



February 12, 2021

RE: Support for HB 611 Maryland Cruelty Free Cosmetics

Dear Committee

On behalf of Cruelty Free International, I am pleased to support HB 611 a bill that will make it unlawful to test cosmetics on animals in the state of Maryland and will prohibit cosmetic manufacturers from selling any cosmetic in the state if it was developed or manufactured using an animal test performed after the date of enactment.

The legislation makes exceptions for special safety concerns, drugs used in cosmetics, foreign testing requirements, and allows companies to rely on existing data from testing that was done to address regulatory requirements for non-cosmetic purposes under specific conditions. We worked very hard with industry stakeholders to reach an agreement on these points that consider the complexities of the industry while achieving a primary and shared goal of ensuring that cosmetics are not the cause of new animal testing.

Modern non-animal tests for cosmetics safety are accurate, efficient, and affordable. The tests usually carried out on animals for cosmetics ingredients have alternatives at similar or lower costs which have been approved by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as official Test Guidelines. The tests have comparable or higher predictive value for effects on humans than the animal tests that they replace. Alternative methods are tests that use simple organisms like bacteria, or tissues and cells from humans (vitro tests), and sophisticated computer models or chemical methods. For example: Human skin cells can be grown in vitro to test ingredients for skin irritation. Modern eye irritation tests can use corneas cultured in vitro. If a new ingredient is similar to an existing ingredient, a technique called read across can also be used to determine safety based on existing data.

Passage of HB 611 would bring Maryland in line with nearly 40 countries and three US states [California, Illinois, and Nevada] that have already implemented bans on animal testing and/or the sale of animal-tested cosmetics. Hundreds of successful cosmetics companies of all sizes now rely on non-animal testing methods and support nationally and globally consistent rules on this issue.

Moreover, ending animal testing for cosmetics is an issue that unites Americans across generations and political affiliations. A 2019 SurveyUSA poll revealed that nearly 8 out of 10 of poll respondents said that they would support a law that would prohibit animal testing for cosmetics. When broken down by self-reported party affiliation 83% of Democrats, 72% of Republicans, and 80% of Independents support or strongly support a law. Likewise, the poll revealed that there is no generational divide: 76% of those aged 50-64 said they are against animal testing for cosmetics, followed by 75% of those 65 and over, 72% of 34 to 49-year olds and 65% of those aged 18-34.

History has shown that state activity often leads to changes at the federal level. State efforts on this issue have already and helped inform a way forward for the national approach as the agreements reached on state legislation were adopted into the federal Humane Cosmetics Act. HB 611 reflects the interests of industry, consumers and animal protection organizations and would make Maryland one of the first states to create a cruelty free cosmetics market and help to move the rest of the nation in the right direction.

I respectfully request your Aye vote.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Monica Chebet". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Head of Public Affairs
Cruelty Free International