

WILDLIFE ADVOCATE

Representing The Quiet Australian

ISSUE

Californian Legislative Amendment

Background

For many years now the Californian Government has made it unlawful to import for commercial purposes, the dead body, or any part or product thereof, of any kangaroo [Section 635o of the Penal Code]

On 17 February 2005, Californian Legislative Assembly Member Nicole Parra introduced a bill to amend Section 635o of the Penal Code to revise those provisions relative to kangaroos to apply only to endangered kangaroos. Nicole Parra did not provide any reason or justification why she considered such an amendment necessary, although it was well known that Addidas, who uses kangaroo leather in their soccer boots, was sponsoring the amendments.

A change in the Californian legislation would open up an additional market for kangaroo leather products, thus increasing the demand for kangaroo skins. This in turn would increase the incentive for kangaroo slaughtering here in Australia.

Action

Wildlife Advocate made a detailed submission to California Legislative Assembly Members. Key points of that submission were:

- kangaroo numbers have drastically declined over the last three years and are now the lowest in over 20 years;
- the 2005 quota will result in the slaughter of up to 3.9 million kangaroos and the inhumane slaughter¹ of up to 1.5 million joeys

Wildlife Advocate pointed out that the slaughter of 1.5 million joeys was five times greater than the number of Canadian fur and hooded seals that would be similarly bludgeoned to death in the annual seal cull - seals that were also protected under Californian law. Wildlife Advocate argued that Australian kangaroos should at least have the same protection under Californian law as the Canadian seals.

**Wildlife Advocate was successful in its appeals and the proposed amendment was defeated
- at least until Addidas tries again -**

¹ By decapitation by a sharp instrument, bludgeoning to death with a blunt object or being left to die of starvation or predation