

Arthur S. Liverant
43 School Road
Colchester, CT 06415

Dear Chairman Kennedy and Members of the Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today in regards to the subject of the proposed legislation, specifically HB. No. 6599, and possibly banning the trade in all elephant ivory and rhinoceros horn.

I am a lifelong resident of Colchester, and am the third generation of a family business dealing in antiques and the fine arts field. Our family has sold art objects to museums and collectors alike for 95 years. I suggest that an amendment to the proposed legislation be considered which would allow for a one hundred year old exclusion for antique works of art made of ivory.

Allow me to initially state that I am in full agreement that the killing, poaching and slaughter of Asian and African elephants should be stopped immediately. Those responsible for these horrific crimes should be punished to the full extent of the law.

HB 6955 is certainly a step in the right direction, to help stop the slaughter of these majestic animals. Again, I suggest that changes be made to the proposed legislation to accommodate the sale and trade of ivory art objects created over one hundred years ago, before many of these precious items are lost forever. The free market trade in these objects will allow for the appreciation and care of these items that reflect our history and the legacy of Connecticut and America.

As witness, I have brought two objects that will help illustrate my point. The first object that I would like to show is a miniature portrait painted on ivory of a gentleman from my hometown of Colchester. I purchased this item only weeks ago on Ebay from a seller in Tennessee. Miniature portraits on ivory were painted by accomplished artists using a single hair brush to honor and record the subject for future generations, as photography records today. This particular miniature portrait is of Captain Benjamin Day, who was born in Colchester in 1704, a mere six years after the founding of our town. In 1729, he married Margaret Foot, the daughter of the founder of Colchester. In May, 1747 Benjamin Day was appointed Lieutenant by Governor Jonathan Law and this same Connecticut General Assembly. The Day family continued to be leaders in Colchester well into the 20th Century. This portrait was painted in 1766, and gives historians a little insight into the life and accomplishments of Captain Day. If a ban on the trade of ivory objects were in effect, this portrait may never have found it's way back to Colchester, and this bit of Connecticut history may have been lost forever. For practical information, the actual size of the thin sheet of ivory measures 1 1/2" X 1 1/4", and is so thin that it is actually transparent.

The second object illustrating my point is a jewelry box that was originally owned by Marie Gansevoort Melville. This box was made in 1814 in Boston, by one of the finest cabinetmakers of the time. Marie Gansevoort married Thomas Melville. Together they had a son, we all know to be Herman Melville, one of the great authors of American literature. Consider the romance and history of this box. To think that it was very probable that young Herman may have played with his mother's valuable treasures is unmistakable and exciting. The issue here is the small

turned knobs in the interior compartments which are made of ivory. If a ban on all ivory was in effect, this treasure may someday be lost forever.

True, the great elephants of the world are victimized by ruthless, greedy, and lawless criminals. Please do not victimize our history and culture as a result. I recommend that HB 6955 be amended to allow free market trade in ivory and rhinoceros objects over one hundred years old.

Respectfully,

Arthur S. Liverant