



STOP THE TRADE IN BEAR GALLBLADDERS AND BILE IN NEW YORK

Pass Assembly Bill 6291/Senate Bill 3858



The Pressing Need:

- Throughout New York and the rest of the nation, carcasses of American black bear cubs and adults are discovered, illegally killed for their gallbladders and bile.
- New York, home to 6,000-7,000 black bears, is one of only five states that currently allow the free trade in bear gallbladders and bile. This loophole significantly complicates law enforcement, encourages poaching, and puts bears everywhere at risk. Once a gallbladder is removed, it is difficult to prove where the bear was killed. If caught in a state that prohibits trade in bear gallbladder or bile, poachers avoid prosecution by claiming the gallbladder or bile came from a state such as New York that allows such trade.
- Bear gallbladders and bile can sell for thousands of dollars on the black market to supply commercial markets at home and abroad. Because the Asiatic bear is endangered, poachers to turn to America to supply market demand. Trade in bear gallbladders and bile is a serious threat to bears globally.
- Undercover surveys on sale of bear bile products found that 20% of New York City shops carrying traditional Asian medicine openly sell bear bile, including intact gallbladders taken from local wild bears.
- Evidence from an undercover operation by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service links New York to a network of illegal bear gallbladder trafficking in the United States.
- Trade in bear gallbladders and bile in New York can put some fragile state bear populations at risk, serve as a laundering hub for illegal wildlife contraband, and imperil endangered bear species overseas.

The Solution:

- Born Free USA is working with Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal (D-67th) and Senator Mark Grisanti (R-60th) to pass A. 6291/S. 3858. The bipartisan bill would amend the New York Environmental Conservation law to make it unlawful for any person to sell or barter, offer to sell or barter, possess, purchase, transport, deliver or receive, bear gallbladders, bile or any product, item or substance containing, or labeled or advertised as containing, bear gallbladders or bile.
- This legislation is narrowly crafted to solely prohibit intrastate commerce in bear gallbladders and bile. It does not impact legal hunting rights, trade in bear parts other than gallbladder and bile, or the ability of the New York Department of Environmental Conservation to possess, transport, deliver, or receive gallbladders or bile for law enforcement purposes.
- This legislation will not conflict with traditional Asian medicinal practices. A report by the Chinese Association of Medicine and Philosophy stated that there are at least 54 herbal alternatives to bear bile in its various medicinal applications.

New Yorkers will surely support playing a leadership role in protecting wild bears from illegal slaughter to supply the trade in bear gallbladders. Commercialization of wildlife parts undermines maintenance of healthy wildlife populations.

About Born Free USA: Born Free USA is a national non-profit animal protection organization that works to alleviate the unnecessary suffering of wild animals in captivity, rescue individual animals in need, protect wildlife — including highly endangered species — in their natural habitats, and encourage compassionate conservation globally.

For more information, visit www.bornfree.org or email tracyc@bornfreeusa.org.