

March 24, 2015

Dear Members of the Oregon Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I was just alerted of SB 913, and felt I needed to speak out against this bill. Specifically regarding the inclusion of prehistoric woolly mammoth ivory and fossil walrus ivory.

My family has been in business in Oregon's neighboring state, Washington, for over 35 years, and we design and sell eco conscious jewelry, art carvings, and specimen pieces, with a very strong focus on prehistoric woolly mammoth ivory and fossil walrus ivory.

I take great pride in designing eco conscious jewelry from green sources, which is why I was so taken aback when I saw that prehistoric woolly mammoth ivory and walrus ivory were both put on the same plane as new elephant ivory in SB 913.

I strongly agree that poachers in Asia and Africa need to be stopped in order for Asian and African elephants to be saved from extinction, but making it illegal to sell fossil and legally sourced ivory in Oregon is missing the point.

Prehistoric woolly mammoth ivory and fossil walrus ivory are NOT elephant ivory.

How could prehistoric woolly mammoth ivory that ranges in age from 10,000 to 200,000 years, and fossil walrus ivory, that is several hundred to several thousand years old, be lumped into the same category as new poached elephant ivory? Also, how does outlawing fossil materials help to save the living elephants?

Specifically, prehistoric woolly mammoth ivory is a fossil, and is easily identifiable as such when you look at the Schreger lines (cross hatching) present on the material. Elephant ivory has a cross hatching pattern that is wider than the cross hatching pattern present in mammoth ivory. (Please see the US Fish and Wildlife website for reference on Schreger lines: http://www.fws.gov/lab/ivory_natural.php#elephant)

In addition, mammoth ivory comes in a wide range of beautiful, natural tones such as brown, tan, cream, blue or green. Colors depend upon where the mammoth tusk lay in the ground or ice of Alaska, Canada, Russia, or Siberia, and for how many tens of thousands of years.

Elephant ivory is generally stark white or a yellowed white.

Not only is prehistoric woolly mammoth ivory easily discernable from elephant ivory, but so are the other ivories listed in SB 913. Please see US Fish & Wildlife website for detailed descriptions of the different types of ivories. http://www.fws.gov/lab/ivory_natural.php

As you can see, it does not make sense to lump prehistoric woolly mammoth ivory, or the other proposed ivories, into the same category as elephant ivory simply because they are "ivory", when they

can easily be correctly identified. These ivories need to be taken out of SB 913 altogether, as they are unrelated to elephants and elephant ivory.

If this bill were to pass as is, it would be devastating to scrimshanders, knife makers, musical instrument crafters, antique shops, as well as countless other small businesses throughout the state that depend on sales of legally obtained and eco conscious fossil ivory products.

I greatly appreciate your consideration in this matter and would be happy to answer any questions regarding prehistoric woolly mammoth ivory or fossil walrus ivory identification.

Sincerely,

Courtney Tripp Reeder

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