



Testimony of  
Jo-Anne Basile, Executive Director  
CT Votes for Animals  
Before  
The Joint Committee on the Environment  
March, 3, 2021  
On

### **Supporting SB 925**

Senate Co-Chair Christine Cohen, House Co-Chair Dorinda Borer, Vice Chairs Senator Derek Slap, Representative Joseph Gresko, Ranking Members Senator Miner and Representative Stephan Harding, Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on the Environment.

#### **SB 925: AA Prohibiting the Import, Sale and Possession of African Wildlife.**

Connecticut Votes for Animals, an animal advocacy organization representing more than 5,500 CT residents, strongly support policies that involve Connecticut's participation in saving imperiled animals from needless slaughter, including trophy hunting, poaching and wildlife trafficking.

**Accordingly, CVA strongly supports SB 925 An Act Prohibiting the Import, Sale and Possession of African Elephants, Lions, Leopards, Black Rhinoceros, White Rhinoceros and Giraffes.**

“Trophy hunting,” the type of hunting targeted by this Act, is defined as killing wild animals for body parts but not primarily for food or sustenance. The parts, or whole pieces such as heads and antlers, are mostly used for home and office display and decoration. The activity is often fueled by competition where awards are granted for specific and voluminous kills across the globe. In the ten years ending 2014, US based hunters imported more than 1.26 million wildlife trophies. Between 2005 and 2014, trophies of 5,605 African lions were imported in the U.S., a shocking average of 560 per year.

CT does not have clean hands when it comes to the trophy business of hunting African Wildlife. In a similar timeframe, CT hunters were issued more than 100 hunting licenses by the USFWS for Africa's most majestic animals – lions, leopards, elephants and giraffe. According to Friends of Animals, between 2005- 2020, Connecticut residents killed 71 leopards, 39 lions and a giraffe. They also killed seven elephants. The USFWS considers all of the “Big Six” species (identified above) endangered or threatened except for the giraffe, which is now classed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as “vulnerable to extinction.”

Arguments that trophy hunting generates revenues for remote areas are flawed, as it has been estimated that a pittance, only 3%, of expenditures, actually -fund conservation or development. A lack of monitoring and enforcement in host countries, and the growing evidence that trophy hunting creates a legal market for poachers are all reasons to enact SB 925. African wildlife are the most vulnerable species on the brink of extinction. SB 925 allows Connecticut with the opportunity

to do its part in protecting vulnerable species from needless slaughter. CVA applauds the Committee's actions over the past two years when it overwhelmingly supported similar bills. CVA trusts your commitment remains strong and the Committee will once again act favourably on SB 925.

*To Anne Basile -*

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