



Alaska State Legislature

1976

Source:

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 53

Commending the United States Coast Guard.

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

WHEREAS in Alaska and its adjacent waters the officers and personnel, the vessels and aircraft, of the United States Coast Guard must patrol some of the world's most treacherous navigable waterways; and

WHEREAS this continuous patrol embraces 31,383 statute miles of tidal shoreline, a coastline longer than that of the remaining 49 states combined - some 50 per cent of the nation's entire coastal waters and 65 per cent of the continental shelf; in that marine environment the Coast Guard's fisheries patrol protects our state's most valuable renewable resource from incessant attempts at encroachment by ever-increasing numbers of vessels operating as a part of sophisticated foreign fishing fleets; and

WHEREAS, in pursuit of its principal mission of search and rescue from the air and on the sea, the Coast Guard has maintained a high standard of vigilance to ensure protection of human life; the heroic feats of Coast Guard men and women engaged in these life-saving endeavors are legion; and

WHEREAS since early territorial days the U.S. Coast Guard has played a significant role in effective law enforcement in Alaska; it has transported both territorial and state officers to remote communities where the only means of communication were Coast Guard ships or aircraft; and

WHEREAS frequently these sometimes near-impossible tasks have been accomplished with an inadequate complement of personnel

and equipment; and

WHEREAS the extension of control of our fisheries to a point 200 miles beyond the nation's shoreline will impose additional manpower and equipment burdens on the Coast Guard; and

WHEREAS one of the traditional functions of the Coast Guard has been to maintain and protect the lanes of commerce; perhaps nowhere in the world, surely nowhere in the United States, has that task proven a greater challenge than in Alaska: the opening of the icy passages of the Bering Straits and Arctic Ocean to the North Slope-bound "Sealift" during the summer of 1976 was testimony to the Coast Guard's effective response to the exigencies of nature; without the materials supplied by "Sealift '76" the timetable for completion of a project critical to the nation's energy needs and to national defense surely would have been set back; and

WHEREAS the development of a unique vessel traffic control system for the Port of Valdez and Prince William Sound, as an integral part of the marine leg of the trans-Alaska pipeline system, has required the installation of a sophisticated system of navigational controls designed to bring the world's largest oil tankers safely through some of the world's most hazardous waters - a responsibility that only could be met by a service whose long experience in Alaska has gained for it the intimate knowledge of, and respect for, the demands of the sea upon man and his ships;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature salutes the United States Coast Guard for its resourcefulness and intrepidity in the maintenance of effective surveillance programs and the initiation of swift, positive action for the protection of Alaskans for more than a century and extends the appreciation of the people of this state, acknowledging their indebtedness to the men and women of the United States Coast Guard for a job well done.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Gerald R. Ford, President of the United States; the Honorable William T. Coleman, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation; Admiral Owen W. Siler, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard; and to Rear Admiral John B. Hayes, Commander, 17th U.S. Coast Guard District.