

Mar 9, 2015

Committee Members Connecticut Joint Committee on Environment

Dear Committee Members Joint Committee on Environment,

As a Connecticut resident and a member of Born Free USA, I urge you to pass H.B. 6955 to ban the sale of ivory and rhino horn in the state.

The elephant poaching crisis has become increasingly severe over the past several years, and some populations of African elephants are quickly being driven to extinction. An average of 96 elephants is slaughtered by poachers daily, and more than 100,000 were killed between 2012 and 2014. This bloody ivory is funneled into the illegal ivory trade, which helps fund the operations of transnational crime syndicates.

Meanwhile, rhinos are killed for their horns, which are erroneously believed to have medicinal powers in parts of Asia. This market is fueling the slaughter of more than 1,000 rhinos per year. Only 25,000 black and white rhinos remain across all of Africa, and they could become extinct in the wild in as few as 12 years.

The U.S. is a significant ivory market and also a major destination for rhino horn. State laws banning the trade in these products are aimed at reducing the demand, which is why H.B. 6955 is so important.

Ending the illegal trade in wildlife parts is deeply important to me.

As a citizen of Connecticut, I urge you to help put an end to the elephant and rhino poaching crisis by passing H.B. 6955. Time is running out to save these majestic animals.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Susan P. Vessicchio
66 Pope St
New Haven, CT 06512-3654