

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

**BY REPRESENTATIVES WESTLAKE, Grenn, Tuck, Rauscher**

**Introduced: 1/18/17**

**Referred: House Special Committee on Arctic Policy, Economic Development, and Tourism, Resources**

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Urging the United States Congress to pass legislation to open the coastal plain of the**  
2 **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas development; urging the United States**  
3 **Department of the Interior to recognize the private property rights of owners of land in**  
4 **and adjacent to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; relating to oil and gas exploration,**  
5 **development, production, and royalties; and relating to renewable and alternative**  
6 **energy technologies.**

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

8 **WHEREAS**, in 16 U.S.C. 3143 (sec. 1003 of the Alaska National Interest Lands  
9 Conservation Act), the United States Congress reserved the right to permit oil and gas  
10 development and production within the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge;  
11 and

12 **WHEREAS**, in 16 U.S.C. 3142 (sec. 1002 of the Alaska National Interest Lands  
13 Conservation Act), the United States Congress authorized nondrilling exploratory activity  
14 within the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (the "1002 study area"); and

1           **WHEREAS** the oil industry, the state, and the United States Department of the  
2 Interior consider the coastal plain to have the highest potential for discovery of very large oil  
3 and gas accumulations on the continent of North America, estimated to be as much as  
4 10,000,000,000 barrels of recoverable oil; and

5           **WHEREAS** the 1002 study area is part of the coastal plain located within the North  
6 Slope Borough, and many of the residents of the North Slope Borough, who are  
7 predominantly Inupiat, are supportive of development in the 1002 study area; and

8           **WHEREAS** oil and gas exploration and development of the coastal plain of the refuge  
9 and adjacent land could result in major discoveries that would reduce our nation's dependency  
10 on oil produced by hostile foreign nations, help balance the nation's trade deficit, and  
11 significantly increase the nation's security; and

12           **WHEREAS** the state's and the nation's future energy independence would be  
13 enhanced with additional natural gas production from the North Slope of Alaska, including  
14 what are expected to be significant gas reserves in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and  
15 the development of those reserves would enhance the economic viability of the proposed  
16 liquefied natural gas project; and

17           **WHEREAS** development of oil at Prudhoe Bay, Kuparuk, Endicott, Lisburne, and  
18 Milne Point has resulted in thousands of jobs throughout the United States, and projected job  
19 creation as a result of coastal plain oil development will have a positive effect in all 50 states;  
20 and

21           **WHEREAS** North Slope production has declined significantly in the last decade and  
22 is forecasted to continue to decline; and

23           **WHEREAS** the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, a national asset that would cost  
24 billions of dollars to replace, would have its useful physical life extended for a substantial  
25 period if the additional reserves of recoverable oil from the coastal plain were produced; and

26           **WHEREAS** the Trans Alaska Pipeline System is currently being extended to leases at  
27 Point Thomson, an area bordering the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and oil produced in  
28 the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would require only the additional construction of a  
29 pipeline to Point Thomson to deliver oil to market; and

30           **WHEREAS**, while new oil field developments on the North Slope of Alaska may  
31 temporarily slow the decline in production, only allowing access to the state's coastal plain

1 fields would enable the production volume of Alaska oil to increase by up to 700,000 barrels a  
2 day; and

3 **WHEREAS** opening the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge now  
4 allows sufficient time for planning environmental safeguards, development, and national  
5 security review; and

6 **WHEREAS** the 1,500,000-acre coastal plain of the refuge makes up less than eight  
7 percent of the 19,000,000-acre refuge, and development of the oil and gas reserves in the  
8 refuge's coastal plain would affect a limited area as defined by the United States Congress;  
9 and

10 **WHEREAS** 8,900,000 of the 19,000,000 acres of the refuge have already been set  
11 aside as wilderness; and

12 **WHEREAS** the oil industry has shown at Prudhoe Bay, as well as at other locations  
13 along the Arctic coastal plain, that it is capable of conducting oil and gas activity without  
14 adversely affecting the environment or wildlife populations; and

15 **WHEREAS** the state will continue to strive to ensure the ongoing health and  
16 productivity of the Porcupine and Central Arctic caribou herds and the protection of land,  
17 water, and wildlife resources during the exploration and development of the coastal plain of  
18 the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

19 **WHEREAS** the oil and gas industry has developed directional drilling technology that  
20 will allow horizontal drilling in a responsible manner by minimizing the development  
21 footprint within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and that directional drilling technology  
22 may be capable of drilling from outside of the boundaries of the 1002 study area; and

23 **WHEREAS** the oil industry is using innovative technology and environmental  
24 practices in new field developments, and those techniques are directly applicable to operating  
25 on the coastal plain and would enhance environmental protection beyond traditionally high  
26 standards; and

27 **WHEREAS** President Barack Obama's recent action to withdraw millions of acres of  
28 land in the Arctic from new offshore oil and gas drilling threatens future development and  
29 national energy security; and

30 **WHEREAS** the state recognizes that the economic prosperity of the state is dependent  
31 on available, reliable, and affordable energy; and

1           **WHEREAS** the state promotes the development of renewable and alternative energy  
2 resources and created the Alaska Energy Authority to assist the state in advancing new energy  
3 projects and technology; and

4           **WHEREAS** the Alaska State Legislature encourages the use of revenue from  
5 development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for the development of renewable and  
6 alternative energy resources in the state;

7           **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges that oil and gas  
8 exploration, development, and production activity be conducted in a manner that protects the  
9 environment and the naturally occurring population levels of the Porcupine caribou herd on  
10 which the Inupiat, Gwich'in, and other local residents depend, that uses directional drilling  
11 and other advances in technology to minimize the development footprint in the 1002 study  
12 area, and that uses the state's work force to the maximum extent possible; and be it

13           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States  
14 Congress to pass legislation opening the 1002 study area for oil and gas development while  
15 continuing to work on measures for increasing the development and use of renewable and  
16 alternative energy technologies; and be it

17           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States  
18 Department of the Interior to recognize and respect the rights of Native landowners in and  
19 adjacent to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge 1002 study area, including the rights of the  
20 Arctic Slope Regional Corporation and the Kaktovik Inupiat Corporation to develop their land  
21 and resource entitlements received under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and other  
22 agreements; and be it

23           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature opposes any unilateral  
24 reduction in royalty revenue from exploration and development of the coastal plain of the  
25 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and any attempt to coerce the state into accepting less than  
26 the 90 percent of the oil, gas, and mineral royalties from the federal land in the state that was  
27 promised to the state at statehood.

28           **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President  
29 of the United States; the Honorable Mike Pence, Vice President of the United States and  
30 President of the U.S. Senate; the United States Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Paul  
31 D. Ryan, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi,

1 Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Mitch McConnell,  
2 Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Minority Leader of  
3 the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on  
4 Energy and Natural Resources; the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senator, and the Honorable  
5 Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all  
6 other members of the 115th United States Congress.