



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2017 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 17-25

- TITLE:** A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR ESKIMO WALRUS COMMISSION'S OPPOSITION OF INCLUDING LEGALLY OBTAINED WALRUS, MAMMOTH, AND MASTODON IVORY IN AFRICAN ELEPHANT IVORY BAN LAWS IN THE UNITED STATES
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska and its membership includes 185 federally recognized tribes, 177 village corporations, 12 regional corporations and 11 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS:** the mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS:** the use of legally acquired walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory by Alaska Native carvers to create tools, handicrafts, jewelry, and artwork is a longstanding cultural tradition that continues to be a vital component of Alaska Native culture today; and
- WHEREAS:** the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) explicitly protects the right of coastal Alaska Natives to harvest marine mammals and utilize their by-products in handicrafts for sale in the United States; and
- WHEREAS:** the sale of walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory tools, handicrafts, jewelry, and artwork by Alaska Natives is an important source of income in the cash-limited economies of rural Alaska; and
- WHEREAS:** in an effort to stem the poaching of African elephants, various U.S. states have passed laws banning the sale, use, or possession of all ivory, and additional states are considering such laws; and
- WHEREAS:** these ivory ban laws fail to acknowledge the difference between African elephant ivory and legally acquired walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory used by Alaska Native artists; and
- WHEREAS:** these ivory ban state laws may cause residents of those states to face prosecution for buying, owning, or bringing home legally acquired ivory from Alaska; and
- WHEREAS:** these ivory ban state laws are negatively impacting Alaska Native artists who depend on the sale of their handicrafts as a source of important income in a cash-limited economy.
- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the delegates of the 2017 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that AFN opposes the inclusion of legally obtained walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory in ivory ban laws; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that AFN requests that walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory be exempted from current and future ivory ban laws in the United States.