

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

Please accept this email as my testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 5578**, AN ACT PROHIBITING THE SALE AND TRADE OF IVORY AND RHINOCEROUS HORN.

I am a CT registered voter and this is a very important matter to me and my family. I support HB 5578 for various reasons and I urge the Environmental Committee to support the passing of this bill.

As you know, global poaching has reached crisis levels. It is very troubling to me that the U.S. has an ivory market due to all the issues and cruelty surrounding the sale of ivory and horns resulting from inhumane treatment and continued wildlife trafficking. As I am sure this Committee is aware, elephants and rhinos are both threatened with extinction. It has been reported that one elephant is killed for their ivory on average every fifteen (15) minutes. The statistics are horrific and at crisis levels. You have an opportunity to act to help end the continuing stream of monies that drives the continued executions of these precious animals.

I am sure everyone can all agree that poaching is both bloody and brutal, and dangerous not only to the elephants and rhinos, but also for park rangers across the world. Tusks and horns are harvested by cutting off faces of these precious animals, many times while they are still alive. Babies are killed or left as orphans and often die alone. More than 1,000 park rangers have been killed by poachers while working at their jobs.

Another reason I urge the Committee's support of this bill is that extremist groups and terrorist organizations are many times involved in wildlife trafficking, as it is one avenue they use to raise funds for their military operations. All efforts are needed to impact and stop terrorist activities and extremist groups and their illicit activities.

Unfortunately Federal laws have loopholes that are exploited so they do not impact intrastate commerce trade, which results in illegal ivory being sold in our state. It is difficult for a unsuspecting consumer to know what is being legally or illegally sold. Thus, State bans are critical to aide in the fight against the distribution and sale of illegal ivory and horns, ensuring commercial trade doesn't contribute to the killing of elephants or rhinos in the wild.

Connecticut should join our neighboring states that are in the process or have already passed similar laws. I respectfully request the Committee's support and passage of HB 5578.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,

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