

Testimony
Frederick Copeland
HB 6955 An Act Prohibiting The Sale And Trade of Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn

“My name is Rick Copeland, a resident of Avon, in support of a modification of bill **HB 6955** to exclude Ivory (worked ivory) that's at least 100 years old (or worked prior to 1915). I'm a retired business person who has lived many years outside the United States, including Asia, and appreciate that the purpose of the bill is to eliminate markets for the product and by doing that reduce the economic incentive to poach and kill certain animals in the wild. Anyone who has seen and been in close proximity to these animals in Africa is extremely aware of the urgency to protect them and their open habitat. There is nothing more impressive or heart pounding than being on foot and viewing a herd of elephants moving through the African bush.

I am also a collector of American 18th and early 19th century American decorative arts, specializing in objects originating in Ct or with clear Ct provenance of ownership. My collection includes furniture, clocks, needlework, pewter, paintings, and miniatures. The latter are often small portraits painted on ivory +/- 200 - 250 years ago. The skill of the painter on such a small surface oftentimes is incredible and as a result they are sought after and traded by a large group of museums and collectors. In Ct the Wadsworth Atheneum, CT Historical Society, and Yale Art Gallery have impressive collections mostly acquired by gifts of collectors like myself. There is also the intellectual interest of collectors and dealers in researching the sitter/families of these small portraits in the context of better understanding the history of our state (in my circumstance) and country. An active collector and museum market promotes new discovery (it happens frequently). If purchases and sales were prohibited entirely there is no doubt this fascinating small market would dry up.

In summary I don't see a thread of logic that presumes a ban by the Ct State Legislature on the acquisition and sale of OLD worked ivory deters tomorrow's poacher. That will be successful with strong diplomatic agreements focused on Asia and financial support to countries that have committed to anti-poaching enforcement.

By creating a reasonable age (say 100 years) exclusion you are promoting interest in our history, active businesses sourcing and selling rare collectible antique objects, and the enhancement of museum acquisitions. "

Frederick Copeland
11 Deer Ridge Rd
Avon, Ct 06001