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SJR 19 ANWR & Nat'l Petro Reserve: State Share

Version G Sponsor Statement

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With the release of President Donald J. Trump's Executive Order, "Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential," Alaskans are optimistic that we'll see increased production of our petroleum and mining resources. However, this enthusiasm is tempered because Congress has gone back on its promise to provide Alaska with 90 percent of the royalty revenues from production on federal land. Alaska's present and future revenues are also weighed down by the write-offs against State taxes that oil companies can claim for activity on federal lands and necessary upgrades to Alaska's aging infrastructure to support production activity.

When Congress was deliberating granting Alaska statehood, there was recognition that our large, remote state wouldn't have enough of a population and industrial base to be self-sufficient. In exchange for taking on the financial responsibility of providing public services, Alaska was promised 90 percent of the royalties from production on federal lands in both the Alaska Statehood Act of 1958 and an amendment to the Mineral Act of 1920.

It was also acknowledged at the time the Statehood Act was under consideration that some of the most valuable land in Alaska, in particular the Naval Petroleum Reserve (now the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska) and the Arctic Wildlife Range (now the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge), had been reserved by the federal government and was not available for the state to select. With roughly two-thirds or more of the North Slope under federal control, Alaska's ability to determine its own revenue stream has been severely impacted.

Senate Joint Resolution 19 asks Congress to uphold the promise made in the Alaska Statehood Act to provide 90 percent of the revenues from production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and to extend that promise to production in the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska. This will allow the state to support the programs and infrastructure projects necessary for the petroleum industry and provide services for our citizens.