

Dear Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

I am writing to you today to ask that you please support HB 5104, a bill that would ban the importation, possession, sale or transportation of the trophies of African giraffes, leopards, lions, elephants, black and white rhinos and their body parts throughout Connecticut.

From 2005 to 2016, over 100 licenses were issued to CT residents for hunting these animals and returning their body parts to CT. African Elephants, Lions, Leopards, Black Rhinoceros, White Rhinoceros and Giraffes are all considered endangered or threatened except for the giraffe, which is considered “vulnerable to extinction.”

The overwhelming majority of CT residents strongly support policies to save imperiled animals from needless slaughter, including trophy hunting, poaching and wildlife trafficking. HB 5104 provides Connecticut with the opportunity to do its part in protecting vulnerable species from egregious cruelty.

For many years, I have worked with numerous non-profit organizations to benefit and protect animals, and I am currently a District Leader for the Humane Society of the United States. I have seen a heartbreaking amount of unnecessary suffering of animals throughout the world caused by human greed and cruelty. To live as a compassionate society, we must embrace policies that will allow non-human animals to thrive. This is especially important given that human activities, including trophy hunting, encroachment upon animal habitats, and human-caused climate change continually reduce populations of wild animals and threaten the extinction of species.

The Committee passed a similar bill with overwhelming support last year. Thank you for that support and I urge the Committee to do the same this year.

Sincerely,

Julie Stankiewicz

Manchester, CT