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Alaska State Legislature



During Session:
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House of Representatives

SPONSOR STATEMENT

HJR 21 "Urging the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior to withdraw a secretarial order that creates a wild land classification and to administer federal lands in the state in accordance with existing statutes and agency guidelines; and urging the United States Congress to prohibit the use of appropriated funds by the United States Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management to implement, administer, or enforce the secretarial order."

House Joint Resolution 21 is a response and clear statement of opposition to an attempt by a Federal government department head to ignore Federal Statute and promote an agenda that is detrimental to and could essentially shut down Alaska's economy and unique culture.

On December 22, 2010, the United States Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar issued Secretarial Order number 3310 (S.O. 3310) directing the Bureau of Land Management to inventory and designate land with wilderness characteristics as "Wild Lands." This represents a new classification and is currently not legally defined, meaning the designation is based on a whim. S.O. 3310 may go so far as to seek wilderness status for areas of the National Petroleum Reserve, an area critical to the economy of not only Alaska but the entire United States.

S.O. 3310 violates Congressional Law for Alaska relating to land. Both the Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act (ANSCA) and Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) are in conflict with S.O. 3310 and supersede it since only Congress has the authority to designate wilderness areas.

HJR 21 asks Congress to use its power of appropriations to impress upon the Secretary of the Interior that implementing, administering and enforcing S.O. 3310 will be impossible. Passage of this resolution is critically important to the citizens of Alaska and will serve as a milestone for other states to stand up against this land grab and federal intrusion.