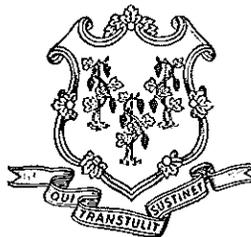


SENATOR BOB DUFF

MAJORITY LEADER

Twenty-fifth District
Norwalk & Darien



State of Connecticut

SENATE

State Capitol
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1591

Capitol: 860-240-8600

Home: 203-840-1333

Bob.Duff@cga.ct.gov

www.SenatorDuff.cga.ct.gov

**Testimony of Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff in Support of Senate Bill 227
AAC Cecil's Law
Environment Committee
March 4, 2016**

Senator Kennedy, Representative, Representative Albis, Senator Chapin, Representative Shaban and distinguished members of the Environment Committee, I am submitting testimony today in favor of Senate Bill 227, An Act Concerning Cecil's Law.

As many of you may remember, last summer an American dentist travelled to Africa and paid a significant amount of money for the experience of killing an endangered lion. Cecil was a beloved lion and local favorite who lived on a wildlife refuge in Zimbabwe. He was tracked with a special collar and studied for many years. Tourists loved him because he allowed humans to get close to him, sometimes as close as thirty feet. He was lured off of the refuge's property and then shot with an arrow. For forty hours a wounded Cecil was tracked until he was finally killed by the hunter. This incident brought to our attention the plight of many endangered species around the world. Cecil wasn't killed for food or any productive purpose, but as a trophy. His killing outraged America and led to the prosecution of the "guides." Unfortunately, of the sixty-two lions who were tagged as part of the same study as Cecil, twenty-four have been killed by hunters.

This bill would help protect endangered species by banning the importation, transportation and possession of certain African wildlife species and products. It does not seek to make criminals out of museums or residents in Connecticut who possess products from another era, when their procurement was acceptable. The bill is prospective only and has a mechanism in place to allow for the certification by the Commissioner of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection that an item was possessed prior to enactment of the bill.

Elephants, lions, leopards and rhinoceroses are beautiful animals. It is not sporting or acceptable in today's society to ambush and murder these amazing creatures. African nations are working to protect these species from extinction and this bill is a small step we can take to help them. I thank the committee for raising this concept and ask that you give the bill a favorable report. I look forward to working with you as this bill moves forward and am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.