

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

NINETEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATORS RIEGER, Taylor, Adams, Ellis

Introduced: 2/15/95

Referred: HES

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Supporting the Alaska Humanities Forum and the National Endowment for the**  
2 **Humanities; endorsing federal legislation reauthorizing and funding the National**  
3 **Endowment for the Humanities; requesting the United States Congress to fund the**  
4 **National Endowment for the Humanities at a fair and reasonable level; and**  
5 **urging the President of the United States to support legislation reauthorizing and**  
6 **funding at a fair and reasonable level the National Endowment for the**  
7 **Humanities.**

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

9       **WHEREAS** the Alaska Humanities Forum was founded in 1972 to create a dialogue  
10 among Alaska citizens through the methods and perspectives of those disciplines collectively  
11 known as the humanities in order to encourage the peoples of Alaska to learn from one  
12 another and explore what it means to be human; and

13       **WHEREAS** the humanities include, but are not limited to, the disciplines of history,  
14 anthropology, linguistics, archaeology, philosophy, and comparative religion, but the  
15 humanities expand beyond these disciplines that are usually seen as the province of scholars

1 and academic institutions, and the humanities are in fact rooted in the everyday experiences  
2 and concerns of ordinary individuals; and

3       **WHEREAS** in the years since its inception, the Alaska Humanities Forum has awarded  
4 more than \$7,000,000 to nonprofit organizations and has committed individuals to engage in  
5 humanities projects of direct significance to Alaska citizens; these projects range from  
6 videographic documentaries on Alaska Native tradition bearers and speakers of nearly extinct  
7 languages, to public meetings on northern architecture and the financing of state government,  
8 and to youth summits meant to give the next generation of Alaska citizens a better focus on  
9 and control of their destinies; and

10       **WHEREAS**, in 1993, more than 75,000 Alaska citizens participated in projects and  
11 programs supported by the Alaska Humanities Forum; and

12       **WHEREAS** the Alaska Humanities Forum encourages the development of local  
13 community support for worthwhile endeavors by requiring grant recipients to match or exceed  
14 the amount they are granted, and in the 1994 fiscal year the Forum's awards of \$262,000  
15 stimulated more than \$1,400,000 worth of other community support, demonstrating how  
16 effectively Forum support acts as seed money attracting private sources to support humanities  
17 activities; and

18       **WHEREAS** a project recently funded by the Alaska Humanities Forum, "Anne Frank  
19 in the World, 1929 - 1945: Picture a World without Prejudice," was considered so outstanding  
20 and exemplary by the national Federation of State Humanities Councils that it was awarded  
21 the prestigious Schwarz Award as the year's best community initiated public humanities  
22 project in the entire country; and

23       **WHEREAS** when all Alaska citizens are given a clear opportunity to learn, minds are  
24 opened by education, attitudes can change for the better, and stereotypes that hurt society can  
25 disappear; and

26       **WHEREAS** the continued life of the Alaska Humanities Forum is at the heart of the  
27 efforts of Alaska citizens to apply traditional wisdom to current concerns, to search as  
28 individuals and as a society for a sense of place and personal and group identity, to explore  
29 divergent points of view, and to engage in community based discussions of the many facets  
30 of our lives; and

31       **WHEREAS** the Alaska Humanities Forum works closely with churches, historical

1 groups, libraries, museums, universities, and interested individuals and organizations to provide  
2 the greatest single source of financial support for humanities projects in Alaska; and

3 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Humanities Forum is a private, nonprofit corporation affiliated  
4 with the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Forum depends on financial support  
5 from the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as grants from private corporations,  
6 foundations, and individuals for its continued existence; and

7 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Humanities Forum has raised increasing amounts of private  
8 donations to fund its operations and programs in recent years, realizing the necessity to  
9 diversify its bases of support so its support is as diverse as the projects supported, and to  
10 minimize its reliance on public funds; and

11 **WHEREAS** the new Republican leadership of the United States Congress is firmly  
12 committed to scrutinizing all components of the federal budget in order to eliminate  
13 unnecessary expenditures, making it essential that the tremendous value of programs supported  
14 by the National Endowment for the Humanities be made clear to all members of the Congress,  
15 as they fulfill their duties as public servants dedicated to reducing the immense size of the  
16 federal budget; and

17 **WHEREAS**, while the Alaska Humanities Forum creates and refines a plan for making  
18 the transition to a future where it is funded more and more by private donations from  
19 individuals, corporations, and foundations, and less and less by federal appropriations, during  
20 the years needed to make the transition, the Forum's existence depends on the existence of  
21 the National Endowment for the Humanities; and

22 **WHEREAS** the United States Congress and President of the United States must hear  
23 from the people of the country in order to know what agencies and programs are valued for  
24 the positive effects they have on individual lives;

25 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature endorses legislation  
26 reauthorizing the National Endowment for the Humanities because the Endowment's support  
27 of the Alaska Humanities Forum is essential to the Forum's work in support of the humanities  
28 in Alaska; and be it

29 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the  
30 United States Congress to fund the National Endowment for the Humanities at a fair and  
31 reasonable level; and be it

1           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the  
2 President of the United States to support legislation that would reauthorize the National  
3 Endowment for the Humanities and fund its operations at a fair and reasonable level.

4           **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the  
5 United States; the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President  
6 of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Strom Thurmond, President Pro Tempore of the U.S.  
7 Senate; the Honorable Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the  
8 Honorable Robert Dole, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens  
9 and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.  
10 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.