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(7)

Date Referred: March 6, 1992

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT  
FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 4/6/92

The JUDICIARY Committee considered:

HB 532

HOUSE BILL NO. 532

LABELING OF ALASKA ARTS/HANDICRAFTS

"An Act relating to the labeling of reproductions of art and handicrafts made by state residents."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

be replaced with CS HB 532 (JUDICIARY)  the same title  
 a new title

have attached amendments(s)

do pass

do not pass

no recommendations

individual recommendations

additional referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

ADOPTS: \_\_\_\_\_ letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S): \_\_\_\_\_ (Dept)

APPROVES PREVIOUS: \_\_\_\_\_ (Dept/Date)

fiscal impact \_\_\_\_\_

fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

zero fiscal note \_\_\_\_\_

zero fiscal note(s) Commerce & Econ. Dev. 3-6-92

SIGNING <u>DO</u> PASS	DP	<u>OTHER</u> RECOMMENDATIONS	DNP	NR	AM
<i>Kevin P. Farrell</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<i>Larry Martin</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<i>John G. Ellis</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<i>John H. Gresham</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<i>Mark Hedley</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

*David D. Onley*  
CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
 1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Revision Date: 3/3/92 Department Affected: Commerce & Econ. Dev.  
 Title: An Act relating to the labeling of reproduc- BRU: Economic Development  
tions of arts and handicrafts made by state residents Component: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor: Representative Hanley  
 Requestor: Representative Hanley

COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 

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EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0
CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
REVENUE FUND RESOURCE:	0	0	0	0	0	0

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year Impact: \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYSIS (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared By: Tina L. D. Long, Rural Development Coordinator Phone: 465-2017  
 Division: Economic Development Date: 3/3/92  
 Approved by Commissioner: Glenn A. Olds  
 Agency: Department of Commerce & Economic Development Date: 3/3/92

Distribution (by preparer): Leg. Fin., Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB/DBR, Gov. Legis. Ofc., and Impacted Agency(ies).

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. CSHB 532

Revision Date: 3/3/92

Department Affected: Commerce & Econ. Dev.

Title: An Act relating to the labeling of reproduc-  
tions of arts and handicrafts made by state residents

BRU: Economic Development

Component: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor: Representative Hanley

Requestor: Representative Hanley

COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 

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EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

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LAND & STRUCTURES						
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TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
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REVENUE FUND RESOURCE:	0	0	0	0	0	0
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year impact: \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYSIS (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared By: Tina L. D. Long, Rural Development Coordinator

Phone: 465-2017

Division: Economic Development

Date: 3/3/92

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Page 1 of 1



**Representative Mark Hanley**  
**Alaska State Legislature**

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Rep. Dave Donley, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Rep. Mark Hanley *MH*

RE: Hearing request for CS House Bill 532 (L & C), "An Act relating to the labeling of reproductions of art and handicrafts made by state residents."

DATE: March 4, 1992

This memo is to respectfully request a hearing in the House Judiciary Committee on CS HB 532 (L&C) at your earliest possible convenience. The bill passed out of the Labor and Commerce Committee today and should be read across on Friday, March 6th. (The committee report has been included in the folder for your convenience.)

CS HB 532 (L&C) is intended to protect the integrity of Alaska made arts and crafts. It simply requires that reproductions of Alaskan arts and crafts be labeled as such.

Currently reproductions of Alaskan arts and crafts are often produced outside the state by non-Alaskans and sold as original Alaska art. The reproductions compete unfairly with true original Alaskan arts and crafts and are sold at lower prices.

I would appreciate your consideration on scheduling this bill for a hearing as promptly as possible.

Thank you



# **Representative Mark Hanley**

## **Alaska State Legislature**

### **SPONSOR STATEMENT**

CS HB 532 (L&C)

by Representative Mark Hanley

CS HB 532 (L&C) "Relating to the labeling of reproductions of art and handicrafts made by state residents; and providing for an effective date.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on CS HB 532 (L&C).

