

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 2

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATORS KOOKESH, Hoffman, Dyson, Wielechowski, Olson, French, Meyer, Menard, Paskvan, Egan, Davis, Thomas, Stedman, Stevens, Ellis

**Introduced: 2/9/11
Referred: Taken Up**

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to fund fully the essential air service program.**

2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:**

3 **WHEREAS** S.223, the FAA Air Transportation Modernization and Safety
4 Improvement Act, has been introduced in the United States Senate; and

5 **WHEREAS** Amendment 4 to S.223 by the senior senator from Arizona would
6 eliminate funding for the essential air service program; and

7 **WHEREAS** the 44 communities in the state that benefit from the essential air service
8 program under 49 U.S.C. 41731 - 41748 are the most remote and isolated communities in the
9 nation; and

10 **WHEREAS** air carriers in the state that are subsidized by the essential air service
11 program provide critical passenger, cargo, and mail services to remote communities; and

12 **WHEREAS**, for many remote communities in the state, air travel is not simply a
13 convenience, but the only scheduled passenger service to the rest of the world, making it vital
14 for basic economic, health, and safety needs; and

15 **WHEREAS** the essential air service program ensures that remote communities can
16 maintain a link to the national air transportation system; and

1 **WHEREAS** Alaska is a young state and, because of the size and the unique
2 geography of the state, relatively few roads provide access to remote communities, making
3 aircraft the dominant mode of transportation in many rural areas; and

4 **WHEREAS** the elimination of the essential air service program would significantly
5 increase commodity prices and the cost of general passenger air travel essential to residents of
6 the state's rural communities; and

7 **WHEREAS**, without the essential air service program, at least 12,000 Alaskans living
8 off the road system would not be able to afford travel to regional hubs for essential medical
9 care; and

10 **WHEREAS** the complete elimination of the essential air service program would have
11 a severe negative economic effect on remote communities in the state, many of which are
12 already economically depressed, and could destabilize those communities;

13 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Senate supports the essential air service program and
14 urges the United States Congress to reauthorize full funding for the program in S.223, the
15 FAA Air Transportation Modernization and Safety Improvement Act.

16 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
17 the United States; the Honorable Raymond L. LaHood, United States Secretary of
18 Transportation; the Honorable John McCain, U.S. Senator; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski
19 and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
20 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the
21 112th United States Congress.