

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

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Supporting the continued and increased exploration, extraction, processing, and production of rare earth elements in the state; and urging the United States Congress to support efforts of the state to develop rare earth elements in the state for the benefit of the economic and national security of the United States.

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

WHEREAS rare earth elements, those elements consisting of lanthanum through lutetium on the periodic table, plus scandium and yttrium, possess unique chemical, electrical, and physical properties that make them indispensable for a wide variety of emerging critical technologies needed for defense, clean energy, and other consumer and industrial uses; and

WHEREAS dysprosium and terbium are among the scarcest, most valuable, and most sought-after rare earth metals needed for green technology and military applications; and

WHEREAS, in the past, the United States was largely self-sufficient in rare earth elements but today has become almost entirely dependent on foreign sources of yttrium, niobium, tantalum, zirconium, and other rare earth elements; and

WHEREAS the value-added technology and skill to allow both the recovery of rare earth elements from mineral forms in ore and the manufacture of finished products, including

powerful magnets, from rare earth elements has almost entirely migrated to China along with the actual mining of rare earth element ores; and

WHEREAS China currently produces 95 percent of the world's rare earth elements but reduced the export of rare earth elements by 54 percent from 2005 to 2010 and by nearly 50 percent from 2010 to 2011; and

WHEREAS a future in which manufacturing of high-tech military equipment takes place only outside of the United States poses a risk to national security, and the manufacturing of wind turbines, solar panels, advanced batteries, and geothermal steam turbines produced only outside of the United States poses a risk to energy security; and

WHEREAS the development and expansion of extraction, processing, refining, and production are needed to provide the United States with self-reliance in technologies that depend on rare earth elements; and

WHEREAS mineral resources make up a major portion of the state's economic assets, and the deposits discovered at Bokan Mountain on the southern end of Prince of Wales Island are rich in the heavy rare earth elements of europium, gadolinium, terbium, dysprosium, thulium, holmium, erbium, ytterbium, lutetium, and yttrium; and

WHEREAS the Bokan Mountain deposits are the only known deposits in the world that have deep water access, accessible labor, and prospective power sources; and

WHEREAS the Tongass National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan designates the Bokan Mountain area for mineral development, and the state's Prince of Wales Island Area Plan classifies the Kendrick Bay area for mineral and forestry access and development; and

WHEREAS economic opportunities on Prince of Wales Island and throughout the state have significantly decreased; and

WHEREAS increased exploration for rare earth elements along with the establishment of secondary processing and research facilities related to rare earth elements in the state will create new career opportunities for Alaskans; and

WHEREAS development of rare earth element deposits in the state is critical to the economic and military security of the state and the nation;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports the continued and increased exploration, extraction, processing, and production of rare earth elements in the

state; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges agencies that administer permits required for the development of the rare earth elements in the state to expedite consideration and issuance of permits required for the development of rare earth element deposits in the state; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States Geological Survey, the United States Department of Commerce, and the United States Department of Defense to work closely with the governor and the director of the division of geological and geophysical surveys in the Department of Natural Resources to explore for and identify deposits of rare earth elements in the state, develop an information database on rare earth elements in the state, and promote the development of the rare earth elements extraction, processing, and production industry in the state; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States Congress to support the efforts of the state to develop rare earth elements in the state for the benefit of the economic and national security of the United States.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Sally Jewell, United States Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Chuck Hagel, United States Secretary of Defense; the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Ron Wyden, Chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. Senate; 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; and all other members of the 113th United States Congress.