House Bill 532 is a straight forward bill which will help protect the value and integrity of Alaska made arts and crafts. The bill simply requires that reproductions of Alaskan arts be labeled as such and defines the word "reproduction". Section 2 of the bill provides for an effective date.

It's estimated the native art market brings in as much as \$800 million a year. In Alaska, our growing tourism industry has lead to a strong market for native art.

The problem is that not all of this art is the authentic work of Alaskan artists. Currently, reproductions of Alaskan arts and crafts are often produced outside the state by non-Alaskans and sold as original Alaska art. The reproductions de-value and compete unfairly with true original Alaskan arts and crafts.

I would appreciate your support of HB 532. I'll be happy to answer any questions you have.

# HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date Referred: February 18, 1992

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Judiciary

Date of Committee Action: 2-4-92

The LABOR AND COMMERCE Committee considered:

HB 532

HOUSE BILL NO. 532

LABELING OF ALASKA ARTS/HANDICRAFTS

"An Act relating to the labeling of reproductions of art and handicrafts made by state residents."

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

be replaced with CSHB 532 (L+C)  the same title

a new title

have attached amendments(s)

do pass

do not pass

no recommendations

individual recommendations

additional referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

ADOPTS: \_\_\_\_\_ letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S): (Dept) \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Dept/Date) \_\_\_\_\_

fiscal impact \_\_\_\_\_

fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

zero fiscal note Commerce

zero fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNING <u>DO PASS</u>	DP	<u>OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS</u>	DNP	NR	AM
<i>Henry J. P... -</i>	✓				
<i>Ken Nelson</i>	✓				
<i>E. Buckner</i>	✓				
<i>James D...</i>	✓				
<i>Albin Taylor</i>	✓				
<i>Carl ...</i>	✓				

*Paul ...*  
CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE

CSHB 532: "An Act relating to the labeling and reproductions of arts and handicrafts made by state residents."

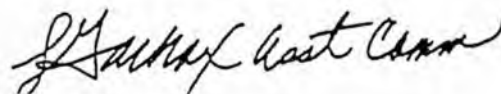
An article dated June 24, 1991, in the Tundra Times entitled "Native Artists Want Fair Dealings" expressed the views of artists and carvers as believing "the counterfeit market is a sizable one." The article's subheading stated: "Native artists want counterfeiting stopped." There have been other informal reports of authentic pieces of arts and handicrafts being reproduced without the artist's permission.

CSHB 532 addresses the problem by requiring reproductions to be clearly labeled by the manufacturers, wholesalers, and/or retailers.

The intent of this legislation is to reduce unauthorized reproductions of pieces of art or handicrafts made by Alaska residents and to ensure consumers know when they are purchasing reproductions rather than authentic originals.

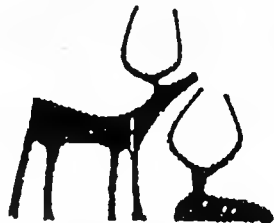
All reproductions, other than those reproduced by the original artist, will have to be clearly labeled prior to wholesale, or retail trade. A penalty of up to one year in jail or \$1,000 fine may be imposed for violations. The legislation is passive in that no active monitoring of compliance is provided. The bill provides a basis for legal action by the original artists or those who believe they have been harmed by the unauthorized duplication of the commercially traded art or handicraft object. Costs of labeling will be borne by the industry.

The Department of Commerce and Economic Development supports CSHB 532.



Glenn A. Olds, Commissioner

Date: 3.2.92



March 2, 1992

Representative Mark Hanley  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: House Bill No. 532

Dear Representative Hanley:

Currently you are sponsoring legislation regarding the reproduction of art and/or handicrafts by residents of Alaska. This act would provide protection for many Native and non-Native artists who sell their work at a very low price to a company that then reproduces the work for huge profits - none of course going to the artist(s) involved.

