



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB4777

by Rep. Theresa Mah

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

520 ILCS 5/3.25 from Ch. 61, par. 3.25
520 ILCS 5/3.25a new
30 ILCS 105/5.1038 new

Amends the Wildlife Code. Requires fur facilities to be licensed by the Department of Natural Resources in order to continue operating. Provides that a person is not eligible to obtain a fur facility license for a fur facility that was not owned or operated in the State before the effective date of the amendatory Act. Specifies that a person who owns or operates a fur facility before the effective date of the amendatory Act must obtain a fur facility license from the Department for the facility by January 1, 2028 in order to continue owning or operating the facility on or after January 1, 2028. Limits the transferability of licenses after January 1, 2028. Establishes various license application requirements. Requires the Department to inspect fur facilities before granting or renewing a fur facility license. Provides that a fur facility license may be granted by the Department only if the Department determines the facility meets certain requirements. Creates the Fur Facility Fund as a special fund in the State treasury. Provides that amounts in the Fund must be used by the Department to finance the administration and enforcement of the licensing system established by the amendatory Act. Specifies that the Department of Natural Resources must revoke the license of any person who violates the licensing requirements added by the amendatory Act and may confiscate the person's fur-bearing mammals. Establishes criminal penalties for violations of the licensing requirements added by the amendatory Act. Exempts fur facility license holders from the Code's fur-bearing mammal breeder permitting requirements. Defines various terms. Amends the State Finance Act to make conforming changes.

LRB104 17214 BDA 30634 b

1 AN ACT concerning wildlife.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Wildlife Code is amended by changing
5 Section 3.25 and by adding Section 3.25a as follows:

6 (520 ILCS 5/3.25) (from Ch. 61, par. 3.25)

7 Sec. 3.25. Any individual who, within the State of
8 Illinois, holds, possesses or engages in the breeding or
9 raising of live fur-bearing mammals, protected by this Act,
10 except as provided in Sections 1.6, ~~or~~ 1.7, or 3.25a, shall be
11 a fur-bearing mammal breeder in the meaning of this Act.
12 Before any individual shall hold, possess or engage in the
13 breeding or raising of live fur-bearing mammals, he shall
14 first procure a fur-bearing mammal breeder permit. Fur-bearing
15 mammal breeder permits shall be issued by the Department. The
16 annual fee for each fur-bearing mammal breeder permit shall be
17 \$25. All fur-bearing mammal breeder permits shall expire on
18 March 31 of each year.

19 Holders of fur-bearing mammal breeder permits may hold,
20 possess, engage in the breeding or raising, sell, or otherwise
21 dispose of live fur-bearing mammals or their green hides,
22 possessed thereunder, at any time of the year.

23 Fur-bearing mammal breeders shall keep a record for 2

1 years from the date of the acquisition, sale or other
2 disposition of each live fur-bearing mammal or its green hide
3 so raised or propagated, showing the date of such transaction,
4 the name and address of the individual receiving or buying
5 such live fur-bearing mammal or its green hide, and when
6 requested to do so, shall furnish such individual with a
7 certificate of purchase showing the number and kinds of live
8 fur-bearing mammals or green hides so disposed of, the date of
9 the transaction, the name and permit number of the breeder,
10 and the name of the individual receiving, collecting, or
11 buying such live fur-bearing mammals or green hides, and such
12 other information as the Department may require. Such records
13 and certificates of purchase shall be immediately presented to
14 officers or authorized employees of the Department, any
15 sheriff, deputy sheriff, or other peace officer when request
16 is made for same. Failure to produce such records or
17 certificates of purchase shall be prima facie evidence that
18 such live fur-bearing mammals or green hides are contraband
19 with the State of Illinois. The holder of a fur-bearing mammal
20 breeder permit may exhibit fur-bearing mammals commercially.

21 Nothing in this Section shall be construed to give any
22 such permittee authority to take fur-bearing mammals in their
23 wild state contrary to other provisions of this Act, or to
24 remove such permittee from responsibility for the observance
25 of any Federal Laws, rules or regulations which may apply to
26 such fur-bearing mammals.

1 Holders of fur-bearing mammal breeder permits may import
2 fur-bearing mammals into the State of Illinois but may release
3 the same only after health and disease prevention requirements
4 set forth by the Director and other State agencies have been
5 met and permission of the Director has been granted.

