

**STATEMENT OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MUSIC MERCHANTS
CONCERNING
CONNECTICUT HOUSE BILL 5578**

The National Association of Music Merchants represents more than 9,000 companies which manufacture and sell musical instruments. This statement is submitted in connection with the consideration of HB 5578 which would ban the sale of many products containing elephant and mammoth ivory.

By way of background, small amounts of elephant ivory were used in a variety of musical instruments – e.g., acoustic guitars, pianos, violin bows, bassoons, bagpipes – although usage had essentially stopped by the time elephant ivory was listed on CITES Appendix I in 1990 and passage of the African Elephant Conservation Act the same year. Many of the instruments containing these small amounts of ivory are still in use today by professional as well as amateur musicians.

While the inclusion of an exemption for certain musical instruments is appreciated, NAMM believes that modification of HB 5578 is in order:

- The requirement that the ivory component is not “raw, unaltered or minimally changed by carving” is vague and the owners of such instruments will not be readily able to determine the status of the ivory, especially whether the ivory has been “minimally changed.” Therefore, the requirement should be deleted.
- The requirement that the seller or owner provide “historical documentation demonstrating provenance” is also vague. The overwhelming majority of instrument owners do not have “historical” documentation regarding their instruments, especially those which were acquired many years ago with nothing more than a simple sales receipt. In addition, the term “provenance” is usually thought of as relating to an ownership trail, not necessarily the instrument’s age. Therefore, NAMM suggests that the language be changed to read: “The owner or seller provides documentation that shows:...”

NAMM representatives would be happy to discuss the musical instrument industry’s concerns in more detail.

For further information, contact James M. Goldberg at 202-628-2929, or at jimcounsel@aol.com.