I whole heartedly support your legislation - House Bill No. 532. I believe this would offer a certain amount of protection, but it also raises the level of awareness of the situation. Your concern over Alaskan artists is to be applauded; thank you for your recognition of this great Alaskan resource and your willingness to protect it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maria Williams". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Maria Williams  
Native Arts Director

**Alaska State Council on the Arts**

411 West 4th Avenue, Suite 1E, Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2343 (907) 279-1558 Fax: (907) 279-4330



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2 March 1992

Representative Mark Hanley  
Alaska State House of Representatives

Dear Rep. Hanley:

I am so pleased to see that Angie Larson's concern has made such progress. The introduction of your House Bill No. 532 to label reproductions and handicrafts has been a shady area for too long. As the manager of the Anchorage Museum Shop I work everyday with Alaska Native artists and it's time to protect the wonderful work they are creating.

Last week I sent to Michelle Toohy literature from the Canadian government which protects their Inuit artists. This method also serves as an educational tool which gives further credibility to the work. A viewer or collector now has authenticity of a work they admired.

What is happening is that people are reproducing an artist's work and marking it as the real thing. Often putting back on the work the name of the artist who originated the idea. Most reputable businesses gladly mark reproductions, but there seems to be an influx into Alaska of work that appears to be Alaska Native, but is carved often outside by nonNative folks.

Again, I thank you for moving ahead with this legislation and offer any support you need. Travellers to Alaska come to our Shop knowing that we have integrity and I would like to know that wherever they shop they return with the real spirit of Alaska.

Sincerely,

*Georgia Blue*  
Georgia Blue  
Shop Manager

Anchorage Museum Shop

121 West Seventh Avenue • Anchorage, AK 99501

(907) ~~264-4326~~

343-6195 FAX 343-6149

St.Lawrence Island Original Ivory  
Co-op,Ltd.  
P.O.Box 189  
Gambell,Alaska 99742-0189  
(907)985-5112

Feb.28,1992

The Honorable Mark Hanley  
State Capital  
Juneau,Alaska 99801-1182

MAR - 2 1992

Dear Mark:

This letter is in regards to HB#532 which you  
Have already introduced in the legislation on 2/18/92.

As a manager of the Ivory Co-op in Gambell,I  
am in support of your bill HB#532 in order to protect  
the art works of the individual native artist and other  
artists here in the State of Alaska.

I have with me on hand a reproduction of an  
art work that was reproduced in Kenai,Alaska in a form  
of Porcelain material. This piece of art work was reproduced  
without permission from the original artist and is now  
in mass production. This piece was made by local carver.

I Will look forward for your respond in matter  
and again thank for introducing this bill, Good-luck.

Sencereely,

*Clement Ungott*  
Clement Ungott (Manager)

St.Lawrence Island Original Ivory  
Co-op,Ltd.

cc; Senator Frank Murkowski  
Senator Ted Stevens  
Senator Al Adams  
Rep. Richard Foster

465-2294

Village Crafts  
P. O. Box 141191  
Anchorage, Alaska 99514-1191  
March 2, 1992

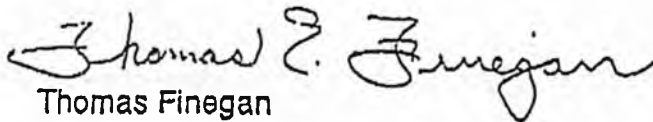
Representative Hanley  
Juneau, Alaska

Representative Hanley:

Re: C S H. B. 532

I strongly support C S H B 532. I am in the business of selling Alaska Native made arts and crafts and have been doing so about sixteen years. I am presently concerned with arts and craft items coming into Alaska from Seattle and other areas that duplicate original art work that is produced by Alaskan artists.

