



TUSK TASK FORCE™ | TTF™ has one simple mission: To take anti-poaching to the next level by providing strategic and tactical support—from public policy to morale resources—directly to all deployed forces on the ground worldwide. **#SO THAT ELEPHANTS MAY LIVE™**.

ALLEN R. SANDICO, MPA
Founder | Chief Elephant Officer (CEO)

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State of Connecticut
General Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
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FOR: THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

RE: HOUSE BILL 6955/5718:
An Act Prohibiting the Sale and Trade of Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn

TO: **Chairmen** Sen. Ted Kennedy Jr. and Rep. James Albis
Vice-Chairs Sen. Marilyn Moore and Rep. David Alconti
Ranking Members Sen. Clark J. Chapin and Rep. John T. Shaban
Committee Members Representatives Terry Becker, Gary Byron, Devin R. Carney, Jay M. Case, Mike Demicco, Patricia A. Dillon, Doug Dubitsky, John “Jack” F. Hennessy, Ben McGorty, Robert W. Megna, Philip J. Miller, Craig A. Miner, Gayle J. Mulligan, Mary M. Mushinsky, John E. Piscopo, Kevin Ryan, Sean Scanlon, Steven Stafstrom, William Tong, Mark Tweedie, Diana S. Urban, Roberta B. Willis, and Melissa H. Ziobron

March 11, 2015

Mr. Chairman, Vice-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Committee Members:

My name is Allen R. Sandico and I am the CEO (Chief Elephant Officer) of **TUSK TASK FORCE, A WILDLIFE CONSERVATION NON-PROFIT** with its global HQ in Seattle. As the **WORLD’S FIRST WILDLIFE CONSERVATION NGO FOCUSING ON THE LINK BETWEEN TERRORISM AND POACHING**, I urge the Committee to pass HB 6955/5718 to ban/prohibit the trafficking of ivory and rhino horn in the Great State of Connecticut.

As you may probably know, **the USD \$23-billion black market on wildlife parts has been proven to fund terrorists around the world at the rate of USD \$600,000 a month.** These terrorists include al-Shabaab in the Sudan and Somalia, Boko Haram in Nigeria, and Joseph Kony’s The Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda. Most especially, al-Shabaab is the sworn affiliate al-Qae’da in Yemen and was responsible for the Westgate shopping mall massacre in Nairobi, Kenya on September 21, 2013. Boko Haram abducted 200 Nigerian school girls on April

15, 2014 and is now using them as suicide bombers, spies, and executioners in their operations. In addition, they started beheading some of their Christian hostages and just this weekend, they swore their allegiance to ISIL (Islamic State in The Levant).

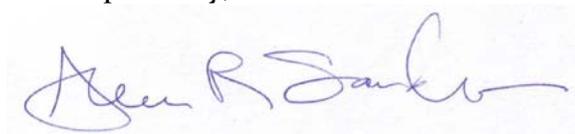
Indeed, **wildlife trafficking is such an urgent global security issue that threatens our national security** that it compelled the Director of National Intelligence, GEN James R. Clapper, to include it as an important agenda item to the ODNI's *Worldwide Threat Assessment* (presented to the Senate Armed Services Committee on 02/26/15, p. 9) which supplemented the President's *National Security Strategy* with regards to the other non-conventional threats facing our nation (released on 02/06/15, p. 12).

In order to stop the flow of money from this illicit enterprise of wildlife parts, Connecticut has the tremendous opportunity to mitigate the funding of terrorism by banning all commerce related to ivory and rhino horn. Please do so and influence the rest of your caucus to vote for 6955/5718.

As a PhD candidate focused on counterterrorism, I have attached a one-page "briefing paper" for your quick review but I will gladly provide you with more research on the link between wildlife trade and terrorism with citations and references, at your convenience, if you so desire.

Thank you so much for accepting my testimony on this urgent public policy and national security issue.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Allen R. Sandico".

Allen R. Sandico, MPA
Chief Elephant Officer (CEO)

Copies:
State Rep. Rick Lopes, 24th District
State Rep. Roberta B. Willis, 64th District

Encl/ars



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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TTF Launches “Ivory Funds Terrorism/Poaching Is Terrorism” Public Policy Campaign
Political campaign to influence a moratorium on ivory and rhino horn trade in many states

SEATTLE — March 1, 2015 — Tusk Task Force has launched the “Ivory Funds Terrorism/Poaching Is Terrorism” public policy campaign today to influence lawmakers in CA, CT, FL, HI, IA, IL, MA, MD, OR, and VT to pass a laws banning ivory and rhino horn trade and sales in those states. The organization, through its CEO, has contacted key lawmakers in those states sending the message that wildlife conservation is also a global security issue. Similar laws were already passed in NY and NJ. Unfortunately, laws introduced in OK, VA, and WA did not passed due to tremendous opposition led by the gun lobby.

