

SPONSOR STATEMENT FOR CS For HB 324 (RES)  
24-LS1218\F

“An Act banning the importation, transfer, and cultivation of orange hawkweed and purple loosestrife.”

The act prohibits the importation of orange hawkweed and purple loosestrife. It also prohibits the sale, gift, or otherwise transfer of those plants except for disposal. A person under this act is prohibited from knowingly planting or cultivating these plants.

These two plants are creating problems in Alaska. Non-native invasive species significantly threaten the ecological integrity of our state’s natural systems. These species invade natural communities, farmland, forestland, wetlands, waterways and pastures.

They displace native plants and animals, disrupt ecological processes, upset the stability of our ecosystems, and can permanently change our natural landscapes. What today are fields of our State Flower, the Forget-Me-Not, can become a field of orange hawkweed.

Chester Creek had purple loosestrife growing wild along its banks. This is a horrific wetland invader found pretty much across North America.

It is estimated that invasive plants cost the United State’s economy at least 137 billion dollars each year.

Even though many invasive species are not regulated or controlled federally, states have passed a wide array of laws designed to address invasive species problems. States are also beginning to adopt non-agricultural weed prohibitions to protect natural systems, especially aquatic or wetland areas.