February 20, 2024

Representative Judy Aron, Chair
House Environment and Agriculture Committee
The General Court of New Hampshire
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH

Dear Chair Aron, Vice Chair Creighton, and members of House Environment and Agriculture Committee,

World Animal Protection, on behalf of its New Hampshire supporters, strongly opposes H1325FN, which would allow the private possession of “small tailed monkeys,” raccoons, foxes, otters, skunks, and kangaroos.

Monkeys and Other Wild Animals Pose a Safety Risk to the Community
Monkeys, kangaroos, and the other listed species are wild animals who can inflict serious injuries to humans. For example, kangaroos weigh between 40 and 200 pounds with red kangaroos being the largest. They are muscular animals who can balance on their tails to execute forceful kicks with their sharply clawed feet. Kangaroos use their arms, claws, and feet when fighting. Western grey kangaroos are known as the “boxing kangaroo” because of their fighting abilities. A kangaroo’s kick can be lethal to humans.¹

Monkeys kept as “pets” often become destructive, knocking over furniture, and ripping curtains. Monkeys may also attack or bite people out of frustration. It is not uncommon for a monkey’s teeth to be removed in an attempt to make them more easily managed. People may also remove a monkey’s nails or use chains to stop them from biting and scratching. Though foxes, raccoons, skunks, and otters pose little risk to humans when left in their natural habitats, these animals can bite and scratch when they’re confined and forced to interact.

Wild animals are also zoonotic disease risks. Whether through bites, scratches, or just close contact, nonhuman primates can transfer serious viruses such as Herpes B, tuberculosis, and Ebola. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control banned the importation of nonhuman primates for use as “pets” in 1975, in part, due to these concerns.

Monkeys and Other Wild Animals Cannot Thrive in Human Homes
Wild animals kept in human homes are deprived of the ability to engage in their natural behaviors, resulting in physical and psychological suffering. A cage or enclosure cannot replicate the space and freedom these animals enjoy in the wild.

¹ Graeme Coulson. Reminder: kangaroos are ‘vegetarian gladiators’ with kicks that can kill. An expert explains why they attack. University of Melbourne, September 13, 2022.
It is not possible to provide the socialization and rich habitat that monkeys require in a human home. Non-human primates have complex social structures with many species living in large social groups. Being isolated from their peers causes severe psychological damage. And while different species of monkeys have different needs, non-human primates generally require large outdoor areas to explore with trees, perches, and bodies of water.

Monkeys in the pet trade are prematurely separated from their mothers, usually when they’re as young as a few days old. Not only does this cause significant trauma for both the mother and baby, but the young monkey is denied the mother-child relationship critical to normal physical and psychological development.

Similarly, kangaroos are herbivores who spend their days grazing, jumping, and exploring—activities that are severely curtailed in a suburban home. Though each of their needs are different, foxes, otters, and skunks have complex needs that can only be provided in their natural habitats.

To protect animal welfare and public safety, World Animal Protection urges the committee to oppose H1325-FN.

Thank you for your consideration.

Liz Cabrera Holtz, Esq,
Wildlife Campaign Manager
World Animal Protection