

CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 4()

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

Offered:

Referred:

Sponsor(s): SENATORS OLSON, Gardner, Begich, Stedman, Bishop, Egan

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to pass legislation providing for the exemption of**
2 **legally acquired walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory from laws that ban the sale, use,**
3 **and possession of ivory.**

4 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 **WHEREAS** the Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1361 - 1423h) explicitly
6 protects the right of coastal Alaska Natives to harvest walrus and use the walrus byproducts in
7 handicrafts for sale in the United States; and

8 **WHEREAS** the use by Alaska Natives of legally acquired walrus, mammoth, and
9 mastodon ivory to create tools, handicrafts, jewelry, and artwork is a longstanding tradition
10 that is a vital component of current Alaska Native culture; and

11 **WHEREAS** non-Native individuals in the state use legally acquired mammoth ivory
12 to make handicrafts, jewelry, and artwork; and

13 **WHEREAS** the sale of walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory tools, handicrafts,
14 jewelry, and artwork by Alaska artists is an important source of income in the cash-limited
15 economy of rural Alaska; and

1 **WHEREAS**, in the effort to stop the poaching of African elephants, certain states in
2 the United States have passed laws banning the sale, use, and possession of all ivory, and
3 other states are considering enacting those laws; and

4 **WHEREAS** the laws banning the sale, use, and possession of ivory in certain states of
5 the United States do not distinguish between African elephant ivory and the legally acquired
6 walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory used by Alaska artists; and

7 **WHEREAS** the laws banning the sale, use, and possession of ivory may subject
8 residents of certain states to criminal charges for buying, owning, or bringing home legally
9 acquired walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory items from Alaska; and

10 **WHEREAS** the laws banning the sale, use, and possession of ivory in certain states
11 adversely affect those Alaska artists who depend on the sale of ivory handicrafts to obtain the
12 cash necessary to live in cash-limited local economies;

13 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature opposes the inclusion of legally
14 acquired walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory in current and future laws that ban the sale,
15 use, and possession of ivory; and be it

16 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests that the United
17 States Congress pass legislation providing for the exemption of legally acquired walrus,
18 mammoth, and mastodon ivory from current and future laws that ban the sale, use, and
19 possession of ivory.

20 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President
21 of the United States; the Honorable Michael R. Pence, Vice President of the United States and
22 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the U.S. House of
23 Representatives; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of
24 Representatives; the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the
25 Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; and the Honorable Lisa
26 Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young,
27 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.