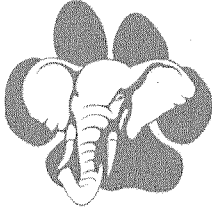


*The Nation's First  
Elephant Sanctuary*



**PAWS**  
PERFORMING ANIMAL  
WELFARE SOCIETY

Founded in 1984  
PROTECTION  
EDUCATION  
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June 4, 2017

The Honorable Tanya Chan, Chairman  
Environmental Affairs Panel  
Legislative Council

**Re: Support for ivory trade ban**

Dear Councillor Chan:

On behalf of the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) in California, I would like to express our full support for the proposed legislation to prohibit the import, export and possession of pre-Convention ivory for commercial purposes, and to increase penalties for wildlife crimes.

I am proud that California, which was the second largest market for ivory in the United States, passed legislation to prohibit ivory sales in the state. We did not provide any compensation for ivory traders (nor has any other law passed in the United States), and I urge you to reject any amendment that would suggest doing so in Hong Kong.

PAWS was formed in 1984 to rescue and care for abused, neglected or retired wild animals. We operate three captive wildlife sanctuaries in California, including ARK 2000, a 2,300-acre natural habitat refuge where we care for eight elephants, among other animals.

PAWS is recognized internationally for its expertise in the care and management of captive wildlife. I serve on the Director's Advisory Committee on the Humane Care and Treatment of Wild Animals for the California Department of Fish & Wildlife, and the Advisory Committee for the Detroit Zoological Society's Center for Zoo Animal Welfare. Our advocacy for elephants extends to those in the wild, where we support anti-poaching efforts in Africa.

After working with elephants for more than 30 years, and getting to know them as I have, I cannot imagine the horror that individual elephants and their families endure when under attack by poachers who mercilessly slaughter both young and old for their tusks. The insidious trade in ivory is not just about species or populations, it concerns individual elephants who maintain intricate familial connections, possess complex systems of communication, and who are empathetic and self-aware – making their physical and psychological suffering all the more devastating.

Nearly 100 elephants are killed each day in Africa. They are gunned down or poisoned and stripped of their tusks or horns for costly trinkets and symbols of social status. Unless action is taken now, these iconic animals are headed toward extinction.

We have a responsibility to do all that we can to stop the destruction of elephants and ensure their existence on the planet for years to come. The proposed ivory trade ban is critical to that effort and has our full support.

Sincerely,

Ed Stewart  
President and Co-founder, PAWS