

HB 6955 Prohibiting the sale and trade of ivory and Rhino horn
Environment committee- March 11, 2015
Testimony for Karen Laski 279 Fern St. Manchester CT

I support House Bill 6955 to prohibit the sale of ivory and rhino horn.

I am on the Board of CT Votes for Animals and president of CT Compassion in Entertainment.

My experience with elephants has taken place over the past twenty years while filming them during their captivity in circuses and exhibits.

Several years ago, I shared my videos with people in Deep River who were organizing a formal dedication to elephants in remorse for killing them for their ivory from the 19th century to the early sixties. I didn't realize until then how much CT was involved in the ivory trade and was proud of the people in the Deep River area who acknowledged the injustice and are making amends. They have shown us we should never participate in that market again.

The black market for ivory and rhino horn hides under the guise of legality but has now lost its cover in NY and NJ because of their recent state laws to ban the sale and fix the loopholes of the federal law. Connecticut is now vulnerable to more involvement with this cruel offense from our neighbor's large market in ivory spilling into our borders. Wildlife trafficking with ivory and rhino horn has been proven to be one of the most lucrative ways of funding terrorist operations.

While Deep River elementary school children are raising money for baby elephants orphaned by slaughter we can take their compassionate lead and pass this legislation.

We owe elephants an apology and a promise that we have learned from our mistakes.

Thank you,
Karen Laski