

MARYLAND STATE BAR ASSOCIATION ANIMAL LAW SECTION

January 17, 2022

Delegate Kumar P. Barve, *Chair*
Delegate Mary Lehman
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 252
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Written Testimony of the Animal Law Section of the Maryland State Bar
HB 52: Wildlife Trafficking Prevention

Dear Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice-Chair, Delegate Lehman, and Members of the Committee:
The Maryland State Bar Association Animal Law Section is in support of HB52, a bill which establishes provisions relating to wildlife trafficking.

I. ZONOTIC DISEASE IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO WILDLIFE TRADE

We must first recognize that zoonotic disease transmission is directly related to the wildlife trade. By prohibiting intrastate trading of certain products derived from the wildlife trade, HB52 would improve biosecurity and biodiversity on a significant scale. HB52 also has far reaching possibilities to improve human health and prevent zoonotic disease outbreaks by prohibiting the trade of certain products sourced through wildlife trafficking.

II. FAILURE TO PROVIDE STATE LEGISLATION ON WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING WILL BE THE ACHILLES HEEL OF BIOSECURITY

We must also acknowledge the common goal of prioritizing biosecurity in supply chains sourced from wildlife trafficking, particularly during the time of COVID.

The limitations imposed by HB52 are reflective of national and global policy making directives. Maryland legislators must lock arms with other policy leaders to ensure that a gap in local legislation does not become the Achilles heel of pandemic biosecurity. Covid-19 has demonstrated that zoonotic disease transmission knows no boundaries, and Maryland must have security in place so that it cannot serve as a black market for the trafficking of wildlife products.

Thank you for the time and consideration that you have dedicated to this written testimony. The Maryland State Bar Association Animal Law Section is hopeful that you will vote in favor of HB 52.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/

Kimberly Fullerton

Immediate Past Chair

Maryland State Bar Association Animal Law Section