



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

REPRESENTATIVE PAM STANESKI
ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 4200
300 CAPITOL AVENUE
HARTFORD, CT 06106

CAPITOL: (860) 240-8700
TOLL FREE: (800) 842-1423
Pam.Staneski@housegop.ct.gov

MEMBER
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

***Testimony by Representative Pam Staneski
Before the Environment Committee
House Bill 6955
March 11, 2015***

Good afternoon Chairmen Kennedy and Albis, Ranking Members Chapin and Shaban, and members of the Environment Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity today to provide testimony on HB 6955, AN ACT PROHIBITING THE SALE AND TRADE OF IVORY AND RHINOCEROS HORN.

I come before you to speak in opposition to HB 6955 as it is written because while the intent is understood the unintended consequences that fall on our music industry, in particular, piano tuning and sales are harmful at best. I am hopeful that this committee will amend this bill to exempt music instruments that include ivory in the construction as well as the resale of such instruments.

First, I offer to the committee the fact that there is not, nor has there been since the 1950's, a piano made with ivory and the same can be said for Europe since the 1970's. However, there are pianos that predate the 1950's that are in good shape and in use. Our own Hart School of Music and Yale are Steinway schools and house such old pianos. Antique harpsichords and pianos are owned, some as investments, many as relished family heirlooms by Connecticut families, and many houses of worship have old pianos.

As an example on how this bill would impact piano technicians, I offer the change to their practices and livelihood as a result of similar bills that have been adopted into law in our neighboring state of New Jersey. Possession and resale of pianos with ivory keys is against state statute. This has resulted in confusion within the industry and piano technicians are uncomfortable servicing old pianos with ivory keys and cannot send any part of the keyboard out for repair, piano movers are declining to move old pianos for fear of breaking the law, and owners are confused about what to do with pianos that were purchased and considered an investment. I do not think we want the same in Connecticut.

Thank you for holding this hearing on HB 6955 and I encourage the committee to incorporate my suggested amended language into the legislation.

Sincerely,
Rep. Pam Staneski