CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15(EDT)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE, AND TOURISM

Offered: 3/18/11
Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES HERRON, Kerttula, Peggy Wilson, Gardner

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to collaboration with the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through the**

2 **Pacific NorthWest Economic Region and its Arctic Caucus to address common issues.**

3 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4   **WHEREAS** the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region was formed in 1991 as a forum

5 for collaborative public and private sector planning among the states of Alaska, Montana,

6 Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, the Canadian provinces and territories of the Northwest

7 Territories, Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, and the national capitals of

8 Washington, D.C., and Ottawa, Canada; and

9   **WHEREAS** the Arctic Caucus of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region was

10 formed in November 2009 as an informal group of legislators, government officials, business

11 leaders, and leaders of nonprofit organizations committed to the responsible development of

12 North America's Arctic regions; and

13   **WHEREAS** the purpose of the Arctic Caucus is to provide a forum within the Pacific

14 NorthWest Economic Region for the Arctic jurisdictions of Alaska, the Yukon, and the

15 Northwest Territories to share information, discuss issues of mutual concern, and identify

16 areas for collaboration, including working with other jurisdictions and providing Arctic-

1 related input to the working groups of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region; and

2 **WHEREAS**, on December 1 - 3, 2010, the Arctic Caucus met in Barrow, Alaska, to

3 discuss the federal Arctic policies of the United States and Canada, the Arctic transportation

4 and communication infrastructure needs of the Arctic Caucus member regions, and the

5 priorities and action of the Arctic Caucus; and

6 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Northern Waters Task Force attended the 2010 meeting of the

7 Arctic Caucus in Barrow, and future cooperative action between the Alaska Northern Waters

8 Task Force and the Arctic Caucus was outlined; and

9 **WHEREAS** the 21st Annual Summit of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region will

10 be held July 19 - 22, 2011, in Portland, Oregon, and will provide a forum for continued Arctic

11 Caucus collaboration; and

12 **WHEREAS** Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories, the three northern

13 regions of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region, have problems in common, including

14 limited educational opportunities; a minimal distance-delivery education infrastructure; a need

15 for expanded workforce development programs; a need for better cold climate housing; a high

16 rate of suicide; a high rate of domestic violence; a high rate of substance abuse; an economic

17 reliance on resource-extraction industries and a corresponding need for economic

18 diversification; remote and inaccessible communities that face high costs for fuel and

19 commodities; and an urgent need for investment in transportation and communication

20 infrastructure; and

21 **WHEREAS** there is much to be gained by Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest

22 Territories more closely sharing strategies to solve common problems and working together to

23 solve those problems; and

24 **WHEREAS** some of the issues that the Arctic Caucus might address include

25 increasing cooperation on scientific research and vessel tracking; exploring strategies to

26 address and mitigate tension between local users and industry; identifying economic

27 development opportunities through tourism, infrastructure development, and regional

28 partnerships; supporting Arctic marine safety through appropriate jurisdictional licensing of

29 marine pilots; exploring increased cooperation in emergency and disaster preparedness; and

30 increasing coordination of search and rescue efforts;

31 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature will collaborate with the

1 legislative assemblies of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through the Pacific

2 NorthWest Economic Region and its Arctic Caucus to facilitate communication and

3 cooperation among the Arctic Caucus member regions and, as a result, to address more

4 effectively problems common to those regions; and be it

5 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature will work with the

6 legislative assemblies of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through the Pacific

7 NorthWest Economic Region and the Arctic Caucus to promote a synchronized message

8 detailing the common needs of the Arctic Caucus member regions to their respective federal

9 governments and emphasizing that coordinated United States and Canadian federal policies

10 are vital to the welfare of Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories; and be it

11 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature invites the governments of

12 the Yukon and the Northwest Territories to join Alaska in an enduring alliance to pursue the

13 common goals of their regions.

14 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Stephen Harper, Prime

15 Minister of Canada; the Honorable John Morris Duncan, Canadian Minister of Indian Affairs

16 and Northern Development; the Honorable Jim Kenyon, Member of the Legislative Assembly

17 of the Yukon; the Honorable Bob McLeod, Member of the Legislative Assembly of the

18 Northwest Territories; the Honorable Denis Stevens, Consul General of the Consulate General

19 of Canada in Seattle, Washington; the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United

20 States; the Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, United States Secretary of State; the

21 Honorable Robert M. Gates, United States Secretary of Defense; the Honorable Ken Salazar,

22 United States Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Sean Parnell, Governor of Alaska; the

23 Honorable Mead Treadwell, Lieutenant Governor of Alaska; and the Honorable Lisa

24 Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young,

25 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.