

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

HOUSE RESOURCES COMMITTEE



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Official Business

House Joint Resolution 44 Sponsor Statement

“Support Native Corp Business Development Program”

House Joint Resolution 44 expresses the Alaska Legislature’s strong support for the continued participation of Alaska Native corporations (ANCs) and entities owned by federally recognized tribes in the U.S. Small Business Administration’s 8(a) Business Development Program.

Members:

- Representative Carolyn Hall The 8(a) Program is a cornerstone of federal efforts to promote economic self-determination for socially and economically disadvantaged communities. Congress, through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), created Alaska Native corporations to foster self-sufficiency, generate economic opportunity, and improve the wellbeing of Native shareholders and future generations. Tribal entities similarly play vital roles in strengthening local economies, supporting self-governance, and providing essential services to their members.
- Representative Donna Mears
- Representative Zack Fields For decades, participation in the 8(a) Program has allowed Alaska Native corporations and tribal-owned enterprises to compete for and secure federal contracts in a wide range of industries—construction, engineering, energy, defense, logistics, healthcare, and information technology, among others. Revenues generated through these opportunities are reinvested in Alaska through dividends, education and job training programs, cultural preservation, and infrastructure development. The result is an economy that not only benefits rural and urban Alaska Natives but also creates thousands of jobs for residents across the state, including veterans and workers in underserved areas.
- Representative Dan Saddler
- Representative Mike Prax
- Representative Julie Coulombe However, from time to time, there have been efforts at the federal level to limit or dismantle provisions of the 8(a) Program that recognize the unique status of Alaska Native corporations and tribal entities. Such efforts threaten Alaska’s economic stability, local job creation, and the capacity of ANCs and tribes to fulfill their long-term obligations to their shareholders and members.
- Representative Bill Elam

HJR 44 reaffirms the Legislature’s commitment to Alaska Native self-determination and the federal trust responsibility rooted in ANCSA. It urges the President, Congress, and the SBA to preserve and defend Alaska Native participation in the 8(a) Program as both a matter of equity and as a proven driver of economic growth throughout the state.

The 8(a) Program works—for Alaska Natives, for local communities, and for our state’s economy. HJR 44 stands in strong support of its continued success.