6 ~~The breeding, raising and producing in captivity, and the~~
7 ~~marketing, by the producer, of mink (Mustela vison), red fox~~
8 ~~(Vulpes vulpes) or arctic fox (Alopex lagopus), as live~~
9 ~~animals, or as animal pelts or carcasses shall be deemed an~~
10 ~~agricultural pursuit, and all such animals so raised in~~
11 ~~captivity shall be deemed domestic animals, subject to all the~~
12 ~~laws of the State with reference to possession and ownership~~
13 ~~as are applicable at any time to domestic animals. All~~
14 ~~individuals engaged in the foregoing activities are fur~~
15 ~~farmers and engaged in farming for all statutory purposes.~~
16 ~~Such individuals are exempt from the fur bearing mammal~~
17 ~~breeder permit requirements set forth in this Section if: (1)~~
18 ~~they are defined as farmers for Federal income tax purposes,~~
19 ~~and (2) at least 20 percent of their gross farm income as~~
20 ~~reported on Federal tax form Schedule F (Form 1040) for the~~
21 ~~previous year is generated from the sale of mink, red fox or~~
22 ~~arctic fox as live animals, animal pelts or carcasses.~~

23 No fur-bearing mammal breeder permits will be issued to
24 hold, possess, or engage in the breeding and raising of
25 striped skunks acquired after July 1, 1975, or coyotes
26 acquired after July 1, 1978, except for coyotes that are held

1 or possessed by a person who holds a hound running area permit
2 under Section 3.26 of this Act. No fur-bearing mammal breeder
3 permits will be issued to hold, possess, or engage in the
4 breeding and raising of any dangerous animal as defined in
5 Section 48-10 of the Criminal Code of 2012 acquired after July
6 1, 2022 except for coyotes that are held or possessed by a
7 person who holds a hound running area permit under Section
8 3.26.

9 (Source: P.A. 102-837, eff. 5-13-22.)

10 (520 ILCS 5/3.25a new)

11 Sec. 3.25a. Finding Urgent Relief from Vectors for
12 Infection Risk and Unchecked Spillover.

13 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

14 (1) The public health concerns associated with fur
15 facilities are multifaceted, involving risks of zoonotic
16 disease transmission, environmental contamination, and
17 antibiotic resistance.

18 (2) Intensive confinement and slaughter practices at
19 fur facilities facilitate the spread of viruses. These
20 facilities house large numbers of animals in pens or cages
21 in close proximity to each other, which promotes disease
22 transmission. Due to the cramped and unnatural conditions,
23 the animals experience extreme stress, which increases the
24 potential to shed and transmit viruses over extended
25 periods. This risk is further exacerbated by on-site

1 slaughter practices that create additional points of
2 exposure.

3 (3) Two notable zoonotic disease risks at fur
4 facilities include SARS-CoV-2 and Influenza A virus
5 subtype H5N1.

6 (4) Mink pose a particularly high risk to humans
7 because a mink's upper respiratory tract is
8 physiologically similar to a human's respiratory tract,
9 which means mink can become infected and potentially
10 transmit to people some of the same respiratory viruses.
11 Minks' susceptibility to acquiring and spreading human and
12 animal respiratory viruses renders them potentially potent
13 for generating novel pandemic viruses.

14 (5) Tens of thousands of captive mink in the United
15 States and millions of captive mink worldwide have been
16 infected with SARS-CoV-2, creating opportunities for the
17 virus to mutate into new and more dangerous variants.
18 There have been documented cases of mink at fur facilities
19 transmitting a variant of the virus to humans.

20 (6) Foxes, mink, and raccoon dogs at fur facilities
21 infected with Influenza A virus subtype H5N1 create
22 opportunities for spillover to humans. In at least one fur
23 facility, the virus gained a mutation that favors
24 mammal-to-mammal spread.

25 (b) It is the purpose of this Section to protect public
26 health and human safety by licensing existing fur facilities

1 and ending the establishment of new fur facilities in this
2 State.

3 (c) As used in this Section:

4 "Department" means the Department of Natural Resources.

5 "Fur" means any animal skin with hair, fleece, or fur
6 fibers attached, either in its raw or processed state.

7 "Fur facility" means any operation that owns, controls,
8 breeds, raises, propagates, keeps, skins, or slaughters
9 captive-held fur-bearing mammals for the purpose of profiting
10 from their fur.

11 "Fur-bearing mammal" has the meaning set forth in Section
12 1.2g of this Code.

13 "Person" includes any individual, firm, corporation,
14 trust, association, copartnership, society, or other
15 organization of individuals and any other business unit,
16 device, or arrangement.

17 (d) To own or operate a fur facility, a person must have a
18 fur facility license issued by the Department.

19 (e) A person who owns or operates a fur facility before the
20 effective date of this Section must obtain a fur facility
21 license from the Department for the facility on or before
22 January 1, 2028 in order to continue owning or operating the
23 facility on or after January 1, 2028.

24 (f) A person is not eligible to obtain a fur facility
25 license for a fur facility that was not owned or operated in
26 the State before the effective date of this Section.

1 (g) A fur facility license holder is exempt from the
2 fur-bearing mammal breeder permit requirements set forth in
3 this Code.

