

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 29

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER

Introduced: 1/19/18

Referred: State Affairs, Judiciary, Finance

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and**
2 **Communities Self-Determination Act of 2000.**

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

4 **WHEREAS**, in 1908, the United States Congress enacted 16 U.S.C. 500 (National
5 Forest Receipts Program), which required 25 percent of annual income earned from activities
6 on national forest land to be shared with states for distribution to cities and boroughs in which
7 the land is located for the benefit of education and roads; and

8 **WHEREAS**, in 1986, changes in the approach to managing our national forests
9 seriously curtailed the ability of forest communities to harvest forest products and resulted in
10 steep declines in forest revenue paid to affected communities; and

11 **WHEREAS**, in the early 1990s, the United States Congress recognized that the
12 decision to secure and retain land in federal ownership would deprive the communities in
13 which the land is located of revenue otherwise received if the land were in private ownership;
14 and

15 **WHEREAS** the enactment of P.L. 106-393, 16 U.S.C. 500 note (Secure Rural
16 Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000), temporarily stabilized national

1 forest revenue payments to forest communities and replaced much needed financial support
2 for education and roads; and

3 **WHEREAS** the National Forest Service controls approximately 22,000,000 acres of
4 land in the state; and

5 **WHEREAS** many of the state's rural communities are nestled in the Tongass National
6 Forest and the Chugach National Forest; and

7 **WHEREAS** there continues to be little privately owned land in those forest
8 communities on which to pursue economic development activities, and the communities
9 therefore remain largely dependent on revenue generated from national forests; and

10 **WHEREAS** the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of
11 2000 expired on September 3, 2015, and has not been reauthorized; and

12 **WHEREAS** education is one of the critical services supported by the Secure Rural
13 Schools and Community Self-Determination Act; and

14 **WHEREAS** failure to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-
15 Determination Act will have a devastating effect on many forest communities across America,
16 especially communities in this state, and will severely affect the public education of students
17 living in those forest communities;

18 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that the
19 United States Congress pass and the President sign into law a long-term reauthorization of the
20 Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000; and be it

21 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the United
22 States Congress to pass H.R. 2340 or S. 1027 to extend the Secure Rural Schools and
23 Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

24 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President
25 of the United States; the Honorable Betsy DeVos, United States Secretary of Education; the
26 Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee of the
27 U.S. Senate; the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senator, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
28 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the
29 115th United States Congress.