



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Opinion letters shared with the local newspaper, often referred to as "letters to the editor," are an effective way to share a message with others in the community.

The best letters are concise, share facts and express why the issue is of importance. To increase the potential of being published, letters should generally be less than 200-300 words.

Always include your name, address and contact information when you submit the letter. Newspapers will not publish this personal information but need to be able to reach you if they have questions about your letter.

Letters should never include attacks on other individuals or organizations, or be submitted anonymously.

If you can connect the message of your letter to a recent article published in that newspaper, the likelihood of your letter being published increases significantly. For example, if there is an article about subsistence living, you can reference that article at the start of your letter and then transition to the important points you want to make.

SEE SAMPLE LETTERS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES.

SAMPLE LETTER FROM ALASKAN

DATE

Dear editor,

The ways of life that have sustained Alaska Native people for millennia are in danger. In Alaska's coastal communities like mine, lifestyles - and livelihoods - depend on walrus harvests for food, clothing and cultural traditions.

Alaska Natives have been preserving the land and its resources for thousands of years, and walrus has always been an important and appreciated resource. As part of the waste-not spirit of our culture, when harvested, the entire animal is used, bringing great value to our community.

The walrus ivory is also put to use by making art to help share Alaska Native stories and experiences. This is at the heart of the culture and traditions of the people. Artists who use walrus ivory are examples of the interconnectedness between Alaska Native culture, natural resources and economic viability.

Unfortunately, this way of life is in danger, an unintended consequence of walrus harvests being associated with illegal poaching for ivory. Many states are passing misguided laws banning all ivory, including walrus ivory.

I urge Alaska's congressional lawmakers to pass legislation that prohibits any state or locality from banning the use or sale of walrus ivory that has been produced by an Alaska Native person. I ask fellow readers to join me in contacting elected leaders to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples to pursue their economic, social, and cultural traditions and customs.

NAME

CITY/VILLAGE LOCATION

PHONE NUMBER

SAMPLE LETTER OUTSIDE OF ALASKA

DATE

Dear editor,

I call on our state's elected leaders to amend legislation that bans all ivory, including walrus, mammoth and mastodon ivory. While it may be well intended to protect against poaching for elephant ivory, the state's ban is in direct conflict with federal law and has created severe negative outcomes.

The state's overbroad ban on all ivory goes against the Marine Mammal Protection Act that explicitly allows the use and sale of walrus ivory when legally produced by Alaska Natives.

In Alaska's coastal communities, lifestyles - and livelihoods - depend on walrus harvests for food, clothing and cultural traditions. It has been this way for thousands of years. As part of the waste-not spirit of this culture, when harvested, the entire animal is used, bringing great value to their communities. The walrus ivory is also put to use by making art to help share Alaska Native stories and experiences. This is at the heart of the culture and traditions of Indigenous people.

Unfortunately, this way of life is in danger, an unintended consequence of walrus harvests being associated with illegal poaching for ivory. Many states - like ours - are passing misguided laws banning all ivory, including walrus ivory. I ask fellow readers to join me in contacting elected leaders to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples to pursue their economic, social, and cultural traditions and customs.

NAME

CITY LOCATION

PHONE NUMBER