

To Senator Kennedy and Representative Albis,

I write to oppose SB 227. While there is no doubt that the senseless slaughter of elephants in Africa for the lone purpose of the ivory trade is reprehensible, passing SB 277 will have no effect on that trade but will, more than likely, have many unintended consequences for the citizens of Connecticut and the United States.

The bill, as written, stresses not only an all-inclusive ban on items that include ivory such as antique pianos with ivory keys, heirloom musical instruments, centuries-old miniature paintings on ivory and more, but jeopardizes the state's citizens by making criminals of law-abiding people who possess heritage items precious to them.

Additional consequences for our citizens include the financial impact on individuals who will now own worthless artifacts that may have cost them dearly to acquire. Extraordinary antique pieces that visitors might someday see in a museum will remain hidden as the bill will impact museums' abilities to collect any ivory-bearing objects. SB 277 will become a deterrent for any individual to donate items, because tax incentives will become moot for items rendered worthless.

If the bill were to include antique (as defined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) and existing Federal law exemptions, legislators would be acknowledging the fact that modern poaching is in no way related to existing collections of antique ivory in the U.S. Just as the sailing of the CHARLES W. MORGAN to the traditional whaling grounds of Stellwagen Bank in 2014 (with the blessing and participation of NOAA) was done to stress modern conservation efforts of endangered whales, eliminating such an overarching ban on ivory can help museums and other educational institutions teach new generations the value of conserving wildlife.

Sincerely,



Paul J. O'Pecko
Vice President, Collections and Research
Mystic Seaport
Mystic, CT
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