Sincerely,



Thomas Finegan  
Owner, Village Crafts

*Alaskan Treasures*

1018 E. Dimond, Ste. 514  
Anchorage, AK 99515

(907) 248-2923

March 2, 1992

Representative Mark Hanley  
The State Capitol  
Juneau, AK. 99801-1182

Dear Sir:

The purpose of this letter is to let you know we support HB532. We have been Alaskan Native Art Brokers for 13 years and during that time we have witnessed many reproductions being made for resale. In many cases the imitations even carried the name of the original artist. Materials used for these reproductions were the same as the originals or something that looked very similar. Unless the customer was specially trained, it would be easily mistaken for the authentic.

Thousands of dollars are made each year from these reproductions and many are imported from other states and even foreign countries. The business for illegitimate works of art are so lucrative that there is now small factories to meet the demands.

Alaskans need to preserve their integrity, show we appreciate and value our true artisans and certainly not deceive our tourists (From Oct. 90 - Sept. 91, we had 907,000 visitors.).

Plagiarism in other forms is illegal, this kind of piracy is no different! Please let Alaskan Artisans know you care by protecting their rights.

Sincerely,



Fred and Angie Larson  
Alaskan Treasures

*Alaskan Treasures*

*1013 E. Dimond, Ste. 514*

*Anchorage, AK 99515*

*(907) 248-2323*

*March 1, 1992*

Ms. Michele Toohey  
c/o Rep. Mark Hanley  
The State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182  
(907) 465-4939

Dear Michele:

Enclosed is an original and a copy. Note the copy even has the original artist's name (copy is the small owl, original is the large owl).

When purchasing this copy I pretended it was a gift and I needed to know a little about the artist. The sales clerk said it was done by an Eskimo from Alaska that had visited Seattle and carved for her gallery. Note that she didn't spell his name correctly on the paper.

I spoke to Mr. Tom Antaghame, Gambell AK, telephone 985-5612, and he verified that he did not carve for these people and hadn't been in Seattle since about 1971. He will testify if you need him.

I would appreciate if you could return these items and documents when you are through with them. Again I thank you for all your help.

Sincerely,

*Angie*

Angie Larson  
Alaskan Treasures

3/1/92

Rep. Mark Hanley  
Juneau, AK. 99801

Dear Mr. Hanley,

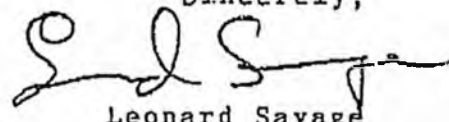
My name is Leonard Savage, I am an artist born and raised in Alaska. I have been in the ivory carving business for seventeen years. My work is sold throughout the U.S. and Alaska.

For many years I have been aware of ivory carvings and other artworks that were manufactured out of our state and being sold in Alaska as "presumed" Alaskan made items. There have been duplications of my artwork and I believe of other persons work also. Some do not have signatures or have fictitious names of non-existent persons.

While I believe in the free enterprize system this type of business practice is very wrong and it should be stopped. The people that visit our state each year need our protection, we must also protect the craftspeople that live and work in Alaska.

I believe that every imported piece of artwork coming into the state should be labeled somehow to show its place of origin. The tourists come to Alaska and look for souvineers that are made by Alaskan artists and they should be able to make an honest choice.

Thank you,  
Sincerely,



Leonard Savage

415 2 St.  
Anchorage AK 99501

NATIVE VILLAGE OF GAMBELL  
P.O. BOX 99  
GAMBELL, ALASKA 99742-0099  
(907) 985-5346 FAX: 985-5014

March 2, 1992

Representative Mark Hanley  
State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Hanley;

The Native Village of Gambell, IRA Council is in support of the House Bill No. 532 - Sale of Reproductions, which you introduced in February of this year.

Many of the residents of Gambell are solely dependent on handicrafts, and the mass reproduction that is occurring is hurting mostly our ivory and bone carvers.

Therefore, we support House Bill 532, and have all reproduction of handicrafts made by state residents labeled as such. Thank you

Sincerely,

Gerard Koonooka, President



cc: Representative Richard Foster  
Senator Al Adams

Transcription of Alaska Public Radio Story on the problem of reproductions of Alaska Native Art: Thursday, October 17, 1991

Native Art Fraud... How wide-spread is it and what can be done to stop it?

