

Dear Environmental Committee,

Please vote NO on Bill No. 227. The bill is a radical overreach by the government in the name of saving elephants.

1. Millions of Objects Affected: Many antiques, musical instruments and art objects have ivory in them. Ivory was the plastic of the 19th century and before. A few of the objects that the State of Connecticut is proposing to seize and destroy include sterling tea sets with ivory insulators, swords and firearms with ivory grips, musical instruments with ivory inlay, pianos with ivory keys, clocks with ivory knobs, bronzes with ivory faces or hands, chests of drawers with ivory keyholes or inlay, antique ivory fans, tea caddies and jewelry boxes with ivory inlay, Nantucket baskets with ivory decoration, canes with ivory tips, pool cues and portrait miniatures on ivory, chess sets with ivory pieces, etc.

2. Property Rights: Bill No. 227 tramples all over personal property rights and will turn regular folks into criminals. It allows the State of Connecticut to seize and destroy any object that contains even a sliver of ivory. This could result in the *seizure* of firearms (with ivory grips or inlay) putting the state at odds with the Second Amendment. Imagine someone putting their sterling teapot on Ebay, only to find out that because it has ivory insulators, they have committed a felony, are now subject to a \$10,000 fine, two years in prison and that their tea set will be seized and destroyed by the State of Connecticut. Thousands of Connecticut residents have objects in their homes that contain ivory and don't even realize it.

3. Senior Citizens: Many seniors have antiques and art objects that have been in their families for generations. When they need to pay unexpected bills, they often sell their antiques to do so. Property they have counted on as a financial asset would be rendered worthless by the legislature. They won't realize that they have committed a felony for just possessing these objects until they go to sell them.

4. Cost To The State: To enforce the law, the State of Connecticut is proposing that "any law enforcement officer" can "execute any warrant to search for and seize" these objects. How will the State of CT pay for the training of all law enforcement officers to tell the difference between ivory, bone, celluloid or plastic? Will the State of CT set up a special task force to raid antique stores, auction houses, antique shows, yard sales and church rummage sales? Will the state have a special warehouse set-up to store the many thousands of objects that they will be confiscating? Where will they put all of the pianos with ivory keys and furniture with ivory inlay? Bill 227 says that the State can destroy the seized objects. What if the State of CT makes a mistake and destroys an object that contains celluloid rather than ivory? Is the State prepared to make reparations for destroying an object in error? Will the State of Connecticut hire special council to deal with the many law suits that will arise when CT citizens have their valuable objects seized and destroyed? Bill 227 says that prior to the new law taking effect, "the legal owner" can "obtain a certificate of possession from the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection" in order to keep their objects. Is the State of Connecticut prepared to hire and train staff to deal with the thousands of applications that will need to be processed before the law takes affect?

5. Antique Dealers: Connecticut is the antique capital of the country with hundreds of dealer, auctioneers and appraisers within its borders, employing thousands of people and supporting many other local businesses. If this legislation passes, dealers will leave the state, resulting in further erosion of sales tax and income tax revenue.

6. Federal Issue: The legislature is trying to solve an international problem that has already been

addressed at the Federal level. The executive order that was signed by President Obama in February 2014 effectively banned the sales of all ivory less than 100 years old. All sales made using the antique exemption must be accompanied by third-party documentation as specified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Directors Order #210, which already creates a burdensome and costly deterrent to the sale of any antique object containing ivory.

7. Laws Should be Created to Address Connecticut Problems: In creating any new law, a legislator should first ask themselves, if there is a specific problem that needs fixing. I challenge the legislature to demonstrate that Connecticut has a problem with illegal ivory trafficking within its borders.

Respectfully,
Rosemarie DeStories, Newtown, CT