

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2024

Source
SJR 13

**Legislative
Resolve No.**
29



Encouraging the United States Congress and the President of the United States to pass and sign legislation amending the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to release certain land held in trust back to affected Alaska Native village corporations.

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

WHEREAS, in 1971, to resolve land claims of Alaska Native peoples, the United States Congress passed, and President Richard Nixon signed into law, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA); and

WHEREAS sec. 14(c)(3) of ANCSA required each Alaska Native village corporation to convey a portion of the land it received to the state to be held in trust for a future municipal government; and

WHEREAS, out of the 101 villages in which Alaska Native village corporation land has been held in trust for a future municipality under ANCSA, only eight villages have incorporated, with the most recently established municipality being incorporated in 1995; and

WHEREAS there are 93 villages that have not decided to incorporate, with approximately 11,500 acres of Alaska Native village corporation land currently held in trust

by the state; and

WHEREAS the requirement under ANCSA that land must be held in trust for a future municipality was drafted over 50 years ago and is now a detriment to enabling Alaska Native village corporations and communities to engage in economic development activities and use the land to its full potential; and

WHEREAS amending ANCSA by removing the requirement that each Alaska Native village corporation must have land held in trust for a future municipality will empower the Alaska Native village corporations and communities to decide how to best use the land and resources, leading to greater economic prosperity and self-sufficiency; and

WHEREAS Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan introduced in the United States Senate and Representative Mary Peltola introduced in the United States House of Representatives the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2023, which restores the Alaska Native village corporation land, held in trust for the establishment of future municipalities, to the Alaska Native village corporations;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the United States Congress to pass the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2023 or similar legislation in the 118th United States Congress that restores the land held in trust under sec. 14(c)(3) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to the affected Alaska Native village corporations; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the President of the United States to sign the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2023 or similar legislation into law.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States; the Honorable Kamala D. Harris, Vice President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Deb Haaland, United States Secretary of the Interior; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Mary Peltola, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.