

From: Ashley Prout

Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 9:23 AM

Subject: [External] Testimony for H.99/S.29! PLEASE PASS THIS CRITICAL BILL!

Dear Chair Sheldon and Esteemed Representatives,

Please find testimony that I would like to submit in support of H.99/S.29. I and members from my all-volunteer team will be there today for the walk through and would be so grateful if you can please read this testimony when you are able-- much of it was delivered to you last year (and in 2015 and 2016) along with the vibrant voices of the kids of Vermont. Many kids have been championing this effort for years and sincerely hope you will hear them and pass this bill now! (I will be out of the country next week and have been fighting for this critical, critical legislation for 8 years now, which is all the more reason why I am so grateful to be present with you today). Thank you for your consideration as you do everything you can to move this forward in order to be on the right side of history.

As you know, this push here in Vermont against extinction has been going on for 8 years now and we have delivered testimony upon testimony from leading experts all around the world and Senators from NJ and on and on (*and our H.297 in 2016 passed the House 135-4 four years ago to this very day!*). Also, unlike last time, this time, the bill as introduced already has reasonable exemptions including those for all musical instruments and some antiques. Also, if it goes to a Senate Committee where it may be next heard, we know we have the votes there and support to get it out along with incredible support from Senate Champions standing with us including Sen. Chris Pearson who attended both of our hugely successful events this past fall- at Queen City Brewery and Main Street Landing. *This setting is vastly different than 2016.* And success can be seen!

The kids of Vermont (including Taegen Yardley of Stowe who received an award from *Prince William* this past spring (see photo below!) for these very efforts right here in VT sold cupcakes at the first event I ever pulled together which was a screening at UVM of *Battle for the Elephants* to a packed Ira Allen Chapel years and years ago when this all began) are so grateful that you are LISTENING to them. They have been marching, speaking out, writing, making art, testifying, and doing all they can for so long to get the attention of Montpelier and to see this pass. It is their future after all and it is important that they feel they not only have a voice, but that they are being HEARD through your action.

Your actions also matters to the nation and to the now TEN other states that have acted. That we stand with them. That we stand on the right side of this battle against extinction and that we are enlightened and we CARE about the consequence of our actions and of what happens thousands of miles away because of a trade that is freely happening right now in our own backyard. The connection is direct despite what those who profit from the trade may say. I have not ever received a single penny for my efforts- nor has anyone on my team. We fight for truth and justice for the voiceless-- both creature and the humans dying protecting the last species on earth.

If you have any questions at all, please contact me at either number below and I and members of my team will be truly grateful to have the chance to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you in advance for your time and action. We have no more time to lose.

Ashley P. McAvey

VermontForWildlife

Ashley Prout McAvey is a graduate in Environmental Biology of Yale College and a Master of Environmental Management (MEM) from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. She first visited Africa when she was 16 and saw first-hand the devastation of human greed on a continent and its wildlife. She immediately fell in love with the beauty of the people, place, and wildlife there and she hopes the movement to ban ivory sales and the sales of other imperiled wildlife parts at the state level will continue swiftly. She feels indebted to the men and women who have died protecting the continent's most majestic creatures and she is fueled by their sacrifice to spread awareness and action here in the United States, which is, sadly, still today one of the leading markets for ivory and other imperiled wildlife parts.





Please watch the kids' video here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=owySfvSbVXo&feature=emb_lo
[go](#)



[Stop the sale of endangered species in VT! - YouTube](#)

Opening quote: Jen Samuel Vermont Friends! Please take action and help stop the sale of imperiled wildlife! Stop extinction- it starts in Vermont! Join the 9 other states that have already taken

...

www.youtube.com

Also, please read my article here that outlines why state action is critical. We wanted VT to be the third. Now, TEN states have acted. Please help VT be #11!

[My article on why state action is KEY to stopping extinction:](#)

<https://medium.com/@tusktaskforce/seven-down-forty-three-to-go-975e8cc0dabe>



[Seven Down, Forty-three To Go - Tusk Task Force - Medium](#)

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medium.com

And take a look at this very sobering video about the death of the planet's last Northern White Rhino:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHvrKPi_tKs

And last, from





Is this what extinction looks like?

this photo shows the entire remaining population of the northern white rhino....both females. And yet, it is perfectly legal for us to buy and sell rhino horn in Vermont today? This is NOT right. Please help us join the now 10 other states that have taken action and said NO. Help Vermont be on the right side of history!

Ashley Prout McAvey MEM (Master of Environmental Management)