

CT. HB 5578

Elephants and especially mammoths are not in danger in Maryland. Where is the proof that there is a problem or that a ban on possession of ivory will help elephants survive in Africa? There is none. Not all ivory is poached. Ivory owners are not criminals. Ivory is NOT the enemy. The ILLEGAL killing of elephants is the enemy. This proposed rule attacks American citizens not poachers. Ivory within the United States is being recycled. It has been bought, sold, resold, and taxes paid at every transaction. We have had an international ivory ban for 25 years. That is where the 7 tons of ivory came from that FWS crushed November 2013. What has that helped in three years? Nothing.

Below are some facts and the proof.

FACT- There is good news for over 80% of elephants. Over 55% of elephants have been within sustainable numbers (Southern Africa). In Eastern Africa (28% of elephants on the continent) poaching numbers have dropped for 4 years and are right at sustainable numbers. PIKE (Proportion of Illegally Killed Elephants) levels in 2013 were lower than in 2011 in all four African sub regions. Enforcement levels are up. Data gathering is improving. Poaching has fallen consistently the last 4 years. **PROOF**-figure 3 page 19 CITES July 2014 report; https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/65/E-SC65-42-01_2.pdf

FACT - South African elephant populations have grown greater than the country can manage. Two articles talk about using birth control and neutering males because they have more elephants than the environment can support. These successfully managed areas should be the blueprint used to save the elephants. **PROOF** -NPR July 2013 <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=200104722> and National Geographic May 2015 <http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2015/05/02/in-south-africa-where-elephants-are-fenced-in-choosing-contraception-over-culling/>

FACT – Not all elephants are endangered. Four national populations were transferred to Appendix II (Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe in 1997, and South Africa in 2000). The African elephant is currently listed as Vulnerable. **PROOF** - page 14 CITES July 2014 report;https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/65/E-SC65-42-01_2.pdf

FACT – the American ivory market is not part of the illegal ivory trade. “ETIS (Elephant Trade Information System) “since 2009... the fundamental ivory trade dynamic lies between Africa and Asia.” **PROOF** - (pg. 29) CITES July 2014 report; https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/65/E-SC65-42-01_2.pdf

FACT - Of large-scale (>500kg) seizures of ivory between 2009 - 2013 none went to the United States. **PROOF** - cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/65/E-SC65-42-01

Elephants do, have, and will die of natural causes. Try to calculate the ivory from every elephant that has died of natural causes throughout history, that ivory is still on our planet. (As mammoth and mastodon ivory is still here) It should be used to honor the spirit of these animals. Not put thru rock crushers and destroyed.

This Bill, HB 5578

- Is an Overwhelming “taking” of legal personal property, without just compensation protected by the constitution with a stated mission to send a message to poachers who will not care
- Ignores the supreme court 1st amendment protecting “viewpoint Neutrality”
- Reverses the long standing premise of American law that we are “innocent until proven guilty”
- Arrogantly forces our patronizing policies onto African citizens without their input and over their objections
- Most importantly it will not save one living elephant from being killed in Africa

AND MAMMOTHS ARE EXTINCT, a dog can smell the difference between elephant and mammoth ivories!

As a scrimshaw artist, who has done work for many collectors in your state, I have been in that LEGAL market for almost 40 years. Ivory sells for about \$100 per pound here. Why would a poacher bring it here when you state it will bring \$1500 per pound in Asia? Our *legal* market is large and these changes will harm many Americans, cost taxpayers money and hurt small business. It will create an unnecessary hardship for Museums, auction houses, collectors, churches housing religious artifacts and individual citizens who have invested in legal transactions that personal property rights should protect.

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