

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 12

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

NINETEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATORS TAYLOR, Pearce

Introduced: 1/25/95

Referred: Resources

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service; relating**
2 **to the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, strategic plan**
3 **known as "Reinvention of the Forest Service"; and advocating that implementation**
4 **of the plan be suspended pending Congressional review and consultation with local**
5 **governments.**

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

7 **WHEREAS** the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, has issued
8 a new strategic plan known as "Reinvention of the Forest Service"; and

9 **WHEREAS** this plan has far-reaching implications and was developed without
10 consultation with key elected leaders, including state governors, members of the United States
11 Congress, or community and tribal government leaders in contradiction of President Clinton's
12 Executive Order No. 12875 "Enhancing Intergovernmental Partnerships"; and

13 **WHEREAS** Vice-President Gore's "Report on Reinventing Government" was
14 developed with the promised intent of empowering local governments and decentralizing
15 decision-making power; and

1 **WHEREAS** the "Reinvention of the Forest Service" strategic plan approved by
2 Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy, just before his resignation, eliminates the very foundation
3 of locally based authority that had the responsibility of working with states, local communities,
4 and tribal governments and masks and diffuses decision-making authority and withdraws it
5 to Washington, D.C., making the Forest Service less responsive to local concerns; and

6 **WHEREAS** moving the Alaska Region Forest Service office to Portland, Oregon, is
7 an example of the flawed science being used to define ecosystems and ecological boundaries;
8 and

9 **WHEREAS** the newly defined purpose of the Forest Service to promote the
10 sustainability of ecosystems without specifically retaining the traditional Forest Service
11 objective of promoting community stability has already created problems and crises for
12 hundreds of communities dependent upon the national forests and state and private forest
13 ecosystems; and

14 **WHEREAS** the new strategic plan has seemingly turned away from commitment
15 towards providing a continuous flow of renewable resources to meet the public need, as
16 directed in the Organic Act, Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960, the National Forest
17 Management Act, and other Acts of the Congress; and

18 **WHEREAS**, under the new strategic plan, the Forest Service is more inclined to
19 present a nebulous plan for ecosystem management where resource yields are simply the
20 by-products of management, with no predictable flows or commitments to supply levels to
21 sustain human life;

22 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls upon the newly designated
23 Secretary of Agriculture to suspend implementation of the reinvention project's strategic plan
24 approved by Secretary Espy to allow for Congressional review and for consultation with local
25 governments; and be it

26 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest
27 Service, conduct true partnership meetings with states, communities, and tribal governments
28 to develop a new strategic plan; and be it

29 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Forest Service acknowledge the United States
30 Department of Agriculture's legal obligations to rebuild, restore, and promote the economic
31 stability of forest dependent communities; and be it

1 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that, in keeping with federal law, timber commodities are
2 a primary not a residual value of forest management; and be it

3 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that Forest Service employee compensation and cost-of-
4 living allowance be reflective of timber production, and be it

5 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest
6 Service, through a true partnership with local communities, identify and implement strategies
7 for decentralizing decision making and empowering state and local governments to more
8 effectively manage forest ecosystems to assure community stability, improve service to the
9 public, and reduce government cost.

10 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the
11 United States; the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President
12 of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Dan Glickman, Secretary of Agriculture; the Honorable
13 Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior; Jack Ward Thomas, Chief of the Forest Service, U.S.
14 Department of Agriculture; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank
15 Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of
16 the Alaska delegation in Congress.