



CITIZENS FOR  
LOS ANGELES  
WILDLIFE

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August 4, 2020

Honorable Senator Anthony Portantino, Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
1020 N. Street, Room 2206  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Support for AB 1788 (Bloom)**

Honorable Chairperson Portantino and the Appropriations Committee:

Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW) is a non-profit environmental organization concerned with the wellbeing of wildlife and wildlife habitat for the City of Los Angeles and beyond. A citizenry of more than 5000 individuals support our organization's multiple calls for biodiverse practices and policy to benefit LA City, County, California, and the globe. Our organization supports the current amended language in the California State Assembly's most recent rodenticides bill, AB 1788.

CLAW has seen the effects of anticoagulants on wildlife firsthand, and has received numerous calls about owls and hawks falling dead in the hillsides, bleeding internally as a result of secondary poisoning. Coyotes have also been discovered with internal bleeding due to secondary and even tertiary poisoning. Over 94% of our local mountain lions have tested positive for exposure to rodenticide, a factor that has led them to candidacy status under the California Endangered Species Act. Many of these threatened mountain lions have died as a direct result of rodenticide poisoning. This continues despite the current consumer restrictions on second generation anticoagulant rodenticide (SGAR) in California, proving that further steps are needed to protect California wildlife.

Rodenticide is not a solution to pest problems. In fact, ample evidence shows rodenticide has a counterproductive effect on pest control by weakening and killing natural predators of rodents. Integrated pest management (which includes sealing entrances and removing attractants for rodents) stops pest problems from occurring, and options such as electric rat traps provide non-toxic lethal alternatives to rodenticide.


Numerous studies have shown that the use of rodenticides has a deleterious effect on the health of non-target wildlife. Rats who ingest poison do not die immediately, but gradually become slow and less alert, making them easy prey for nearby predators. By consuming the rats, these predators become the victims of secondary poisoning, which has been linked to increased risks for diseases such as mange, as well as increased susceptibility to predation and automobile collisions. In

California, exposure to rodenticide has been found in at least 16 species of birds, and 13 species of mammals, including the federally endangered San Joaquin kit fox. Studies of wild animals in California have found that nearly 75% test positive for rodenticide exposure. In habitat that is close to urban areas, percentages can be even higher. AB 1788 will immediately and dramatically reduce these alarming statistics by placing a moratorium on SGARs in California.

In 2019, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) announced that there is enough scientific evidence to warrant a reevaluation of the use of products containing SGARs. However, such a reevaluation could take years to complete, after which it may be further delayed by litigation. This is a timeframe that is simply not appropriate given the urgency of this ecological catastrophe. AB 1788 will place a moratorium on SGARs until DPR completes their reevaluation, and can prove to Californians and other state agencies that SGARs do not pose a significant adverse impact to our wildlife. This proposal of a moratorium would have a smaller impact on state agencies than the permanent ban proposed in previous drafts of AB 1788, which had been deemed as having “minor, if any state costs” by the California State Assembly Committee on Appropriations.

AB 1788 is a fair, low cost bill. In the era of COVID-19, we must acknowledge that the health of our environment can have major consequences on our own personal health, and we must take meaningful steps to protect ourselves and the animals around us. This bill provides many exemptions, including one for emergency use, ensuring that there will be no negative impact on public health, while greatly supporting the health of our wildlife. We urge you to vote “yes” and pass this important bill to a floor vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony T.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tony Tucci, Chair

*CLAW is a public benefit non-profit 501(c)(3) environmental organization that works to protect and restore the environments of wildlife of Los Angeles and California from dwindling open spaces. Our mission is to promote, educate and protect the fundamental importance of wildlife, wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors everywhere.*