

Alaska State Legislature

SENATOR
GENE THERRIAULT

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Senate

While in session
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska
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SENATE DISTRICT F

Memorandum of Request

To: Senator Lesil McGuire / Chair Senate Energy Committee

From: Senator Gene Therriault

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "G. Therriault".

Date: February 23, 2009

Re: Requesting a hearing for Senate Joint Resolution 7

.....

As momentum builds within the new federal administration to set aside greater amounts of land and water in protected areas, the temptation to further restrict control over these important elements is escalating.

SJR 7 sends a clear message that as stewards of our state's sovereign resources we oppose any attempt to place them in a political body that is outside both the state and federal jurisdiction.

It is with these serious issues in mind that I respectfully request that SJR 7 be taken up in your committee.

Thank you.

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SJR 7

Sponsor Statement

SJR 7 is intended to send an important message to the President and Congress. Alaska has an economy that depends on natural resource development including extraction and transportation. Any action that would deny access to the resources that are now under state or national sovereign jurisdiction will directly impact the long-term stability and economic well being of our state and nation.

SJR 7 purposely omits any position or opinion on global warming. The focus of this legislative message is to reinforce the necessity of access to natural resources in the northern latitudes. Any move toward global control over what is now United States sovereign territory is a threat not only to Alaska's economy but our nation's as well.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 7

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATORS THERRIAULT, Dyson

Introduced: 2/19/09

Referred: Senate Special Committee on Energy, Resources

A RESOLUTION

1 **Opposing a United Nations designation of the Arctic Ocean as a World Heritage Site.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** many scientists are concerned that a recent loss of sea ice in the Arctic
4 Ocean could be an indicator of a potential prolonged period of warmer than normal
5 temperatures in the Arctic; and

6 **WHEREAS** scientists theorize that a warming of the Arctic could lead to an ice-free
7 ocean, which would likely lead to trans-Arctic Ocean shipping, resource development, and
8 increased human activity in the Arctic; and

9 **WHEREAS** significant amounts of oil, gas, and minerals lie under the Arctic Ocean,
10 and, if the ocean were ice-free, those resources could be more readily accessed and
11 developed; and

12 **WHEREAS** a group of North American scientists recently proposed that the United
13 Nations designate the Arctic Ocean a multi-location World Heritage Site for the express
14 purpose of eliminating increased transportation, resource extraction, and other development in
15 the area; and

16 **WHEREAS** management of the Arctic Ocean as a "sea park" would negatively affect

1 the sovereignty of the nations that border the ocean, including the United States, Canada,
2 Greenland, Russia, and Norway;

3 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature opposes, and encourages the
4 United States, on behalf of Alaska, its only Arctic state, to oppose, any effort by the United
5 Nations to designate any portion of the Arctic Ocean as a World Heritage Site or similar
6 designation that would impinge on the sovereignty of the United States.

7 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
8 the United States; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S.
9 Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska
10 delegation in Congress.