Coming up next on Alaska News Nightly, Native Art Fraud, Counterfeit Native Alaska Art, it's a problem sometimes hard to detect and often hard to combat.

It's estimated that the arts and crafts of Native Americans bring in as much as \$800 million dollars a year in this country. Here in Alaska a growing tourism industry has lead to a strong market for native art, but how much of it is really native? And how can consumers be sure what they're buying isn't a counterfeit knock-off? Doreen Ransom reports on the problems involved with spotting and fighting native art fraud.

There's a story that's been circulating among dealers of Alaska Native Carvings for the past few years. They say an Asian man and his associate came to the Anchorage area and bought a number of pieces of native carvings. That was taken to Seattle where it's reproduced in a factory. No one knew quite where this so-called factory was, but the work of ivory carver Eddie Stingoff (?) pointed the way.

Anchorage trader Tom Finnegan saw what appeared to be a copy of the work of Inupiat ivory carver, Eugene Tialana, in the display window of the Denali National Park Hotel. He also saw a piece like Tialana's in the Alaska Ivory Exchange in Anchorage. The artist has signed the named Eddie Stingoff, the shop owner acknowledged the piece was by a non-native.

Finnegan didn't know the piece was the work of the Seattle shop where he'd also seen a soapstone carving by a so-called Junior Snooklow of St. Lawrence Island (?). Finnegan says on two occasions at that shop named, Northwest Tribal Art, he was handed a sheet of paper describing the artist. "And I just said you know this is fraudulent, I said I know everybody on St. Lawrence Island, there's no such person there, and it was almost like he would have taken back the sheet, except I withdrew it and put it into my pocket." Finnegan's experiences represent just a few of the wide-spread abuses that are siphoning off the potential earnings of legitimate native artists and duping art collectors. The Snooklow work made its way as far as a well-respected East Coast Gallery where the manager found out to her chagrin that there is no soapstone and there are no soapstone carvers on St. Lawrence Island. With fewer than a thousand people on the island, it seemed obvious to several of those interviewed including Yupik Ivory Carver, Jr. Slokow, that is was Slokow's name that was being exploited.

The Vietnamese owner of the Seattle shop, Knock Lee, declined to take interviews. He did admit, however that the works of Eddie

Singah are created by himself and a team of non-native artists. Lee says he sees nothing wrong with what he's doing, "Does it have to be tribal people to be tribal art, he asks." As for the works of the so-called Jr. Snooklow, Lee says he doesn't know who did them and he doesn't carry the works any more. Jr. Slowkow says he regrets that someone's been treading on his name, particularly because it hurts customers and Eugene Tialana is willing to describe how his work might be distinguished from copies, but nobody is eager to take any action.

Athabascan artist, Leonard Savage might have taken action, but he said his proof slipped away. Savage said he saw a small ivory wolf, which he initially took to be his own work last winter in the Alaska Fur Exchange in Anchorage. "I saw one of my ivory wolves made out of fossil ivory, and I don't carve fossil ivory, I took a closer look at it and it was exactly the same as the one I make, but it wasn't mine, I questioned the people about it and they said they had bought it from some people out of Seattle and they wouldn't tell me who it was.

Today the Anchorage shop still carries Savage's work, but about a 10th of what they did before he saw the apparent copy. Savage said local dealers have told him and other dealers that they can buy soapstone pieces cheaper outside.

When those works are designed by non-natives and sold as such they aren't breaking any law, but what about counterfeiting and fraud. Savage said to take any action, the artist would have to have concrete evidence, and he said the apparent copy of his work wasn't there when he went back.

