

March 12, 2015

Dear Co-chair Kennedy, Co-chair Albis, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

I urge you to **SUPPORT of HB 6955**, a bill that would shut down market demand for elephant ivory and rhinoceros horns in Connecticut.

This is a very important issue to me though it may seem far removed from our concerns in New England. Elephants and rhinoceroses are magnificent and extremely threatened animals. Elephants are being gunned down and poisoned, with nearly 100 killed per day—all for their ivory tusks. Approximately 100,000 elephants in Africa were killed between 2010 and 2012. In 2014, more than 1,000 rhinos were killed in South Africa alone. Apparently only 29,000 remain in the wild.

Poachers kill entire elephant families, though as I understand it elephant babies, who do not have tusks are left as orphans unable to fend for themselves and often die if not rescued by humans in time.

The situation is a moral disaster and needs to be addressed broadly – hence the need for widespread passage of bills that close down the ivory market.

New York and New Jersey have already enacted laws prohibiting the sale, trade, and possession with intent to sell ivory and rhino horns. Up to a dozen U.S. states are considering similar legislation, including California, Illinois, Hawaii, and Massachusetts. I hope that Connecticut will be added to this list of states who have chosen to take this humane and important stance.

Again, I urge you to support public hearings for **HB 6955** and to support it when it comes to a vote.

Yours truly,

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