

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATOR DUNBAR

Introduced: 1/26/24

Referred: Community and Regional Affairs

A RESOLUTION

1 **Encouraging the United States Congress and the President of the United States to pass**
2 **and sign legislation amending the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to release certain**
3 **land held in trust back to affected Alaska Native village corporations.**

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

5 **WHEREAS**, in 1971, to resolve land claims of Alaska Native peoples, the United
6 States Congress passed, and President Richard Nixon signed into law, the Alaska Native
7 Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA); and

8 **WHEREAS** sec. 14(c)(3) of ANCSA required each Alaska Native village corporation
9 to convey a portion of the land it received to the state to be held in trust for a future municipal
10 government; and

11 **WHEREAS** out of the 101 villages in which Alaska Native village corporation land
12 has been held in trust for a future municipality under ANCSA, only eight villages have
13 incorporated, with the most recently established municipality being incorporated in 1995; and

14 **WHEREAS** there are 93 villages that have not decided to incorporate, with
15 approximately 11,500 acres of Alaska Native village corporation land currently held in trust

1 by the state; and

2 **WHEREAS** the requirement under ANCSA that land must be held in trust for a future
3 municipality was drafted over 50 years ago and is now a detriment to enabling Alaska Native
4 village corporations and communities to engage in economic development activities and use
5 the land to its full potential; and

6 **WHEREAS** amending ANCSA by removing the requirement that each Alaska Native
7 village corporation must have land held in trust for a future municipality will empower the
8 Alaska Native village corporations and communities to decide how to best use the land and
9 resources, leading to greater economic prosperity and self-sufficiency; and

10 **WHEREAS** Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan introduced in the United
11 States Senate and Representative Mary Peltola introduced in the United States House of
12 Representatives the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2023, which
13 restores the Alaska Native village corporation land, held in trust for the establishment of
14 future municipalities, to the Alaska Native village corporations;

15 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the United
16 States Congress to pass the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2023
17 or similar legislation in the 118th United States Congress that restores the land held in trust
18 under sec. 14(c)(3) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to the affected Alaska Native
19 village corporations; and be it

20 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the
21 President of the United States to sign the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration
22 Act of 2023 or similar legislation into law.

23 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President
24 of the United States; the Honorable Kamala D. Harris, Vice President of the United States and
25 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the U.S. House of
26 Representatives; the Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the
27 Honorable Deb Haaland, United States Secretary of the Interior; and the Honorable Lisa
28 Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Mary Peltola,
29 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.