

THE RELIEF ACT

THE ISSUE

In 2008, Congress amended a century-old environmental law, the Lacey Act, to protect foreign rare plant and wood species.

THE RESULT

It's now illegal for musicians to travel with antique instruments containing rare wood unless they can provide documentation that every piece of the wood used was harvested legally.

"A well-meaning law to save rare woods basically makes it illegal to travel with an old guitar. Any wooden instrument must have documentation of the genus and weight of every type of component wood-impossible given that antique fretted instruments are constructed from several types (my oldest dates to 1868-good luck finding documentation on that). A solution: make antiques exempt. Other import-export quirks surely have similar fixes."

- Vince Gill, *Newsweek's Daily Beast*, 4/10/11

THE FIX

Rep. Jim Cooper (D-Tenn.) introduced the RELIEF Act with Reps. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) and Mary Bono Mack (R-Calif.), a surgical fix to the law ensuring that we can have healthy forests and legal guitars.

- **Exempts** products, like guitars and antiques, that were built before May 22, 2008
- **Eliminates** declarations for international travel of instruments (unless purpose is for sale)
- **Guarantees** that instruments will not be treated as contraband if the owner exercised due care

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Kenneth "Big Kenny" Alphin
Jeff Baxter
Alison Brown
Rosanne Cash
Vince Gill
Nanci Griffith
Ricky Skaggs
American Federation of Musicians

Grand Ole Opry
Gruhn Guitars
League of American Orchestras
Nashville Chamber of Commerce
National Audubon Society
National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM)
National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)
National Songwriters Association
Taylor Guitars
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

(partial list)

"From the perspective of guitar players, collectors and lovers of old instruments, I wholeheartedly support this bill." -**Vince Gill**

"The RELIEF Act protects us from an overreaching and punitive law that affects touring musicians with fine instruments, and could devastate our ability to make a living on the road." —**Rosanne Cash**

This bill "represents a reasonable bi-partisan compromise" to correct "unintended outcomes" of the 2008 Amendments to the Lacey Act —**Bart Herbison, Executive Director, National Songwriters Association**

NAMM's goal is to "make positive changes to the Lacey Act that will preserve not only the world's forests, but the vital work of U.S. manufacturing and commerce in the music products industry—and we believe the new RELIEF Act moves us closer to achieving this goal." —**Joe Lamond, President & CEO, NAMM**

JOIN OUR EFFORTS

- **Lend your name** to the list of supporters.
- **Send us a statement** of support.
- **Tell your friends** and fans about the RELIEF Act.