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Representative Mark Tweedie
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: H.B. No. 6955 (Raised)

Dear Representative Tweedie:

I am the former Chairman of the Connecticut Historical Commission and currently serve as the Chairman of the Connecticut Historical Society's Collections Steering Committee, in addition to serving several other local history organizations in various volunteer capacities. As a preservationist and student of Connecticut history, I write in complete support of the objective of H.B. No. 6955 to protect wildlife. However, as written, H.B. No. 6955 would have the effect of promoting the loss of many historic artifacts which would not do anything to protect animal welfare. I respectfully request that H.B. No. 6955 be revised to permit the sale and trade of historic artifacts that contain ivory.

In Connecticut, ivory was used as a decorative element in many products of early industry such as clocks, furniture, tools, and guns. Prior to the advent of certain man-made materials, ivory was also used as an insulator in silver tea- and coffee-pots and provided a wear and stain resistant material for piano keys. Without attempting to justify these historical uses of ivory, these items were crafted during a time when society held different views about the use of ivory and now constitute an important part of Connecticut's historical fabric. As such, they contribute to Connecticut's story and deserve to be preserved.

Simply put, there isn't adequate space or financial resources to ensure that these items are preserved in Connecticut's museums. A very effective way to save, protect, and preserve these objects has been the existence of an active market in which these objects are highly sought after, valued, and cared for by collectors and dealers alike. Eliminating this market will undoubtedly lead to the loss, disfigurement (through the removal of the ivory components), or destruction of these objects. We will lose part of our own history as a result.

There is no rational purpose in promoting the loss, disfigurement or destruction of these artifacts. They already exist, and have existed for many years. Preserving these objects will not contribute to or perpetuate the needless slaughter of defenseless wildlife. Please revise H.B. No. 6955 to permit the sale and trade of historic artifacts that contain ivory.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin G. Ferrigno