

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2003

Source

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**Legislative
Resolve No.**

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Relating to economic development generated by new road construction and to the design and construction of the Hot Springs Loop Road to connect Chena Hot Springs and Circle Hot Springs, of a highway along the Bradfield/Iskut Rivers transportation corridor, of the Knik Arm Crossing, of a road from Iliamna Bay to Pile Bay, and of other roads and highways.

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

WHEREAS new roads are needed to connect communities with the resources that create the increased potential for commercial, industrial, recreational, and social activities for residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS new local roads will allow Alaskans to get to local schools and health facilities and to quickly respond to local emergency situations; and

WHEREAS improving the transportation infrastructure in Alaska is vital to the economic growth and prosperity of the state; and

WHEREAS Alaska is the largest state in the Union, comprising one-fifth of the total area of the continental United States, yet Alaska has barely 2,000 miles of roadways, less than the state of Vermont; and

WHEREAS the proposed Hot Springs Loop Road from Chena Hot Springs to Circle

Hot Springs will complete a transportation loop connecting Fairbanks and the two resort areas and will open areas of Interior Alaska for residents and visitors to explore, enjoy, and develop; and

WHEREAS the Hot Springs Loop Road would connect the Steese Highway with the Chena Hot Springs Road either through or around the Steese National Conservation Area; and

WHEREAS the Hot Springs Loop Road will allow residents and tourists an opportunity to drive the scenic loop between Fairbanks and the resort areas at Chena Hot Springs and Circle Hot Springs; and

WHEREAS the Hot Springs Loop Road will foster increased outdoor activities, new tourism ventures, and economic growth in Interior Alaska; and

WHEREAS construction of a highway along the Bradfield/Iskut Rivers transportation corridor would increase the traffic flow between Southeast Alaska and the Alaska marine highway to British Columbia by permitting a more efficient flow of travelers into and out of the region; and

WHEREAS a transportation corridor between Southeast Alaska and British Columbia would generate recreational growth benefiting Alaskans and British Columbians; and

WHEREAS communities in southern Southeast Alaska have suffered immense and catastrophic declines in their economic base due to removal of the timber industry as a key component of their economies by the previous national administration; and

WHEREAS the Alaska marine highway system is placing severe constraints on the shipment of fresh seafood to United States and Canadian markets because it has a policy to maximize revenue in the summer period at the expense of reserved deck space for fresh seafood containers, because the capacity to transport shipping vans has been severely curtailed due to international SOLAS shipping standard requirements, and because the Prince Rupert transfer bridge is not of sufficient weight carrying capacity; and

WHEREAS the shipment of fresh seafood, both caught and processed domestically, by way of airlines is both capacity constrained and expensive, thus denying efficiencies and potential markets for high margin fresh seafood products; and

WHEREAS a land transportation link to the North American highway system could provide viable development of new vocations resulting from new economic growth; and

WHEREAS the southern region of Southeast Alaska has been negatively affected in

recent years with individual fishery quota (IFQ) landings moving to road-connected communities such as Haines and Prince Rupert; and

WHEREAS the people of southern Southeast Alaska wish to increase trade with our Canadian neighbors; and

WHEREAS the Knik Arm Crossing project has been identified as a project that would have a profound effect on future development in Southcentral Alaska; and

WHEREAS construction of a road from Iliamna Bay to Pile Bay on Lake Iliamna will provide a greatly enhanced transportation route to Lake Iliamna, Newhalen, Lake Clark, the upper Bristol Bay area, several mineral deposits, and unparalleled recreational opportunities and will provide for more economical transportation of food, fuel, and materials to the several villages in the area; and

WHEREAS the Donlin Creek Road project has been identified as a project that will greatly enhance economic development and establish a transportation corridor in the Kuskokwim area, which will have a profound effect on future development in the region; and

WHEREAS the Ralph M. Bartholomew Veterans' Memorial Bridge connecting the City of Ketchikan to Gravina Island has been identified as a project that will provide needed access to the Ketchikan International Airport and foster future development of Gravina Island; and

WHEREAS the East Lynn Canal Road connecting the City of Juneau with northern Southeast Alaska communities would have a profound impact on the economy of Juneau and enhance regional development and transportation infrastructure;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes that the economic development activity generated by the construction of new roads is important to the growth and prosperity of the state; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports the design and construction of the Hot Springs Loop Road to provide a scenic loop route to connect Fairbanks and the resort areas at Chena Hot Springs and Circle Hot Springs; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports the efforts of Governor Frank Murkowski and the City of Wrangell to continue their work with the Province of British Columbia and Cassiar and Yellowhead Highways communities in their efforts to reach an agreement to construct a highway along the Bradfield/Iskut Rivers

transportation corridor; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports the pre-National Environmental Policy Act scoping and environmental impact statement process and the design and construction of a highway along the Bradfield/Iskut Rivers transportation corridor to connect southern Southeast Alaska to British Columbia; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports the design and construction of the Knik Arm Crossing and a road from Iliamna Bay to Pile Bay; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports the continued effort for construction of the Donlin Creek Road; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports the design and construction of a road to Rock Creek, bypassing Moon Light Springs, for development of mineral extraction operations on the Seward Peninsula; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports the design and construction of the Ralph M. Bartholomew Veterans' Memorial Bridge to connect the City of Ketchikan and Gravina Island and the East Lynn Canal Road alignment connecting the City of Juneau to northern Southeast Alaska.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Frank Murkowski, Governor of Alaska; the Honorable Mike Barton, Commissioner, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities; Al Ewing, Chief of Staff, Denali Commission; Rick Van Nieuwenhuyse, President and Chief Executive Officer, NovaGold Resources Inc.; the mayors of the Municipality of Anchorage, Fairbanks North Star Borough, City of Fairbanks, City and Borough of Juneau, City of Wrangell, City of Petersburg, Ketchikan Gateway Borough, City of Ketchikan, City of Klawock, City of Craig, Kenai Peninsula Borough, City of Homer, City of Kenai, City of Soldotna, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, City of Wasilla, City of Palmer, Lake and Peninsula Borough, and City of Nome; the Postmasters of Central, Circle, Pedro Bay, Iliamna, Crooked Creek, and Red Devil; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.