A RESOLUTION

Relating to establishment of an Arctic council.

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

WHEREAS there are many Arctic issues that are common to the nations of the circumpolar north, and these issues can be addressed most effectively in a multilateral forum that promotes cooperation and concerted action; and

WHEREAS a regional multilateral forum for the Arctic would provide a focus for anticipating and addressing current and future problems of the Arctic, capitalizing on new opportunities for the Arctic, and involving residents of the Arctic in a discussion of the issues that affect them directly; and

WHEREAS the creation of a multinational Arctic council has been proposed to provide a permanent, intergovernmental policy forum for the eight Arctic nations, including the United States, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden; and

WHEREAS Alaska should play a prominent and active role in developing a policy forum for the Arctic; and

WHEREAS an Arctic council would be the only existing international institution that is mandated to address and manage the full range of common Arctic concerns; and

WHEREAS an Arctic council would be a key body to ensure international cooperation
and coordination on sustainable development of the Arctic; and

WHEREAS an Arctic council would ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness in handling Arctic issues, by providing focus and, where appropriate, recommending policy direction to existing agencies with authority over Arctic-related issues, creating by consensus additional working groups only where necessary, and by influencing and coordinating with other international organizations;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports the establishment of an Arctic council consisting of the eight nations having territory or jurisdiction in the Arctic and urges the President and the Congress of the United States to take whatever action is necessary to support establishment of an Arctic council and to enable the United States to become an active member of the council.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the United States; to the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of State; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.