



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1200-2019, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1200

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.7556/S.4325, the Big Five African Trophies Act, relating to banning the importation, transportation and possession of certain African wildlife species and products.

By Council Members Powers, Levine and Holden

Whereas, New York State bills A.7556/S.4325, if enacted, would prohibit the sale, import, and possession of any parts of the skin or body of African Elephants, African Leopards, African Lions, Black Rhinoceroses and White Rhinoceroses, collectively referred to as the "Big Five"; and

Whereas, According to the Red List, compiled by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and considered the world's most comprehensive data-set on species conservation, all of the Big Five animals are categorized as either near threatened, vulnerable to becoming endangered or critically endangered; and

Whereas, Unfortunately, the scarcity of these animals makes them particularly sought-after by trophy hunters and poachers; and

Whereas, The largest hunting organization, the U.S.-based Safari Club International (SCI), holds competitions to encourage the killing of the Big Five animals; and

Whereas, For example, SCI gives awards to people who have killed one of each of the Big Five animals, while the winner of the highest award - World Hunter of the Year - must kill more than 300 animals across the globe; and

Whereas, Hunters covet access to the Big Five animals to participate in such competitions, and information collected by the Humane Society states that trophy hunters can pay up to \$150,000 for the

opportunity to hunt a White Rhinoceros; and

Whereas, Hunts for the other Big Five animals also range in the tens of thousands of dollars; and

Whereas, Despite the cost, Big Five animal hunting is a booming tourist industry, and globally the United States is the most frequent importer of animal trophies, according to a 2016 report from the House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee; and

Whereas, According to data from the Humane Society, 14,456 animal trophies from the Big Five were imported into the United States; and

Whereas, Nationally, the top port of entry for these trophies and animal parts is New York City; and

Whereas, Of the 14,456 Big Five trophies imported into the United States between 2005 and 2014, more than a quarter were imported through New York City; and

Whereas, Last year, the federal government eased restrictions on the import of trophies from the Big Five and other animals; and

Whereas, Conversely, the New York City Council has made animal protections a key priority; and,

Whereas, For example, the City Council recently enacted a package of bills that provide various animals protections; and

Whereas, Part of the package included legislation to create an Office of Animal Welfare - making New York City the first city in the Country to establish this kind of dedicated office; and

Whereas, Clearly, the issue of animal welfare is of key concern to the residents of New York City; and

Whereas, As the top port of entry for Big Five trophies, New York City is uniquely positioned to restrict, and potentially reduce the demand for, such imports; and

Whereas, These restrictions would also reflect the concerns that the City's residents have regarding the welfare of animals; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass,

and the Governor to sign, A.7556/S.4325, the Big Five African Trophies Act, relating to banning the importation, transportation and possession of certain African wildlife species and products.

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