

**From:** ashley prout **Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 5:16 PM  
**Subject:** [External] Please vote H.99 out of Committee on Thursday!

Dear Chair Sheldon, Vice Chair Lefebvre, and Esteemed Representatives,

We are aware that guns and knives were discussed today and may be added to H.99 as additional exemptions. It is my team's hope that the bill will retain its strength with the original wording which included existing exemptions of antiques at 200 grams or less AND musical instruments at 200 grams or less. *Adding additional items such as guns and knives opens the trade to new markets, expanding the trafficking and the killing.* It also is counter to the smart and strong laws of many, many states that have exemptions limited to antiques and musical instruments (as H.99 was written as of this morning). In no way do we wish to derail your amazingly diligent work and our 8 years of effort-- so if you must include these additions, please do so and please pass H.99 out of Committee. If there is room to get back to the wording of H.99 with just musical instruments and antiques, both at the 200 grams or less, this would be far and away our preference and the preference of thousands of **experts** around the world including Pat Bosco, a Special Agent with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for over 27 years, with his last 12 based in Vermont who stated the following in testimony he delivered to Vermont:

*"By closing legal loopholes, you also create awareness and help reduce demand.*

***The more ivory items circulate, the more interest it generates."***

NY and NJ don't have exemptions for knives and guns. Vermont shouldn't either. These animals have paid enough already- they shouldn't have to pay any more with additional markets profiting from their demise. ALSO, please note that as H.99 was written this morning, if the gun or knife is an antique and has less than 200 grams, it would be exempt anyway.

Thank you for hearing our simple consideration-- again with the larger request being no matter what you decide on the issue of guns and knives, that H.99 is PASSED out of Committee. Thank you for being a voice for the voiceless.

Thank you!  
Ashley P. McAvey  
VermontForWildlife and Partners

Last, I wanted to share these additional quotes:

Quotes from world-renowned experts pertaining to Vermont's role in the crisis:

"The only way to save elephants is to kill the demand for ivory. We must ban all buyers and traders in every country permanently if we are to save this magnificent species. State bans without any exemptions are critical to ending demand in the USA and to accelerating global awareness about the problem. We are hugely grateful for the support of the USA in saving Africa's elephants."

-Paula Kahumbu, Executive Director, WildlifeDirect

"Ivory buyers may not be directly killing elephants, but by not buying ivory, they can directly stop the killing of elephants. State by state bans are a critical means of crushing demand and saving elephants."

-Richard Leakey, Internationally renowned paleontologist and founder of WildlifeDirect

And this:

John Kerry Quote:

"Certainly, even if we aren't today thinking much about the global implications of poaching in Africa, I can guarantee that we will be if it goes unabated. How shockingly destructive and historically shameful it would be if we did nothing while a great species was criminally slaughtered into extinction. And yet, here we are in the midst of one of the most tragic and outrageous assaults on our shared inheritance that I've seen in my lifetime—where an elephant's dead ivory is prized over its living condition, where corruption feeds on its body and soul, and where money only makes matters worse." — senator John Kerry, Statement at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing on Ivory and Insecurity: The Global Implications of Poaching in Africa, May 24, 2012.

Ashley Prout McAvey MEM (Master of Environmental Management)  
[www.vermontforwildlife.org](http://www.vermontforwildlife.org)

