

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 26

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATOR COGHILL

Introduced: 2/21/14

Referred: State Affairs

A RESOLUTION

1 **Recognizing June 14, 2014, as the 60th anniversary of the first recital of the United**
2 **States Pledge of Allegiance with the words "under God."**

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

4 **WHEREAS**, on February 10, 1954, Senator Homer Ferguson of Michigan introduced
5 a bill in the United States Congress to amend the United States Pledge of Allegiance by
6 adding the words "under God" to the text of the pledge; and

7 **WHEREAS** February 10, 1954, was chosen as the date to introduce the bill by
8 Senator Ferguson because it was the five-year anniversary of the imprisonment of Cardinal
9 Joseph Mindszenty of Hungary, who was imprisoned and tortured by the communist
10 government of Hungary for his sermons exposing the goal of communism to eradicate all
11 religion; and

12 **WHEREAS** members of both political parties delivered speeches in the United States
13 Congress honoring Cardinal Mindszenty and emphasizing the threat posed to America by
14 communism; and

15 **WHEREAS**, upon introduction of the bill, Senator Ferguson commented, "I believe
16 this modification of the pledge is important because it highlights one of the real fundamental

1 differences between the free world and the Communist world, namely, belief in God. Our
2 nation is founded on a fundamental belief in God, and the first and most important reason for
3 the existence of our Government is to protect the God-given rights of our citizens. . . .
4 Spiritual values are every bit as important to the defense and safety of our Nation as are
5 military and economic values"; and

6 **WHEREAS** the vote to add "under God" to the United States Pledge of Allegiance
7 was unanimous; and

8 **WHEREAS**, on February 7, 1954, after hearing Reverend George M. Docherty
9 preach that the phrase "nation under God" was used in the Gettysburg Address, President
10 Dwight D. Eisenhower became convinced that adding the words "under God" to the United
11 States Pledge of Allegiance would be the right thing to do; and

12 **WHEREAS** President Eisenhower signed H.J. Res. 243, 83rd Cong. (1954) and the
13 United States Pledge of Allegiance was recited with the phrase "under God" for the first time
14 on Flag Day, June 14, 1954; and

15 **WHEREAS** it is the policy of the legislature to recognize and honor important dates
16 that strengthen the ties of history and bind us to our Christian heritage;

17 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes June 14, 2014, as
18 the 60th anniversary of the first recital of the United States Pledge of Allegiance with the
19 words "under God."

20 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
21 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and
22 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the U.S. House of
23 Representatives; the Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; and the
24 Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the
25 Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.