

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 19

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Introduced: 4/24/19

Referred: House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs, Community and Regional Affairs

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to fully fund the United States Census Bureau for the**
2 **2020 Census; urging the governor to prioritize an accurate count for the 2020 Census;**
3 **and urging local governments to establish local complete count commissions.**

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

5 **WHEREAS** the United States Census Bureau is required by the United States
6 Constitution to conduct a count of the population every 10 years to help shape the foundation
7 of our society and play an active role in American democracy; and

8 **WHEREAS** the demographics of the United States continue to grow and shift and
9 include individuals who identify as multiracial; and

10 **WHEREAS**, every year, billions of dollars of federal and state funds are allocated to
11 communities, and decisions on matters of national and local importance, including healthcare,
12 community development, business location and operations, housing, education, transportation,
13 social services, and employment, are made based on census data; and

14 **WHEREAS** distribution of federal funding for American Indian and Alaska Native
15 schools, education programs, health programs, housing programs, water and sewage projects,

1 roads, and economic development is based on data collected by the United States Census
2 Bureau; and

3 **WHEREAS** the decennial census is a significant undertaking that requires cross
4 sector collaboration and partnership to achieve a complete, fair, and accurate count; and

5 **WHEREAS** the United States Census Bureau is facing several challenges with the
6 2020 Census, including declining response rates, technological changes, and fiscal
7 constraints; and

8 **WHEREAS** census data is used in the consideration of redistricting for the Alaska
9 State Legislature and affects municipal assemblies and councils; and

10 **WHEREAS** the Alaska State Legislature is committed to ensuring that every state
11 resident is counted in the 2020 Census;

12 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States
13 Congress to fully fund the United States Census Bureau for the 2020 Census, and, if Congress
14 determines it to be advantageous, to allow rural residents of the state without a physical
15 address to use a post office box to participate in the 2020 Census, thereby equipping the
16 United States Census Bureau to fulfill its constitutional obligation to fully enumerate all
17 persons within the United States; and be it

18 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature desires to work with the
19 state's executive branch to allocate funding necessary to conduct outreach within the state and
20 to provide support to supplement the outreach and promotional activities of the United States
21 Census Bureau as well as the work of groups in the state, including the Alaska Census
22 Working Group and other regional stakeholders, in targeting populations that are hard to
23 count; and be it

24 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests that the governor
25 urge the 2020 Census Alaska Complete Count Commission to hold active and regular
26 meetings to adequately prepare for the decennial census, to prioritize an accurate census count
27 in all areas of the state before considerations of data use to promote census participation, to
28 leverage existing community stakeholder knowledge to conduct outreach in rural
29 communities, and to create and translate educational materials to supplement the
30 communications campaign of the United States Census Bureau; and be it

31 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages every

1 municipality in the state to establish its own complete count commission to foster maximum
2 participation by all state residents.

3 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to Tim Navarre, President, Alaska Municipal
4 League; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U. S. Senators,
5 and the Honorable Don Young, U. S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in
6 Congress.