



FACT SHEET



H.R. 5052/S. 2587 Would Weaken the U.S. Response to Devastating Elephant Poaching

The Problem:

- Elephants are in crisis. It is estimated that more than 86,000 elephants have been poached since January 2012. If this killing rate continues, certain African elephant populations could be extinct within a decade.
- Poaching impacts not only elephant populations, but also human welfare. According to Born Free USA's report, *Ivory's Curse* (www.bornfreeusa.org/ivoryscurse), illegal ivory trafficking is exploited by transnational criminal networks that enable terrorism, weapons, and human trafficking, feeding devastating violence and instability in Africa.

Fish and Wildlife Service's Significant Response:

- As the second largest market for ivory in the world, the U.S. bears a significant responsibility to take action. By ending the trade of ivory within our nation, we can set a powerful precedent for the rest of the world to follow.
- The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is working to enact regulations to ban commercial elephant ivory trade in the U.S.
- This comprehensive ban is necessary because *all* ivory trade increases the demand for ivory and encourages poaching, particularly because it is so difficult to tell old ivory from new ivory. Exemptions for certain ivory pieces allow for the exploitation of these exemptions, and inevitably serve as a loophole for illegally trafficked ivory.
- Traveling musicians have been granted an exception to the rule for their musical instruments.

The Problematic Legislation:

- H.R. 5052/S. 2587 would severely weaken the new FWS rules. Some say that the FWS rules unfairly restrict the rights of those who legally own ivory in the U.S. However, this concern is unfounded. The rules *do not* inhibit anyone's right to continue owning ivory items.
- If the FWS regulations are weakened by H.R. 5052/S. 2587, we are simply moving back to square one, and elephants are not receiving the international assistance they require.

Oppose H.R. 5052/S. 2587 for the sake of elephants and African communities impacted by poaching!