

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE BY REQUEST

Introduced: 2/13/15

Referred: Judiciary

A RESOLUTION

1 **Denouncing the decision to reverse the suspensions of the federal prosecutors who**
2 **intentionally withheld evidence of innocence from the defense of Senator Ted Stevens;**
3 **and honoring the service of Senator Ted Stevens.**

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

5 **WHEREAS** Theodore Fulton "Ted" Stevens, Sr., honorably served Alaska as a
6 United States senator from December 24, 1968, until January 3, 2009; and

7 **WHEREAS** Senator Stevens served longer than any senator of his party in United
8 States history; and

9 **WHEREAS** Senator Stevens was instrumental in crafting key federal legislation that
10 has immensely benefited Alaska, including, but certainly not limited to, the Alaska Native
11 Claims Settlement Act, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act, and the Magnuson-
12 Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; and

13 **WHEREAS** Senator Stevens was President pro tempore of the United States Senate
14 from 2003 to 2007 and was President pro tempore emeritus of the United States Senate from
15 2007 to 2009; and

1 **WHEREAS** Senator Stevens served in the Alaska House of Representatives from
2 1965 to 1968, serving as House Majority Leader during his second term; and

3 **WHEREAS** Senator Stevens was indicted on July 29, 2008, for allegedly failing to
4 disclose as a gift the value of renovations to his cabin in Girdwood, Alaska; and

5 **WHEREAS** Senator Stevens pled not guilty to the charges in United States District
6 Court on July 31, 2008; and

7 **WHEREAS** evidence presented at trial showed that Senator Stevens paid all bills for
8 work presented to him, and that he actually paid more than the renovations were worth; and

9 **WHEREAS**, after a trial, United States Attorney General Eric Holder asked that the
10 verdict of the jury be set aside after it was discovered that federal prosecutors unlawfully
11 withheld critical, exonerating evidence from the defense; and

12 **WHEREAS**, on April 7, 2009, United States District Judge Emmet G. Sullivan
13 granted the motion filed by the United States to set aside the verdict and dismiss the
14 indictment; the dismissal order includes the statement: "There was never a judgment of
15 conviction in this case. The jury's verdict is being set aside and has no legal effect."; and

16 **WHEREAS** Judge Sullivan appointed a special counsel to investigate the prosecutors,
17 and the special counsel's 2011 report on the case stated: "The investigation and prosecution of
18 United States Senator Ted Stevens were permeated by the systematic concealment of
19 significant exculpatory evidence which would have independently corroborated Senator
20 Stevens's defense and his testimony, and seriously damaged the testimony and credibility of
21 the government's key witness."; and

22 **WHEREAS**, on May 23, 2012, United States Associate Deputy Attorney General
23 Scott N. Schools issued a final decision approving the disciplinary action proposed by Kevin
24 Ohlson, chief of the Professional Misconduct Review Unit, that federal prosecutor Joseph
25 Bottini be suspended for 45 days and federal prosecutor James Goeke be suspended for 15
26 days; and

27 **WHEREAS**, on January 2, 2015, the United States Merit Systems Protection Board
28 upheld a 2013 ruling by an administrative judge finding that the United States Department of
29 Justice violated its own rules when it suspended prosecutors Joseph Bottini and James Goeke;

30 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the full and fair
31 exoneration of Senator Ted Stevens; and be it

1 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature denounces the decision to
2 reverse the suspensions of the federal prosecutors who intentionally withheld evidence from
3 the defense of Senator Ted Stevens; and be it

4 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that
5 the Alaska Bar Association determine whether any of the prosecutors involved in the Stevens
6 case violated the Alaska Rules of Professional Conduct; and be it

7 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes and honors the
8 long and distinguished leadership of Senator Ted Stevens on many issues that the state still
9 faces today, including access to federal land for oil, gas, and mineral development, the role of
10 Alaska in the nation's defense, and the need for adequate federal services for Alaskans and
11 others, and the legislature recognizes that Senator Ted Stevens's record and papers provide
12 insight and guidance into how the state can address those issues; and be it

13 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature honors the importance of
14 Senator Ted Stevens's service and legacy as a vital part of the history of Alaska.

15 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
16 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and
17 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr., Attorney General of the
18 United States; the Honorable Susan Tsui Grundmann, Chair of the U.S. Merit Systems
19 Protection Board; Loretta Lynch, nominee for Attorney General of the United States; Geoffry
20 B. Wildridge, President of the Alaska Bar Association; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski
21 and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
22 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.