

To Whom It May Concern:

The latest iteration of detaining and destroying a piano with ivory keys, an antique cane with an ivory handle or any other piece of antique ivory will not halt the poaching of African or any other animals in today's world. There is little consistency in distinguishing ivory from elephants, rhinos or other animals. The present bill H. B. No. 5578 goes beyond penalizing the antiques trade and home owners; possession of any specimen from any of the named species makes one a criminal. The animal rights groups and the government will not allow trade in antique objects made with or from ivory. Custom agents in Florida even went so far as to watch as dealers had to destroy their own stock of 18th century items because these items were deemed illegal to come into the US in January 2016. This is a ridiculous subversion of the law! Authorizing searches and seizures in people's homes based on a 'probable cause' argument that one owns a piece of ivory is allowing the lunatics to run the asylum. I am sure that reasonable and educated folks with an understanding of both the government and the antiques trade can resolve this idiocy and work on a mutually agreeable solution! Defeat this bill and find a mutually agreeable resolution.

Helaine Fendelman

Former President of the
Appraisers Association of America, Inc.

Contributing Editor at 'Country Living' Magazine

Syndicated Columnist for Tribune Agency

Board Member of The National Arts Club, NYC

Member Art Table

Friend of the American Wing, Metropolitan Museum of Art