

STATE OF ALASKA

THE LEGISLATURE

1988

Source

SCR 44 am H

Legislative
Resolve No.

63



Relating to estimates of joblessness in the state.

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

WHEREAS, when the state Department of Labor compiles data on levels of employment and unemployment in the state, it is required to be consistent with definitions and methodology of the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics; and

WHEREAS, to be counted as unemployed under the definitions used by the department, a person must be actively looking for work unless the person has accepted a job and is waiting for the job to begin; and

WHEREAS village residents generally know of job availability in their areas and do not look for work when no jobs are available; and

WHEREAS, consequently, as household surveys have demonstrated, the definition of unemployment results in substantial underestimates of joblessness in rural Alaska; and

WHEREAS unemployment rates in urban areas suffering economic distress are also generally believed to be underestimates of the number of jobless persons; and

WHEREAS, like other states, Alaska's share of the four billion dollars in federal funding for programs of training, job services, and certain public works is based on levels of unemployment and does not consider the jobless rate; and

WHEREAS in this time of statewide economic distress, it becomes especially important that the governor and legislature be accurately informed of levels of joblessness throughout the state as they consider courses

of action to relieve economic distress and encourage recovery;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the governor is respectfully requested to direct the Department of Labor to review the available data and to advise the legislature by April 11, 1988, of its conclusions about levels of real joblessness in the state and what steps the legislature might take to encourage changes in the federal methodology guiding future unemployment data collection efforts so that unemployment information more nearly reflects information about joblessness.