



Alaska State Legislature

1969

Source:

HJR 57 am

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JOINT RESOLUTION

Requesting the construction of two additional sea-train slip facilities at the Port of Seward.

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

WHEREAS Seward, Alaska, the southern terminus of the Alaska Railroad, has served as the principal port of entry for steamships carrying freight destined for the interior of Alaska via the Alaska Railroad for over 50 years, and such transportation has been the major source of revenue for the community; and

WHEREAS the earthquake of March 27th, 1964, with the accompanying tidal wave, completely destroyed the freight handling facilities at the Port of Seward and forced steamship carriers engaged in Alaska shipping to seek alternate routes to the interior of Alaska, leaving Seward without a single scheduled carrier ship for nearly two years; and

WHEREAS the Task Force for the reconstruction of the 1964 disaster area recommended that the Port of Seward be restored to its former capacity and that the railroad track between Seward and Portage be rehabilitated and restored; and

WHEREAS subsequently a modern dock was constructed at the Port of Seward at a cost of approximately 15 million dollars, providing for berthing and unloading facilities for the conventional van carrying ships enroute from Seattle to Alaska, but no provision was made for sea-train slip unloading facilities; and

WHEREAS Seward Harbor is the only year-round ice free deep water port with three-way transportation access to the interior of Alaska by railroad, highway and airfield facilities; and

WHEREAS recognizing the increased volume of merchandise shipped to Alaska in rail cars, the Alaska Steamship Company, in

January of 1969, completely suspended the operation of vanships to the Port of Seward, leaving that port without shipping; and

WHEREAS, at present, when world conditions are so unsettled and millions of dollars are being spent for national defense, it would seem imperative that a three-way transportation access port of entry be continually maintained on an operational basis, so that in case of an international emergency it could be made available for the handling of emergency shipping to the interior of Alaska;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Sixth Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests in the interests of national defense, and the economic well-being of the state, the construction of two modern and adequate sea-train slip facilities at the year-round ice free deep water Port of Seward, Alaska.

COPIES of this Resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States; the Honorable John A. Volpe, Secretary of Transportation; the Honorable Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of Defense; the Honorable Walter J. Hickel, Secretary of the Interior; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Mike Gravel, U. S. Senators, and the Honorable Howard W. Pollock, U. S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.