

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sponsor Statement Senate Joint Resolution 4

States like New York, California, Hawaii, and Washington have passed legislation and voter initiatives trying to curtail the illegal poaching of African elephants. Some consequences from their language prohibits the purchase or possession of all ivory: legally obtained walrus ivory, legally obtained mastodon ivory, legally obtained mammoth ivory; in addition to the Africa-based, endangered wildlife.

Since it does not add to the poaching of endangered species, this language in state legislation poses a negative consequence on rural Alaska residents who legally obtain ivory through a byproduct of subsistence. In addition, many who subsist, use byproducts like ivory to provide additional cash income in some of the most impoverished areas of the state. If state legislation continues with no federal clarification or legislation, individuals in New York, California, Hawaii, and Washington will continue to face harsh punishments for purchasing Alaskan made ivory, further limiting Alaskans' customer base.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution to show Alaska's support for our artists who handicraft legally obtained walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory.