

# STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2011

Source  
HJR 24

Legislative  
Resolve No.  
26



Urging the United States Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self-Determination Act of 2000.

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

**WHEREAS**, in 1908, the United States Congress enacted 16 U.S.C. 500 (National Forest Receipts Program), which required 25 percent of annual income earned from activities on national forest land to be shared with states for distribution to cities and boroughs in which the land is located for the benefit of education and roads; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1986, changes in the approach to managing our national forests seriously curtailed the ability of forest communities to harvest forest products and resulted in steep declines in forest revenue paid to affected communities; and

**WHEREAS**, in the early 1990s, the United States Congress recognized that the decision to secure and retain land in federal ownership would deprive the communities in which the land is located of revenue otherwise received if the land were in private ownership; and

**WHEREAS** the enactment of P.L. 106-393, 16 U.S.C. 500 note (Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000), temporarily stabilized national

forest revenue payments to forest communities and replaced much needed financial support for education and roads; and

**WHEREAS** many of the state's rural communities are nestled in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest; and

**WHEREAS** there continues to be little privately owned land in those forest communities on which to pursue economic development activities, and the communities therefore remain largely dependent on revenue generated from national forests; and

**WHEREAS** P.L. 106-393 (Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000) expires in 2011; and

**WHEREAS** education is one of the critical services supported by P.L. 106-393; and

**WHEREAS** failure to reauthorize and extend P.L. 106-393 will have a devastating effect on many forest communities across America, especially communities in this state, and will severely affect the public education of students living in those forest communities;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that the United States Congress and the President sign into law a long-term authorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the Honorable Arne Duncan, United States Secretary of Education; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the 112th United States Congress.