

# STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2011

**Source**

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**Legislative  
Resolve No.**

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Urging the United States Army and United States Air Force to extend the public comment period for the scoping phase of the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex Modernization and Enhancement Environmental Impact Statement, which is set to end February 18, 2011, for a minimum of 30 days to allow for effective communication and full state and user involvement during the comment period.

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

**WHEREAS** Alaska's Military Operations Areas, including in the air and on the land and sea, are necessary to replicate realistic conditions for training and testing of combat systems; and

**WHEREAS** expanded weapons and sensor capabilities, extended mobility, and improved communications have driven the need for larger training areas; and

**WHEREAS** the federal Environmental Impact Statement for the actions and projects identified by the United States Army and the United States Air Force in a proposal known as Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex Modernization and Enhancement was released for public scoping comment on December 10, 2010, preceding the holiday season; and

**WHEREAS** the proposals involve expanding and establishing new Military Operations Areas, restricted airspace, and airspace corridors, expanding access to training areas, and developing new ranges and facilities to provide adequate resources to conduct training and testing under realistic and varied conditions; and

**WHEREAS** the proposed significant expansion of those Military Operations Areas will have far-reaching effects across multiple segments of the state's communities, industries, and activities, including hunting, tourism, commerce, and aviation; and

**WHEREAS** aviation represents approximately \$3,500,000,000 in economic activity in the state and supports an estimated 47,000 jobs, constituting a significant component of the state's economy; and

**WHEREAS** proposals for Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex Modernization and Expansion may greatly affect aviation in the state; and

**WHEREAS** the aerospace needs of the civil aviation community have evolved significantly since the last major expansion of Military Operations Areas in the mid-1990s, and the emergence of new technologies has changed how aviation uses airspace; and

**WHEREAS** a complete review of existing and proposed airspace uses is needed to consider which alternatives may best suit the overall aviation needs of all users now and in the future; and

**WHEREAS** it is vital to ensure that citizens are allowed access to their villages at all times and for all reasons; and

**WHEREAS** four villages in the state currently cannot be accessed by air during military operations; and

**WHEREAS** proposed military expansion into air corridors will significantly interfere with air traffic into and out of Fairbanks and will affect training operations conducted in the area by general aviation and commercial operators; and

**WHEREAS** all divisions and departments of state government must be given adequate time to evaluate thoroughly the effects from the proposed changes in military airspace; and

**WHEREAS** it is paramount that, for all potential contact between civilian and military operations involving both United States and foreign military aircraft, safety prevails;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States Army

and United States Air Force to extend the public comment period for the scoping phase of the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex Modernization and Enhancement Environmental Impact Statement, which is currently scheduled to close on February 18, 2011, for a minimum of 30 days past that date to allow for effective communication and full state and user involvement during the comment period.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Robert M. Gates, United States Secretary of Defense; the Honorable John M. McHugh, United States Secretary of the Army; the Honorable Michael B. Donley, United States Secretary of the Air Force; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.