

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

**BY REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER**

**Introduced: 3/25/19**

**Referred: Transportation**

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Urging the Alaska Congressional delegation to pursue infrastructure funding for a deep**  
2 **draft Arctic port in Nome; requesting the Department of Transportation and Public**  
3 **Facilities to send a letter from the state to the Alaska Congressional delegation**  
4 **supporting a deep draft Arctic port in Nome; and requesting the Department of**  
5 **Transportation and Public Facilities to work collaboratively with the City of Nome on a**  
6 **deep draft Arctic port in Nome.**

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

8 **WHEREAS** Alaska is the only state in the United States that borders the Arctic  
9 Ocean; and

10 **WHEREAS** the retreat of Arctic sea ice is increasing the seasonal navigability of the  
11 Arctic Ocean, which has resulted in an influx of marine traffic in the circumpolar Arctic; and

12 **WHEREAS** the other seven Arctic nations have been very proactive in addressing the  
13 changing situation in the Arctic and have begun to assert their interest in the region; and

14 **WHEREAS** the United States Army Corps of Engineers launched the Alaska Deep-

1 Draft Arctic Port System study in 2012 to evaluate potential locations for a deep draft Arctic  
2 port on the northern and western coasts of the state and determine the feasibility of  
3 constructing navigation improvements as part of a large system of port facilities in the Arctic  
4 and subarctic regions; and

5 **WHEREAS**, in 2015, the United States Army Corps of Engineers released a draft  
6 feasibility report and environmental assessment that selected the Port of Nome as the  
7 preferred site to establish a deep draft Arctic port; and

8 **WHEREAS** the state, the Alaska State Legislature, and the Arctic Policy Commission  
9 realize that access to newly open Arctic waterways is vitally important to the state; and

10 **WHEREAS** the Alaska State Legislature appropriated \$1,600,000 in the fiscal year  
11 ending June 30, 2017, and \$1,600,000 in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, to fund the City  
12 of Nome's 50/50 match requirement for the United States Army Corps of Engineers feasibility  
13 and design studies; and

14 **WHEREAS** the first year of the accelerated two year study is almost complete and the  
15 selection of a preferred project design alternative is scheduled for March 2019; and

16 **WHEREAS** the timeline for developing a deep draft Arctic port is fairly short, with  
17 construction potentially beginning in 2023 or 2024 if the project is authorized by Congress in  
18 2020; and

19 **WHEREAS** the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the urgency of developing key  
20 infrastructure and defense capabilities in the Arctic;

21 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Alaska Congressional  
22 delegation to pursue all infrastructure funding that recognizes the region's importance in  
23 addressing the nation's critical security concerns, vital energy supply, and significant  
24 opportunities to decrease intercontinental shipping distances; and be it

25 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests the Department  
26 of Transportation and Public Facilities to send a letter from the state to the Alaska  
27 Congressional delegation supporting a deep draft Arctic port in Nome; and be it

28 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests the Department  
29 of Transportation and Public Facilities to work collaboratively with the City of Nome to  
30 provide technical support through the completion of the feasibility and design phases of  
31 establishing a deep draft Arctic port and assist the City of Nome in developing innovative

1 funding strategies for the city's construction cost share.

2 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the  
3 Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative,  
4 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.