

# Alaska State Legislature



Senator Hollis French

## **SCR 11 - WALTER HICKEL DAY OF THE ARCTIC**

### **Sponsor Statement**

SCR 11 establishes August 18, 2011 as Walter J. Hickel Day of the Arctic. The date has been selected to match our former Governor's birthday, and the title 'Day of the Arctic' has been chosen to honor what Walter Hickel knew to be true decades ago - that Alaska, rich with resources, can provide for Alaskans and the world for centuries to come.

During the 1950s Walter Hickel played a major role in the fight to get Alaska's statehood land entitlement, which gave us 103 million acres of land to hold in common. From 1966-1969, he served as the second Governor of Alaska. During his term, he successfully pushed to open Prudhoe Bay to oil development, creating the foundation for our economy today.

From 1969 to 1970 Walter Hickel served as the US Secretary of the Interior. This was when the critical permitting process for our Trans-Alaska Pipeline was taking place. In that capacity, he helped turn plans into a construction project, getting our valuable resource to market.

In 1990, he was elected to his second term as Governor of Alaska. During this term he led the way internationally on the issue of by-catch fish waste, and negotiated the \$1 billion Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement.

In 1973, Walter Hickel authored a piece for Readers Digest that declared 'the Day of the Arctic has come.' Today, the points he made in that article are still applicable. The Walter Hickel Day of the Arctic will honor the vision and legacy he left for all Alaskans, and I urge your support.