

Good Afternoon Mr. Chairman and Members of the Environmental Committee:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak in favor of HB 5578
An Act Prohibiting The Sale and Trade of Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn
My name is Eva Magnuszewski; I am on the Advisory Council for CT Votes for Animals.

Today I took a vacation day from my full time job to speak to you about the importance of banning the sale of ivory and rhino horns in CT.

~Chop Sticks, Ornaments, Hair pins, Pendants and Trinkets:
Did you know that these are some of the reasons that Elephants are being killed in droves?
The questions I ask: Are these items necessary to live? Should they be made from ivory?

~ Rhinos are hunted and murdered because their horns are Status Symbols for the wealthy.
Countries like Vietnam and China use them supposed cures. No scientific medical evidence exists.

The ivory and rhino horn bans sweeping the nation come at a critical time for these vanishing and irreplaceable animal populations worldwide.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service [reports](#) that elephants are being poached faster than they can procreate
At this rate, elephants could become extinct in the wild in as little as 10 years.
Everyday 96 Elephants are killed.

In 2011, one type of rhino known as the Western Black Rhino was declared extinct, by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.
That was 5 only years ago.
Poaching was identified as the main reason why.
Now only 5 species of rhinos remain and all 5 are listed on the ICUN's Red list of threatened species.
Savetherhino.org has the pictures and further information.

You might ask why are elephants and rhinos important to the planet or why should I care?
Elephants and rhinos are key species needed on the earth to protect ecosystems, biodiversity, and forests.

Banning ivory and rhino horn sales also combats the violent illegal wildlife trafficking industry that funds terrorism.

The ivory and rhino horn trade puts money in the hands of [terrorist groups](#) including Al-Shabaab, and Boko Haram.

They use the profits from slaughtering elephants and rhinos to buy weapons and inflict terror on innocent victims.

At \$8-10 billion per year, the illegal wildlife trade ranks as the 4th most lucrative criminal activity internationally, only behind narcotics, counterfeiting and human trafficking.

Which countries are the biggest consumers of Ivory?

#1 is China, # 2 is the United States.

One third of the ivory sold in the US was recently carved which means it was illegally imported from recently poached elephants.

For those of you with a strong stomach please watch the Last Days Documentary from Kathryn Bigelow, the director of Zero Dark Thirty and the Hurt Locker. I can almost guarantee tears will flow.

In 2015, California Governor Jerry Brown signed legislation banning the sale of ivory and rhino horns.

New York and New Jersey passed this landmark legislation in 2014.

Massachusetts and Vermont are also in the process of passing legislation.

Wouldn't it be great if CT also passed this legislation?

I am blessed to have a 2 year old niece who absolutely loves all kinds of animals, her parent's two dogs, the fish in their aquariums, the deer and birds that come into their yard, my cat and all of her stuffed animal toys which are numerous. This is a picture of her with her stuffed animal elephants. *(Picture)*

The question from her that one day I do not want to answer is this:

"Auntie, why didn't you do anything to save the elephants and the rhinos?"

For those of you with children, step children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and younger cousins please consider how answering this question would make you feel.

This is a picture of my friend's 16 year old daughter who also loves elephants, she too would love elephants remained on the planet.

In my Advisory Council position, I cannot pass this important and urgent legislation but I can ask you to fill yourselves with the knowledge and empathy to pass this bill and urge your colleagues to do the same.

In closing: I want to thank you so much for your time, for listening and for raising this bill.

I know your time is important, your schedules are hectic and there are many worthwhile bills before you in 2016.

As Oprah once said “Unless you choose to do great things with it, it makes no difference how much you are rewarded or how much power you have.”

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Environmental Committee: You have the power to do great things; you have the power to help two species not become extinct.

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