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Faux Fur Not So 'Faux'

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CBNNews.com - Coat lovers beware. That fur coat you thought was "faux" fur may not be so "faux" after all.

A loophole in the law has allowed some companies to sell imported products that may contain real dog fur or fur from "raccoon dogs," a member of the canine family. It is illegal in the United States to sell products made with cat or dog fur.

The loophole lets companies leave any product valued at less than \$150 unlabeled. Several of these unlabeled coats, or coats labeled as "faux," contain real fur, an investigation by the Humane Society of the United States revealed.

Animal fur is often sheared and dyed to look fake, making it difficult for the untrained eye to distinguish between faux and real fur, experts say.

Several congressmen on Capitol Hill are fed up with the misleading practice. A bill introduced Feb. 7 by Rep. Jim Moran, D-Va., seeks to clamp down on companies working around the law. It will outlaw the use of raccoon dog fur and will require all fur products to be correctly labeled, regardless of value.

Republican Rep. Michael Ferguson, N.J., and an additional 27 other congressmen have joined in the fight as co-sponsors of the bill, called The Dog and Cat Fur Prohibition Enforcement Act.

"Americans don't want Lassie turned into a fur coat," Rep. Moran said at a press conference announcing the bill. "Unfortunately, that's happening today because consumers lack the right information to make an informed purchase."

"We are a nation of animal lovers and it's just outrageous that consumers are being deceived," Rep. Ferguson said. "Congressional action is needed to make sure that the best, most accurate information is made available when purchasing new jackets and coats."

An ongoing investigation by The Humane Society revealed that some big-name retailers have sold jackets trimmed with raccoon dog fur that were either mislabeled or not labeled at all. The investigation also showed that, in some cases, domestic dog fur was used in the product.

"If consumers buy fur jackets from China, it's very possible they are getting falsely labeled fur from domestic dogs or raccoon dogs skinned alive," said Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of The Humane Society.

According to The Humane Society, half of all imported fur garments come from China, where dogs, cats and raccoon dogs, among other species, are often killed for their fur.



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