

STATE OF ALASKA

THE LEGISLATURE

1982

Source

Legislative
Resolve No.

CSSJR 66(Trsp)

7



Relating to Coast Guard user fees.

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

WHEREAS the United States Coast Guard is considering a proposal to offset its operating costs by imposing user fees on boat owners; and

WHEREAS it is inappropriate to require boat owners, rather than the general public, to bear the cost of basic governmental functions, such as search and rescue, aiding navigation, and protecting the marine environment; and

WHEREAS it would be inequitable for boat owners to bear the entire cost of user fees, since in Alaska, unlike other states, the "users" of the above-mentioned Coast Guard services include not only boat owners, but also mountain climbers, hikers, hunters, users of canoes and kayaks, persons in need of medivac and other emergency aid in rural villages and remote areas, aviators who rely on navigation aids, and persons dependent upon marine shipments for necessities; and

WHEREAS the user fee rate structure being considered does not distinguish between domestic and foreign boat owners, even though foreign boat owners are not subject to other federal taxes that provide revenue for the Coast Guard; and

WHEREAS because the proposed user fee rate structure discriminates against small boat owners by establishing a single rate for all boats up to 100 tons gross weight, smaller gross weight classifications should be established; and

WHEREAS the user fees proposed for the owners of small fishing boats in Alaska would, in many cases, exceed the owners' annual net income and thereby force the owners out of business; and

WHEREAS the fixed rate structure for user fees being considered does not allow for adjustments during lean years in the Alaska commercial fishing industry; and

WHEREAS since Coast Guard services are almost entirely unavailable in many of the remote areas of Alaska, it is inequitable to charge owners in those remote areas the same fee charged vessel owners in areas that are well serviced by the Coast Guard;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that the President of the United States direct the Secretary of Transportation to reject the proposed imposition of Coast Guard user fees on boat owners, or in the alternative, to approve the proposed user fees only if the rate structure equitably distributes the economic burden of the fees among all users of Coast Guard services and avoids a severe economic impact on Alaska commercial fishermen.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald Reagan, President of the United States; the Honorable Drew Lewis, Secretary of Transportation; Admiral John B. Hayes, Commandant of the Coast Guard; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.