



## MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

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February 8, 2022

To: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

From: Lisa Radov, President and Chairman, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.

Re: Natural Resources – Wildlife Trafficking Prevention – SB 381 - Support

Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chairman Kagan, members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before to you today. My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chairman of Maryland Votes for Animals. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our members across Maryland, I respectfully request that the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee vote favorably for Natural Resources – Wildlife Trafficking Prevention – SB 381.

This bill prohibits the sale of parts or products from endangered or threatened wildlife from a list of species including elephants, giraffes, rhinoceros, and pangolins. While Federal law already prohibits the import of these parts or products and their sale across state lines, it is still legal within our state.

With Washington, DC, New Jersey, and New York having passed legislation protecting all or some of these animals, Maryland has become a hot spot for this illegal trade. Baltimore is a certified antiques port, so with nearby states and our nation's capital banning these sales, it puts pressure on our port and our state as these illegal items are coming into in Maryland.

Our state is no stranger to taking a stand to protect a species from these activities. In 2013, Maryland was the first state on the East Coast to pass a law banning shark finning. In 2017 and 2018, The Maryland legislature heard bills to ban wildlife trafficking that did not pass. Senator Smith was a co-sponsor of the Senate Bill with Senator Young. It is time for Maryland to take a similar step forward, not only to protect sharks as we did in 2013, but also to protect these endangered or threatened species whose numbers have declined precipitously in the past four years, fueled in part by illegal poaching and the continued trafficking of these wildlife parts.

I want to thank Senator Smith for his sponsorship of this important bill and urge this committee for a favorable report.

