



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Law

CIVIL DIVISION

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May 4, 2023

XXXX

Re: Reminder Against Improper Removal of Country of Origin Markings

Dear XXXX:

This reminder letter is being sent to businesses that sell artesian products that are or that appear to be made in Alaska. If you have received this letter erroneously, please disregard.

This letter is designed to help your business better understand the law in regard to Country of Origin markings. The Alaska Department of Law's Consumer Protection Unit ("CPU") enforces Alaska's consumer protection statutes, including Alaska's Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act, AS 45.50.471 - .561, which outlaws unfair methods of competition and unfair and deceptive acts and practices in the course of trade or commerce.

In the past, CPU has received information indicating that some businesses serving the tourist market may be removing foreign country of origin markings from products, which confuses or misleads consumers into believing that the products were made in Alaska. This conduct harms both consumers who seek authentic Alaska-made products, and honest Alaskan artisans and businesses who must compete against cheaper foreign made products that lack proper country of origin markings.

It is a violation of Alaska law when a business sells or offers for sale a product that lacks a country of origin marking and the business knows or should know that the product was made outside the United States. Such violations of the law are particularly egregious when the product is designed or marketed in a way that could lead a consumer to believe that it is an Alaska Native art or craft.

This letter is not intended to discourage Alaskan artisans from creating arts and crafts from imported materials. CPU recognizes that foreign country of origin markings are generally not required when imported items are substantially transformed by craftsman in the United States.

To protect Alaskan artisans, Attorney General Treg Taylor has directed CPU to investigate allegations of country of origin label removal and to bring consumer protection actions when appropriate.

Again, this reminder letter is being sent to numerous businesses that sell arts, crafts, and similar items to the tourist market. The fact that you received this letter does not in any way indicate that an allegation has been made against you or that you are under investigation.

If you are aware of a person or business that is unfairly competing in the marketplace by removing country of origin markings from products that consumers are likely to believe are arts and crafts made in Alaska, we encourage you to file a consumer complaint with our office. Consumer complaints forms are available at: https://law.alaska.gov/pdf/consumer/FORM_complaint.pdf.

The Department of Law wishes you a productive and busy summer tourist season.

Sincerely,

TREG TAYLOR
ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: /s/ John H. Haley
John H. Haley
Assistant Attorney General