

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 25**

**IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA**

**TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION**

**BY SENATORS WILKEN, Sharp, Miller, Taylor, Pearce**

**REPRESENTATIVES Brice, James**

**Introduced: 4/1/97**

**Referred: Transportation**

**A RESOLUTION**

**1 Supporting enhancement of visitor access to Denali National Park and Preserve**  
**2 through development of a northern railroad route corridor access to the vicinity**  
**3 of Wonder Lake.**

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

**5 WHEREAS** a new northern railroad route will provide majestic views of Mt.  
**6 McKinley, the opportunity to enjoy a wilderness experience, and the chance to encounter**  
**7 wildlife in its natural habitat, and would connect to the Alaska Railroad corridor; and**

**8 WHEREAS** a new northern railroad access would enhance the Mt. McKinley  
**9 experience for visitors to Denali National Park and Preserve, promote tourism statewide**  
**10 through greater visitor satisfaction, and provide a foundation for year-round visitation; and**

**11 WHEREAS** insufficient transportation access to premier viewing areas in Denali  
**12 National Park and Preserve and the lack of facilities at these areas are major obstacles to**  
**13 enhancing the wilderness experience that the park offers; and**

**14 WHEREAS** a new northern railroad transportation system and visitor facilities can be  
**15 designed and constructed so as not to detract from the qualities that make Denali National**  
**16 Park and Preserve the state's premier visitor attraction; and**

1       **WHEREAS** the Wonder Lake area, located on the north side of Denali National Park  
2 and Preserve, has a dry interior climate, long daylight hours, and splendid viewing  
3 opportunities, and offers the potential to promote both summer and winter activities; and

4       **WHEREAS** creating a new northern railroad access into Denali National Park and  
5 Preserve, taking advantage of a long-established and historic transportation route previously  
6 used by the mining industry, would offer an opportunity for the private sector to meet the  
7 increased demand for tourism facilities; and

8       **WHEREAS**, without making a substantial claim on the state's financial resources, the  
9 state is uniquely able to assist in this effort to develop a new northern railroad route by  
10 supporting the private sector efforts underway, by making available for use the state land  
11 adjacent to Denali National Park and Preserve for the creation of a railroad route corridor, and  
12 by monitoring negotiations that would encourage development opportunities involving the  
13 private sector;

14       **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature strongly supports the efforts of  
15 the federal and state governments and the private sector to complete the necessary studies and  
16 acquire the necessary permits that would identify and open a new northern railroad route to  
17 the vicinity of Wonder Lake and spur the appropriate development of visitor facilities in the  
18 Wonder Lake area; and be it

19       **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the  
20 Governor and the state's executive branch agencies to be aggressive in their resolve to support  
21 the consensus of Alaska opinion in supporting the creation of a new northern railroad access  
22 into Denali National Park and Preserve, as represented by resolutions of endorsement from the  
23 city councils of North Pole, Fairbanks, Nenana, and Seward, the Assembly of the Municipality  
24 of Anchorage, and the Assemblies of the Denali, Fairbanks North Star, and Matanuska-Susitna  
25 Boroughs, to enhance the Mt. McKinley experience for visitors and the creation of a rail  
26 connection between the Wonder Lake area and the Alaska Railroad; and be it

27       **FURTHER RESOLVED** that appropriate state agencies should work with the National  
28 Park Service and interested government officials and representatives of the private sector to  
29 investigate the potential of establishing a new northern railroad route into the Wonder Lake  
30 area of Denali National Park and Preserve, for the appropriate development of facilities in this  
31 area that would serve the needs of park visitors.

1           **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the  
2 United States; the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President  
3 of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Strom Thurmond, President Pro Tempore of the U.S.  
4 Senate; the Honorable Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; and  
5 Roger G. Kennedy, Director of the National Park Service; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens  
6 and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.  
7 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.