

**KAWERAK, INC. • P.O. Box 948 • Nome, AK 99762**



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SERVING THE  
VILLAGES OF:  
BREVIG MISSION  
COUNCIL  
DIOMEDE  
ELIM  
GAMBELL  
GOLOVIN  
KING ISLAND  
KOYUK  
MARY'S IGLOO  
NOME  
SAVOONGA  
SHAKTOOLIK  
SHISHMAREF  
SOLOMON  
STEBBINS  
ST. MICHAEL  
TELLER  
UNALAKLEET  
WALES  
WHITE MOUNTAIN

March 28, 2017

Alice Bioff  
P.O. Box 862  
Nome, Alaska 99762

Public Testimony Given to the Community and Regional Affairs Committee

SJR 4 - Senate Joint Resolution No. 4

Position: **SUPPORT**

Dear Honorable Committee Chair and Committee members,

My name is Alice Bioff, resident of Nome, Alaska, currently employed at Kawerak, Inc. and an Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA) council member. Thank you all for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Joint Resolution #4. I am a tribal member of the Native Village of Koyuk, and grew up there and in Nome. My family and I have lived in Nome for the last 17 years. For much of that time, I have been employed by Kawerak, Inc., the regional Native non-profit consortium of tribes for the Bering Strait region, as a Business Planning Specialist.

Through our work here at Kawerak, I am honored and privileged to work with artist entrepreneurs within our communities. We provide direct technical assistance offering tools and resources to assist artists continue their work so that they can sustain themselves, their families and their communities.

Walrus Ivory harvested during subsistence hunting is one of the main materials Artist Entrepreneurs in our region use to carve into unique traditional artwork that has been recognized for its amazing craftsmanship throughout the world.

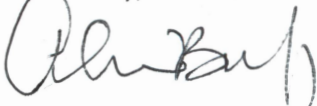
Artist Entrepreneurs are economic development drivers in their communities. I see firsthand the economic impact of selling ivory has in our communities. But most importantly how the arts and crafts keep our traditional practices alive and strong, beautiful work being passed down from one generation to the next. Our art is weaved into who we are as indigenous people and having access to the materials to continue that art is vital. I support this resolution. It would be a shame to see our ability to sell

ivory collapse because of a lack of understanding of a culture that is unique and special with a history of customary traditions and ability to live with nature and ability to successfully self-manage a resource such as walrus. Please educate those who do not understand.

This resolution is an important step in advocating and protecting the inherent rights of each and every one of our tribal members. Our ability to harvest and use the bi-products of the animals we hunt and sustain our families is crucial. Thank you Senators Olson, Garner, Begich, Stedman, Bishop and Egan for bringing this resolution forward.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony, and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at, (907) 443- 4366 or email me at [bp.spec@kawerak.org](mailto:bp.spec@kawerak.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alice Bioff', written over a horizontal line.

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