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Gunther
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CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 26(RES)
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ARCTIC AFFAIRS

A RESOLUTION

1 **Supporting the ability of Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by federally**
2 **recognized tribes in the state to participate in the United States Small Business**
3 **Administration's 8(a) Business Development Program.**

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

5 **WHEREAS** the United States Congress enacted 43 U.S.C. 1601 (Alaska Native
6 Claims Settlement Act) in 1971 to resolve aboriginal land claims in the state and to promote
7 economic self-sufficiency for Alaska Natives through the creation of Alaska Native
8 corporations; and

9 **WHEREAS** there are 229 federally recognized tribes in the state, each with a
10 government-to-government relationship with the United States, and the trust responsibility of
11 the United States extends to Alaska Native tribes and Alaska Native corporations; and

12 **WHEREAS** Alaska Native corporations were established to create economic
13 opportunity, provide employment, and improve the health, education, and welfare of Alaska
14 Native shareholders and future generations; and

15 **WHEREAS** entities owned by federally recognized tribes in the state serve vital roles

1 in promoting the economic development, self-governance, health, education, and welfare of
2 Alaska Native communities; and

3 **WHEREAS** the United States Small Business Administration's 8(a) Business
4 Development Program is a federal program designed to assist socially and economically
5 disadvantaged businesses in accessing federal contracting opportunities; and

6 **WHEREAS** Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by federally recognized
7 tribes in the state are expressly eligible to participate in the 8(a) Business Development
8 Program under federal law in recognition of the federal government's trust responsibility to
9 Alaska Natives and the unique circumstances of how the plenary powers of the United States
10 Congress were exercised over the organizational structure of Alaska Natives; and

11 **WHEREAS** the participation of Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by
12 federally recognized tribes in the state in the 8(a) Business Development Program has created
13 thousands of jobs for residents of the state, including veterans and residents of rural and
14 underserved communities, and has helped build a skilled workforce across the state; and

15 **WHEREAS** revenue generated through the participation of Alaska Native
16 corporations and entities owned by federally recognized tribes in the state in the 8(a) Business
17 Development Program is reinvested in the state through shareholder dividends, job training,
18 scholarships, cultural preservation, health care, infrastructure, and community development;
19 and

20 **WHEREAS** Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by federally recognized
21 tribes in the state participating in the 8(a) Business Development Program operate in a wide
22 range of industries, including construction, engineering, energy, defense, logistics,
23 information technology, health services, and professional services; and

24 **WHEREAS** the participation of Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by
25 federally recognized tribes in the state in the 8(a) Business Development Program has
26 strengthened the state's economy by increasing competition, fostering entrepreneurship, and
27 ensuring that federal money spent in the state provides lasting benefits to residents of the
28 state; and

29 **WHEREAS** the 8(a) Business Development Program has proven to be an effective
30 and efficient tool for federal agencies to meet mission needs while advancing the federal
31 policy goals of economic inclusion and self-determination for Alaska Natives, including

1 Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by federally recognized tribes in the state; and
 2 **WHEREAS** periodic proposals to restrict, eliminate, or undermine the participation of
 3 Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by federally recognized tribes in the state in
 4 the 8(a) Business Development Program threaten jobs in the state, rural economies, and the
 5 ability of Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by federally recognized tribes in the
 6 state to fulfill obligations to shareholders and tribal members;

7 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature strongly supports the continued
 8 authorization for Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by federally recognized tribes
 9 in the state to participate in and fully implement the 8(a) Business Development Program; and
 10 be it

11 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the
 12 participation of Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by federally recognized tribes
 13 in the state in the 8(a) Business Development Program as a critical component of the state's
 14 economy and a successful example of federal policy that promotes self-sufficiency,
 15 opportunity, and long-term economic development; and be it

16 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the President of the
 17 United States, the United States Congress, and the United States Small Business
 18 Administration to preserve, defend, and fully utilize the ability of Alaska Native corporations
 19 and entities owned by federally recognized tribes in the state to participate in the 8(a)
 20 Business Development Program and to oppose efforts that would weaken or eliminate its
 21 unique provisions applicable to Alaska Native corporations and entities owned by federally
 22 recognized tribes in the state; and be it

23 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature affirms its support for
 24 Alaska Native self-determination and the federal trust responsibility embodied in 43 U.S.C.
 25 1601 (Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act) and related federal programs, including those
 26 supporting the sovereign authority of federally recognized tribes in the state.

27 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President
 28 of the United States; the Honorable Pete Hegseth, United States Secretary of Defense; the
 29 Honorable Brandon Beach, Treasurer of the United States; the Honorable Kelly Loeffler,
 30 Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration; Nicole Borromeo, President,
 31 ANCSA Regional Association; Benjamin Mallott, President, Alaska Federation of Natives;

1 Curtis McQueen, Executive Director, Alaska Native Village Corporation Association; and the
2 Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the
3 Honorable Nicholas Begich, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in
4 Congress.