



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Monica R. Martinez

Senator Monica R. Martinez Passes Legislation Protecting Vulnerable Species

MONICA R. MARTINEZ April 30, 2019

| ISSUE: **S5098**

(Albany, NY) On April 30, 2019, Senator Monica R. Martinez passed Senate Bill S5098, which requires the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to designate at-risk species as vulnerable and prohibit the sale of articles made from any part of a vulnerable species in the State of New York.

An alarming number of species across the globe are at risk of becoming endangered due to climate change, overexploitation, poaching and the illegal wildlife trade. By prohibiting the sale or possession of anything made in whole or in part of a vulnerable species in New York, we are taking another step in the right direction when it comes to safeguarding at-risk species and our environment. This bill was inspired by the recent classification of two giraffe subspecies as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, with their population plummeting by a devastating 40% between 1985 and 2016, leaving less than 100,000 remaining today.

“Protecting endangered vulnerable species is a priority of this state’s legislature, considering the federal government has been slow to designate species as “endangered,” despite ample evidence and petitions for change. New York will continue to be a leader in protecting our environment and our most vulnerable populations who cannot advocate for themselves,”

stated Senator Martinez.

“Wild animal populations worldwide and the ecosystems where they live are under unprecedented pressure. For example, Africa’s giraffe populations have plunged nearly 40 percent over the past 30 years due to habitat loss, poaching, and trophy hunting. This bill gives the New York State DEC the power to provide additional protections for such animals by designating them as vulnerable species and by prohibiting the sale of any article made in whole or in part of the skin, hide, or other parts of the species.” Stated Assemblyman Steve Englebright, the Assembly Sponsor of this legislation.

“The Humane Society of the United States applauds Senator Martinez and Assemblymember Englebright for sponsoring legislation aimed at protecting vulnerable wildlife species,” said Brian Shapiro, New York State Director for the HSUS. “Passage of this legislation ensures stronger enforcement here in New York for many nearly extinct species not protected under federal law.”

###