

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 1()

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES HERRON, Edgmon, Millett, Lynn

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act declaring the Arctic policy of the state."**

2 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
4 to read:

5 LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT. (a) The legislature finds that

6 (1) the state is what makes the United States an Arctic nation;

7 (2) the entirety of the state is affected by the activities and prosperity in the
8 Arctic region, and conversely, the Arctic region is affected by the activities and prosperity in
9 the other regions of the state;

10 (3) residents of the state, having lived and worked in the Arctic region for
11 decades, have developed expert knowledge regarding a full range of activities and issues
12 involving the region;

13 (4) residents of the state recognize the risks that come with a changing climate
14 and emerging threats to ecosystems, as well as increased maritime activity, but are optimistic
15 that the skillful application of expertise, coupled with circumpolar cooperation, will usher in a

1 new era of economic and resource development that will improve the quality of life for
2 residents of the state;

3 (5) the development of the state's natural resources in an environmentally and
4 socially responsible manner is essential to the development of the state's economy and to the
5 well-being of the residents of the state;

6 (6) for thousands of years, indigenous peoples have made up the majority of
7 the inhabitants of the Arctic region, and their physical and spiritual well-being depends on
8 protecting the bountiful lands, rivers, and seas of the Arctic region;

9 (7) it is essential for the state and federal government to strengthen their
10 collaboration on Arctic issues, including coordination when creating policies and
11 implementation plans related to the Arctic, as both continue to engage in international
12 circumpolar activity;

13 (8) the state should maintain an official body authorized to further develop
14 strategies and policies for the Arctic region that respond to the priorities and critical needs of
15 residents of the state.

16 (b) It is the intent of the legislature that this declaration of Arctic policy

17 (1) be implemented through statutes and regulations;

18 (2) not conflict with, subjugate, or duplicate other existing state policy;

19 (3) guide future policy derived from the implementation strategy developed by
20 the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission;

21 (4) clearly communicate the interests of residents of the state to the federal
22 government, the governments of other nations, and other international bodies developing
23 policies related to the Arctic.

24 * **Sec. 2.** AS 44.99 is amended by adding a new section to read:

25 **Sec. 44.99.105. Declaration of state Arctic policy.** (a) It is the policy of the
26 state, as it relates to the Arctic, to

27 (1) uphold the state's commitment to economically vibrant
28 communities sustained by development activities consistent with the state's
29 responsibility for a healthy environment, including efforts to

30 (A) ensure that Arctic residents and communities benefit from
31 economic and resource development activities in the region;

1 (B) improve the efficiency, predictability, and stability of
2 permitting and regulatory processes;

3 (C) attract investment through the establishment of a positive
4 investment climate and the development of strategic infrastructure;

5 (D) sustain current, and develop new, approaches for
6 responding to a changing climate, and adapt to the challenges of coastal
7 erosion, permafrost melt, and ocean acidification;

8 (E) encourage industrial and technological innovation in the
9 private and academic sectors that focuses on emerging opportunities and
10 challenges;

11 (F) maintain a strong, sustainable fisheries industry and
12 increase fisheries research and monitoring;

13 (2) collaborate with all levels of government, tribes, industry, and
14 nongovernmental organizations to achieve transparent and inclusive Arctic decision-
15 making, including efforts to

16 (A) strengthen and expand cross-border relationships and
17 international cooperation, especially bilateral engagements with Canada and
18 Russia;

19 (B) sustain and enhance state participation in the Arctic
20 Council;

21 (C) pursue opportunities to participate meaningfully as a
22 partner in the development of federal and international Arctic policies, thereby
23 incorporating state and local knowledge and expertise;

24 (D) strengthen support for and collaboration with Arctic
25 Council Permanent Participant organizations that include indigenous peoples
26 of the state;

27 (E) reiterate the state's long-time support for ratification of the
28 Law of the Sea Treaty;

29 (3) enhance the security of the Arctic region of the state and, thereby,
30 the security of the entire state, including efforts to

31 (A) enhance disaster and emergency prevention and response,

oil spill prevention and response, and search and rescue capabilities in the region;

(B) provide safe, secure, and reliable maritime transportation in the areas of the state adjacent to the Arctic;

(C) sustain current, and develop new, community, response, and resource-related infrastructure;

(D) coordinate with the federal government for an increase in United States Coast Guard presence, national defense obligations, and levels of public and private sector support; and

(4) value and strengthen the resilience of communities and respect and integrate the culture and knowledge of Arctic peoples, including efforts to

(A) recognize Arctic indigenous peoples' cultures and unique relationship to the environment, including traditional reliance on a subsistence way of life for food security, which provides a spiritual connection to the land and the sea;

(B) build capacity to conduct science and research and advance innovation and technology in part by providing support to the University of Alaska for Arctic research consistent with state priorities;

(C) employ integrated, strategic planning that considers scientific, local, and traditional knowledge;

(D) safeguard the fish, wildlife, and environment of the Arctic for the benefit of residents of the state;

(E) encourage more effective integration of local and traditional knowledge into conventional science, research, and resource management decision making.

(b) It is important to the state, as it relates to the Arctic, to support the strategic recommendations of the implementation plan developed by the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission and to encourage consideration of recommendations developed by the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission. Priority lines of effort for the Arctic policy of the state include

(1) promoting economic and resource development;

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(2) addressing the infrastructure and response capacity gap in order to support the Arctic region;

(3) supporting healthy communities; and

(4) supporting existing and fostering new science and research that aligns with state priorities for the Arctic.

(c) In this section, "Arctic" means the area of the state north of the Arctic Circle, north and west of the boundary formed by the Porcupine, Yukon, and Kuskokwim Rivers, all contiguous seas, including the Arctic Ocean, and the Beaufort, Bering, and Chukchi Seas, and the Aleutian Chain, except that, for the purpose of international Arctic policy, "Arctic" means the entirety of the state.