

From: Duane Merrill, Auctioneer & Appraiser, Past President Vermont Auctioneer Association & Past Advisor for the Office of the Professional Regulation.

Kyle Scanlon, President Vermont Antique Dealers Association

To: Vermont Legislature

Subject: H-99 Ivory Bill

The passage of H-99 as written without further amendment will not protect genuine antiques and historical objects. Takes Vermont from never having an illegal animal products case to the most extreme radical unnecessary disruptive legislation and most certainly doesn't create a reasonable antique exemption. It will do substantial economic damage to the Vermont antique business and destroy individual's significant investment in their collections rendering them valueless.

The antique business has suffered significant economic damage due to the pandemic. All antique shows have been cancelled. The important Brimfield Flea market has been cancelled. Leaving dealers and collectors with no place to sell. The Vermont antique dealers shops and antique centers that depend on tourists are devastated. Auctioneers are unable to hold public auctions putting seller's plans and estates in limbo. All leading to a disastrous 2020.

The sale of antique ivory is important. It could mean thousands of dollars in income to a dealer, collector or private Vermont citizens. The current world record at auction for a piece of American 19<sup>th</sup> folk art carved marine scrimshaw is over \$400,000.00 dollars and they're many examples.

If one uses a 2015 study by International Development Group (IDG) and applies it to Vermont it is fair to estimate 30,000 plus Vermont homes contain some form of ivory, remember thousand's of pieces have been made over the centuries.

The weights limit in H-99 on an antique or historical object is arbitrary and unreasonable. Just because a great antique or historical object is fat (over 200 grams 6 1/4 oz.) makes it illegal, valueless and could result in its destruction is ridiculous. The weight limit must be removed and keep the 100 year antique rule without any other qualifiers.

It should be noted that most recently the heads of both the Wadsworth Athenaeum and Mystic Seaport Museums have come out in strong support of the legal trade in genuine historical artifacts, antiques and works of art made of ivory or that contain ivory and they further stated it is critical in our efforts to preserve and maintain our shared cultural heritage.

The push to pass this damaging legislation during the pandemic is cruel. Please vote H-99 Down. It is the Right thing to do.