



SCIL
Social Compassion
in Legislation

October 6, 2018
PRESS RELEASE

California Governor Vetoes Bill Banning the Possession of 11 Iconic African Species

SACRAMENTO, CA—Governor Jerry Brown vetoed Senate Bill 1487, the Iconic African Species Protection Act, authored by Senator Henry Stern on September 30th. Sponsored by animal advocacy group, Social Compassion in Legislation (SCIL), the bill that would have banned the possession of any dead body part of an African elephant, African lion, leopard, black or white rhinoceros, giraffe, Jentink's duiker, plains zebra, mountain zebra, hippopotamus, and striped hyena throughout the state. Despite exemptions carved out for articles that were already possessed in the state at the time of enactment or if possessed by a bona fide education or scientific institution, the Governor felt the bill would be unenforceable.

"The tragic loss of the world's last male Northern White Rhino earlier this year served as a grim reminder that once a species is gone, it's gone," remarked Senator Stern. "I am disappointed the governor did not sign SB 1487. We will continue fighting with every tool at our disposal to prevent the hunting and poaching of dwindling wild animal populations."

"We disagree with Governor Brown's assessment that the bill is unenforceable," stated Judie Mancuso, founder and president of SCIL. "The author went to great lengths to appease the concerns regarding enforcement, and the bill was crafted in consultation with the legal departments of several internationally renowned organizations to ensure the bill would withstand any legal challenge."

"Obviously we're disappointed with the veto, as the law was carefully crafted to be easily enforceable and likely to survive the inevitable court challenge by its opponents. We remain hopeful that a similar bill will eventually become law and end California's complicity in the cruel and unsustainable exploitation of some of the most endangered and iconic animals on earth," said Brendan Cummings, Conservation Director of the Center for Biological Diversity.

Much of the discussion surrounding the bill has centered around the lack of evidence that trophy hunting contributes to the conservation of species in Africa, but advocates say the bill would have also sent a message about the mass extinction occurring the world over. "The earth is currently experiencing the 6th great extinction period due to human causes," said Nickolaus Sackett, Director of Legislative Affairs for SCIL. "We cannot afford half-measures any longer. Every jurisdiction must do its part to save animals everywhere."

Social Compassion in Legislation (SCIL) is a 501(c)4 nonprofit political advocacy organization that has been a vanguard voice sponsoring landmark legislation since its founding in 2007. SCIL's mission is to advance protections of all animals via the legislative process.

###