He says too that many artists have become apathetic about the wide-spread abuses. " People don't really seem to be interested to be interested in it. I guess it's been going on for such a long time that they don't see that there's anything wrong with it. More importantly many artists feel that making a shop-owner made is more of an economic risk than competing with copiers. "Well a lot of people are afraid, because we deal with the shops and if the shops get angry with us than they won't buy anymore and so it's better not to say anything." There are laws and other controls intended to stop native art fraud, and on occasion they work, federal fish and wildlife agent, Wally Saroka in Anchorage, says Seattle shop owner Knock Lee was convicted of violating the marine mammals protection act, with possession of raw ivory by a non-native, and paid a substantial fine while on probation. Saroka says federal agents also busted an in-state gang of counterfeiters in recent years. There was a trail off of Muldoon and there were a number of, it was basically a mobile carving shop that they were carving raw walrus ivory, there were no native carvers in there, but they had rolls of the Alaska Native-made stickers and they were slapping them on the finished products even though they were made by non-natives.

It's against state law for non-natives to use the silver hand

emblem, the sticker Saroka mentioned on their art work. Tina Long with the state Division of Economic Development coordinates the silver hand program. She says the Department of Commerce has access to investigators and attorneys to prosecute if people would only report abuses.

"I don't think that many people have turned in other people." Saroka says fish and wildlife is also eager to investigate fraud cases and ask people to contact them if they know of any violations.

A 1990 Amendment beefing up the Federal Indian Arts and Crafts Act would enable all American Indian Tribes to register their trade-marks. Under that law, any misrepresentation is subject to stiff civil and criminal penalties. But officials say it may be 18 months or more before the machinery is set up to enforce the law. Whether it's the silver hand or a tribal trade-mark, these protections for the artist and the consumers are unlikely to work unless both groups insist upon their use and report any fraud. That calls for more public education and state and federal officials say that's also in their plans. For APRN in Anchorage, I'm Doreen Ransom.

Genuine Alaska Native Arts and Crafts can be seen at the AFN Convention in Anchorage this week, it's the largest congregation of native artists of the year and we asked Phillip Matrecardy to ask some of them what their reaction is to counterfeit native art. He reports that some of them are calling for tougher enforcement of existing federal laws and a real effort by the state to get involved.

Tahita Arts and Cultural group has one of the widest selections of goods for sale at the AFN Convention this year. Chuck Palmer says Tahita sells only authentic native handicrafts. Palmer points out the Silver Hand symbol has had some limited success in helping shoppers identify authentic Alaska Native hand work and in deterring counterfeiters. "They try to copy it and steal different ideas from other people...?" When he heard some counterfeiters had been using the silver hand to defraud customers, Palmer concluded more law enforcement is needed. The problem is enforcing it, you can have all the laws you want, but unless you have someone there to enforce the law, it doesn't do no good. So, we just have to get more investigators there checking out and try to arrest these people that are counterfeiting Alaskan native handicrafts. Palmer thinks the Federal Governments efforts to regulate the ivory trade may be sufficient. The state could be more to stop counterfeiting in his opinion, but he doubts it will. "The Federal Government has some control over, but the state of Alaska, there's a lot more people up here and they could do a lot better job of enforcing it if they'd put forth the effort, I can't see the state of Alaska putting forth the effort right now, not with Wally

Hickel in there. Charlotte Doffett originally from Fort Yukon, who now lives in Wasilla does bead work, combined with seal fur and moose skin, linx and bear claws, and walrus teeth. She says Asian imitation tourist goods have hurt Alaska Native Artists in recent past. "They did a lot of damage, from Hong Kong and all this stuff, they already did a lot of damage to native people and Eskimo people here in Alaska from importing all these different fake stuff and now days you can't even buy ivory because you don't know whether you're buying plastic.

Another bead worker, Salina Alexander from Fort Yukon thinks most counterfeit work could be detected by discerning buyers. To me it's offensive when I see it because they copy, but if you look at it close, you can tell the quality isn't the same, a lot of it is machine-made and you could easily see the thread or something like that. A lot of people do get fooled and that's too bad ya know, I think it, maybe it does cut into our business, but I don't see it personally right now.

Most other artists at the AFN Convention either had not heard about counterfeiting or did not think it affected them personally. Those who had an opinion felt like the people of Tahita that existing laws could handle the problem if there was more law enforcement.