4 (h) After January 1, 2028, a fur facility license is
5 nontransferable to a new owner or operator.

6 (i) A person must apply annually to the Department for a
7 fur facility license.

8 (1) At the time of obtaining or renewing a license,
9 the person who is being issued the license shall pay a fee
10 of \$1,000.

11 (2) Each fur facility license application requires:

12 (A) the full contact information for all owners
13 and operators of the fur facility;

14 (B) the address for each place of business where a
15 fur facility conducts business;

16 (C) the legal descriptions of any lands upon which
17 the fur facility conducts business;

18 (D) all trade names under which the fur facility
19 conducts business;

20 (E) the number of individuals who work at each fur
21 facility;

22 (F) the number, species, and sex of individual
23 fur-bearing mammals raised for fur within the previous
24 year at each fur facility;

25 (G) the source of each individual fur-bearing
26 mammal raised for fur kept at each fur facility within

1 the previous year;

2 (H) a detailed description of how the fur-bearing
3 mammals raised for fur were transported to and from
4 each fur facility within the previous year, including
5 the route taken, if applicable;

6 (I) the number of individual fur-bearing mammals
7 purchased, transferred, or sold by each fur facility
8 within the previous year and the name of each person or
9 entity to whom or from whom those fur-bearing mammals
10 were purchased, transferred, or sold;

11 (J) a description of the size, number, and type of
12 pens, cages, or other such enclosures used by the fur
13 facility;

14 (K) a description of the barriers used to contain
15 the fur-bearing mammals at the fur facility, as well
16 as the barriers used to prevent other animals from
17 gaining access to the fur facility;

18 (L) a description of the procedures the fur
19 facility uses to dispose of manure or carcasses or and
20 any parts of carcasses;

21 (M) a description of the practices and procedures
22 used by the fur facility within the previous year to
23 ensure the health and safety of workers, the public,
24 and the fur-bearing mammals and animals on and around
25 the facility; and

26 (N) the number of fur-bearing mammals kept at the

1 fur facility who died or were killed within the
2 previous year, the cause of death, and, if killed by
3 humans, the reason each was killed and the method
4 used.

5 (3) Each fur facility shall be inspected, annually, by
6 the Department, prior to the granting or renewal of a
7 license, to ensure compliance with this Section and other
8 applicable laws and regulations. Following each
9 inspection, the Department shall produce a report stating
10 its decision on whether to grant or renew a license and how
11 the fur facility complies with the terms of its license.

12 (4) A license may be granted only if the Department
13 finds that, following an inspection, the application is
14 made in good faith with the intention to carry on the
15 business described in the application, and if the
16 Department also determines that:

17 (A) the facility is constructed to minimize
18 fur-bearing mammal escapes and additional protections
19 are put in place if escapes occur following
20 construction;

21 (B) there are adequate security and safety
22 programs and procedures that minimize the possibility
23 of fur-bearing mammal escapes;

24 (C) there is adequate recordkeeping to aid in
25 tracking of confined fur-bearing mammals or recovery
26 of escaped fur-bearing mammals;

1 (D) there are adequate procedures, equipment, and
2 trained staff to maximize capture of escaped
3 fur-bearing mammals;

4 (E) adequate veterinary care and animal husbandry
5 is provided to identify and minimize the spread of
6 diseases; and

7 (F) the applicant has not been convicted of or
8 received any citations for violating environmental,
9 animal cruelty, or wildlife laws or regulations.

10 (f) The Fur Facility Fund is established as a special fund
11 in the State treasury. Fees collected under this Section and
12 interest attributable to moneys in the Fur Facility Fund must
13 be deposited into Fur Facility Fund. Subject to appropriation,
14 moneys in the Fund, including interest earned, must be used by
15 the Department to help fund the administration and enforcement
16 of this Section.

17 (g) If a licensee does not comply with any provision of
18 this Section, the Department shall, after notice and an
19 opportunity to be heard, revoke the licensee's license and may
20 confiscate the fur-bearing mammals at the fur facility.

21 (1) A person who operates a fur facility without a
22 license after January 1, 2028 commits a Class C
23 misdemeanor. The Department, or a representative of a unit
24 of local government approved by the Department for this
25 purpose, shall report any violation of this Section to the
26 State's Attorney of the county in which the violation

1 occurred. Each day a violation continues constitutes a
2 separate offense.

3 (2) The penalties described in this Section may be
4 enforced by the Attorney General bringing an action in a
5 court of competent jurisdiction. The application of this
6 Section does not preclude an action by the Attorney
7 General seeking equitable or other remedies in connection
8 with the enforcement of this Section.

9 Section 10. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
10 Section 5.1038 as follows:

11 (30 ILCS 105/5.1038 new)

12 Sec. 5.1038. The Fur Facility Fund.