



Shyan and parents Steve and Tammy Kautzer with the prairie dog that gave the child and mother monkeypox in 2003.



Letter in Response to this [SF Chronicle Article](#)

Stop the next pandemic

Regarding “[Exotic pet trade poses disease risk](#)” (Open Forum, Aug. 15): Thank you for the article calling on more to be done to stop live wildlife imports, the source of many zoonotic diseases, such as COVID and monkeypox.

Despite the alarm bells sounding from scientists that the next pandemic will originate in animals and spread to humans, our elected officials refuse to take substantive steps to prevent it. My nonprofit, Social Compassion in Legislation, in partnership with the Center for Biological Diversity, co-sponsored bills (SB1175 and SB376) authored by state Sen. Henry Stern (D-Los Angeles) in 2020 and 2021 that would have curtailed live animal markets in California and given the Department of Fish and Wildlife more authority to stop imports of wildlife.

Both bills allowed wildlife imports when safe, and limited department authority to only when scientific evidence suggested zoonotic transmission from a species could be responsible for a novel, not previously reported, readily transmissible human disease, and there is no protocol for robust testing, effective treatment or quarantine.

Yet, the Assembly and Senate leadership killed the bills due to pressure from wildlife traders. When will our California Legislature begin taking this issue seriously and protect us instead of ushering in the next pandemic?

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