I'm Phillip Matricardi.

Transcription from National Native News, Gary Fife (?) ....

This is National Native News, I'm Gary Fife, Native Art means big bucks these days, it's estimated that the native art market brings in as much as 800-million dollars a year, but studies indicate that as much as 1/5 of that is being siphoned off by imported imitations.

There's no shortage of domestic counterfeiters either. As Doreen Manson reports from Anchorage, Alaska some dealers find the profit margin is fatter when they cut the natives out of native arts.

There's more money than ever before to be made from the arts and crafts of native Americans Ann Millalowmakema of the Hopi arts and crafts coop in Second Mesa, Arizona says that means temptation. "It's really popular and everybody wants to get a bit of that pie, so people are really making a lot of fake stuff to get into this market. That counterfeiting can involve the illegal use of materials restricted to natives. It can also involve mass-producing someone else's artistic idea. The deception cheats both native artists and art buyers. It also infuriates those in the business of marketing the art. Dealers often note who the major counterfeiters are but they're reluctant to talk for fear of legal action and damage to their reputations. One dealer who didn't want to be identified was willing to tell how she found out some fakes had made their way into her old and well respected east coast

gallery. She says a trader came in who was familiar with the work of native carvers on St. Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea off the Coast of Alaska. The man was puzzled by the name he saw on a sculpture alleged to be from the island, "and he said the spelling of Jr. Slooknow's name was incorrect, and also he'd never seen Jr. working in soap-stone before, he'd only worked in ivory. A little research convinced them both that Jr. Snooklow was an invention patterned after Jr. Sloko, the St. Lawrence ivory carver. The dealer who had brought the work in subsequently denied any fraud but offered no proof of authenticity.

The gallery manager returned all his pieces to him and refuses to do business with him again. It's hard to believe the similarity in these artists names is coincidental, there are fewer than a thousand people on the island. The artists there are well known to visiting traders and to each other. Besides says Yupik carver Jr. Sloko, there's no soapstone and no soapstone carver on St. Lawrence Island. Sloko says he thinks it's a shame that art buyers are being deceived. "I'm sorry for the customers mostly that they're getting ripped off." Alaska ivory trader Tom Finnegan was also angered by the work of so-called Jr. Snooklow. He spotted it last year in a Seattle shop, Northwest tribal art owned by a Vietnamese named Knock Lee, in that shop and in two other shops in Alaska, Finnegan says he also saw a small ivory mask he took to be the work of Inupiat carver Eugene Tialana of Anchorage, but Finnegan says even before he saw the name on the mask, he realized they weren't authentic.

"When you get up close there's two things that separate it. For one thing the work is not as good, another thing instead of using little ivory rods to attach these masks to the baleen post, they use what appears to be brass. The carvers name was Eddie Singhok, and it's no wonder that he didn't use ivory as Tialana does, Singhok is really the shop owner Knock Lee. U.S. Fish and Wildlife officials say he was convicted in 1987 for possession of raw ivory by a non-native. Lee wouldn't agree to a taped interview, but when asked how the large amount of Eddie Singhok work seen in his shop could possibly be produced by one artist, he admitted it was the work of a team. That team rarely includes natives says Lee because they don't stay long. Lee says he can't get enough native art to feel his shop. He says he understands tribal art and sees nothing wrong with what he's doing. Does it have to be tribal people to be tribal art he asks? The misrepresentation of work as being Indian produced is against federal law, but regulations to implement the 1990 law have yet to be published. In the meantime, legitimate dealers recommend that buyers ask the seller to write the name of the artist and the tribe on the sales slip. Some who love native art may also develop the kind of instinct that serves Alaska trader Tom Finnegan. In his opinion the fakes all have one thing in common. Every piece that I've seen, they are not as good as the originals. I think probably because it lacks what you would call the spirit.

For National Native News in Anchorage, Alaska, I'm Doreen Ransom.