

STATE OF ALASKA

THE LEGISLATURE

1988

Source

HJR 52

Legislative
Resolve No.

65



Opposing reductions in the budget of the United States Coast Guard.

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

WHEREAS the budget of the United States Coast Guard for fiscal year 1988 has been reduced by \$100,000,000; and

WHEREAS this budget reduction does not permit the Coast Guard to perform its mission, maintain its physical plant and equipment, and pay its personnel; and

WHEREAS the budget reductions will drastically and adversely affect the quality and quantity of services that the Coast Guard provides in the waters of and off Alaska; and

WHEREAS the Coast Guard in Alaska has performed 5,597 search and rescue missions in the last five years, saving 1,314 lives; and

WHEREAS the budget reductions will be felt in Alaska as

- (1) an absence of law enforcement to prevent fishing violations in the Gulf of Alaska and the waters of Southeast Alaska;
- (2) a reduction in the number and duration of fishery patrols in the Bering Sea due to the reduction in the operations of the high endurance and medium endurance cutters and long range aircraft necessary to conduct these patrols;
- (3) elimination of six VHF-FM coastal distress radio sites;
- (4) reduction of staffing at the Marine Safety Office at Valdez, the southern terminus of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline;

(5) an increased possibility that lighted aids to navigation will become extinguished before they can be serviced; and

(6) numerous other reductions in services provided to mariners and the public; and

WHEREAS there is evidence of extensive illegal fishing in the 200-mile fishing zone in the Bering Sea by foreign fishing vessels; and

WHEREAS 129 different foreign vessels were sighted in the international waters of the Bering Sea during 1987; and

WHEREAS inadequate enforcement of foreign fishing results in over exploitation of the fish stocks and deprives American fishermen and processing workers of their jobs and the United States of a market for its fishery products, thus eliminating an opportunity to correct the imbalance of trade with Japan and other countries; and

WHEREAS fishermen, sailors, and boaters on the waters of and off Alaska rely on the vital service the Coast Guard provides by being on call 24 hours of each day to assist in the protection of property and the lives of those who are in peril at sea; and

WHEREAS the reductions in the budget of the Coast Guard for meeting its operational responsibilities puts the lives of our friends and neighbors at risk;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully expresses its strongest possible objection to the reductions that have been made to the United States Coast Guard budget for fiscal year 1988; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that the budget for the Coast Guard be restored to that level necessary to allow the Coast Guard to fully perform its mission, maintain its physical plant and equipment, and pay its active and retired personnel.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald Reagan, President of the United States; to the Honorable George Bush, Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; to the Honorable James H. Burnley IV, Secretary of Transportation; to Admiral Paul A. Yost, Jr., Coast Guard Commandant; to Rear Admiral Edward Nelson, Jr., Commander 17th Coast Guard District; to the Honorable Jim Wright, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; to the Honorable John C. Stennis, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations; to the Honorable Jamie L. Whitten, Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations; 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.