Tusk Task Force believes that a moratorium on trade of elephant and rhino parts will diminish the killings of these gentle giants in Africa while alleviating the threat of terrorism. **“Wildlife conservation is now a global security concern since profits from poaching has become a primary currency for and by terrorist organizations. The threat is real and it’s not just about the wildlife anymore,”** said Allen R. Sandico, founder and Chief Elephant Officer (CEO) of Tusk Task Force. **“Compelling evidence brought forth by many organizations, including Interpol and UNEP, have given this issue a sense of urgency. We must mitigate this by curtailing its supply and demand; and banning their trade in every state is a necessary step,”** he added.

Tusk Task Force will continue to follow-up with key lawmakers and will also reach out to concerned individuals, organizations, non-profits, and NGOs in state capitols across the United States to influence lawmakers to introduce, co-sponsor, and pass bills banning ivory and rhino horn trafficking.

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About TUSK TASK FORCE

TUSK TASK FORCE™ | TTF™ is a Seattle-based, federal 501c3-status-pending non-profit, non-governmental wildlife conservation organization. Our mission is to provide strategic and tactical support—from public policy to morale resources—directly to all ground forces conducting anti-poaching operations deployed worldwide. TTF believes that wildlife conservation is also a global security issue and addresses this concern by influencing public policy through education, research, and outreach.

For more information, please contact below for press and media inquires only:

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TUSK TASK FORCE'S MISSION IS TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE THAT POACHING WILDLIFE PARTS IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE ANIMALS ANYMORE; IT'S NOW A GLOBAL SECURITY ISSUE SINCE POACHING FUNDS TERRORISM.

- **Every 15 minutes an elephant is killed for its tusk.** That's 4 an hour, 96 a day, 672 a week, 2,880 a month, and 34,560 a year. A total of 35,000 elephants were killed in 2013 alone.
- **Wildlife trafficking has an estimated \$23-billion-a-year market** according to the U.S. Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division (John C. Cruden, 02/11/14).
- **Rhino population is down at 97% since 1960 and one is killed every 13 hours, every day.** Rhino population figures include Black (<5,000), Southern White (<20,000), Greater One-Horned (<3,000), Sumatran (<100), and Javan (35-45). **The Northern White Rhino is now extinct.** Vietnam and China are the world's biggest consumers of rhino horn due to non-regulation and illicit trade.
- **Individual elephant tusks can sell for tens of thousands of dollars, and reports indicate that the substantial portions of these illegal profits are ending up in the hands of transnational organized crime syndicates that also conduct trafficking of humans, drugs, and weapons** and extremist groups like al-Shabaab in the Sudan and Somalia, Boko Haram in Nigeria, and Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda that use the proceeds to finance human rights abuses and terrorist activities.
- **Consumer demand, stimulated by the presence of legal domestic markets in many countries around the world, is elevating the price of ivory and driving elephant poaching.** Within the United States, assessed by some to be the second largest commercial market for ivory in the world, studies indicate that illegal ivory is frequently sold alongside legal ivory in shops across the country. It is impossible to distinguish legal ivory from illegal ivory without an expensive lab test. This renders enforcement of existing U.S. law extremely difficult, and **traffickers frequently exploit these regulatory loopholes in order to sell poached ivory in legal markets at the local/state level.**
- A September 2013 report issued by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime identified the **notorious al-Shabaab, the Somali-based affiliate of al-Qae'da** (and has been designated by the U.S. as a foreign terrorist organization) **raises \$600,000 a month from poaching to fund all of its operations that includes the Westgate shopping mall attack in Nairobi, Kenya on September 21, 2013.**
- **Supplies of ivory from Africa and elsewhere are usually purchased and distributed by Chinese mafia organizations** in Hong Kong, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States with those funds being recycled to purchase arms for poachers and terrorists to use.
- **Boko Haram, who kidnapped the 200 Nigerian school girls and beheaded hostages,** publicly declared that they will directly resort to poaching as a primary source of income since **"it is easier than kidnapping and extortion."**
- At a hearing at the UN General Council in September 2013, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations cited the link between terrorism and illegal ivory sales, citing the murder of park rangers and also saying **"Wildlife trafficking is increasingly associated with rebel and terrorist groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and al-Shabaab, an al-Qaeda terrorist cell in East Africa"** making ivory tusks as a primary resource for this organizations due to demand by global markets.

Sources: World Threat Assessment of the Intelligence Community (ODNI, 02/26/15); National Security Strategy (EOPOTUS, 02/06/15); Ivory's Curse: The Militarization & Professionalization of Poaching in Africa (Born Free USA/c4ads, 04, 2014); A Rapid Response Assessment: The Environmental Crime Crisis/Threats to Sustainable Development from Illegal Exploitation and Trade in Wildlife and Forest Resources (United Nations Environmental Programme/INTERPOL, 06/26/14)

IF CURRENT POACHING RATES CONTINUE OR INCREASE DUE TO DEMAND, ELEPHANTS AND RHINOS WILL BE EXTINCT WITHIN TEN YEARS.