

# STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2018

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Legislative  
Resolve No.  
28



Urging the Alaska delegation in Congress to pursue the establishment of a U.S. Coast Guard port in the Arctic region; supporting the increase in defensive capabilities in the Arctic region; and encouraging the development of critical Arctic infrastructure.

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

**WHEREAS** Alaska is the only state in the nation that has land bordering the Arctic Ocean; and

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

**WHEREAS** the increased navigability of Arctic routes has the potential to reliably decrease shipping distances of intercontinental vessels by as much as 40 percent in the coming decades; and

**WHEREAS** the control of access to newly opening Arctic waterways is becoming an objective for nations in the region; and

**WHEREAS** the other seven Arctic nations have been very proactive in addressing the

changing situation in the Arctic and have begun to assert their interests in the region; and

**WHEREAS** the Russian Federation has recently established the Arctic Joint Strategic Command to assert its long-term military strategy in the Arctic region; and

**WHEREAS** the Russian Federation has constructed as many as 40 icebreakers, 14 airfields, and 16 deepwater ports in the region; and

**WHEREAS** the United States has been very inactive in addressing the changing situation in the Arctic region; and

**WHEREAS** the United States possesses only two operating icebreaking vessels, none of which is stationed in this state; and

**WHEREAS** vessels with icebreaking capabilities may operate in any environment, but ships without that capability cannot operate in an Arctic environment without an icebreaker escort; and

**WHEREAS** the United States has an extremely limited capability to respond to medical emergencies that may occur as a result of increased activity in the region; and

**WHEREAS** the United States has no means of asserting itself in the Arctic Ocean or maintaining domain awareness along its northernmost flank; and

**WHEREAS** the extreme weather conditions in the Arctic increase the amount of time needed to complete large infrastructure projects in the region; and

**WHEREAS** the potential for energy discovery in the Arctic region may produce new investment, infrastructural development, and other economic opportunities;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes that the increased activity in the Arctic region is becoming a national security concern for the nation; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the potential for economic development in the Arctic; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the urgency of developing key infrastructure and defense capabilities, considering the investments other nations have committed to the region as well as the increased amount of time needed for those types of projects because of the extreme weather of the region; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Alaska delegation in Congress to pursue the establishment of a United States Coast Guard port capable of supporting naval contingency operations in the Arctic as well as the development

of critical infrastructure that is necessary to improve emergency response capabilities in the region; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on the Alaska Congressional delegation to advocate for the security of the nation's northernmost flank by increasing the military and emergency response capabilities in the Arctic region.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States; the Honorable Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Orrin Hatch, President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Jim Mattis, United States Secretary of Defense; the Honorable Ryan Zinke, United States Secretary of the Interior; Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.