



SENATOR JESSE KIEHL

SJR 11

Sponsor Statement

SJR 11 affirms the State of Alaska’s commitment to strong oil spill prevention and response efforts in Western Alaska and the U.S. Arctic. It makes clear that Alaska expects to be fully consulted and engaged when the U.S. Coast Guard implements standards Congress required under the Don Young Coast Guard Reauthorization Act (Sec. 11309 of the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act.)

The waters of Western Alaskan and the U.S. Arctic are vast, and don’t have the same commercial, Coast Guard, maritime organization, or volunteer vessel resources to respond to emergencies as the Lower 48. But ocean-going vessels carrying cargoes of fuel or oil must have plans in place to both prevent and clean up oil spills consistently and effectively. That’s doubly critical when the closest response may be hundreds of miles away.

The Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act requires the Coast Guard to develop standards for oil spill plans that consider the unique issues and attributes of Western Alaska and the U.S. Arctic. The Act requires full consultation with the State of Alaska, local governments, Tribes, and others. SJR 11 calls on the Coast Guard to consult in advance, rather than just consider the state’s comments on a federal register notice.

This resolution reaffirms Alaska’s strong commitment to balancing economic activity with environmental protection on the seas.