

CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14(STA)
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 3/14/97

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES JAMES, Barnes, Hodgins, Sanders, Masek, Martin, Kemplen, Phillips, Cowdery, Vezey, Ryan, Porter, Ogan

A RESOLUTION

1 Relating to supporting the "American Land Sovereignty Protection Act."

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

3 WHEREAS the United Nations has designated 67 sites in the United States as "World
4 Heritage Sites" or "Biosphere Reserves," which altogether are about equal in size to the State
5 of Colorado, the eighth largest state; and

6 WHEREAS art. IV, sec. 3, United States Constitution, provides that the United States
7 Congress shall make all needed regulations governing lands belonging to the United States;
8 and

9 WHEREAS many of the United Nations' designations include private property
10 inholdings and contemplate "buffer zones" of adjacent land; and

11 WHEREAS some international land designations such as those under the United States
12 Biosphere Reserve Program and the Man and Biosphere Program of the United Nations
13 Scientific, Educational, and Culture Organization operate under independent national
14 committees such as the United States National Man and Biosphere Committee that have no
15 legislative directives or authorization from the Congress; and

16 WHEREAS these international designations as presently handled are an open invitation
17 to the international community to interfere in domestic economies and land use decisions; and

1 **WHEREAS** local citizens and public officials concerned about job creation and
2 resource based economies usually have no say in the designation of land near their homes for
3 inclusion in an international land use program; and

4 **WHEREAS** former Assistant Secretary of the Interior George T. Frampton, Jr., and
5 the President used the fact that Yellowstone National Park had been designated as a "World
6 Heritage Site" as justification for intervening in the environmental impact statement process
7 and blocking possible development of an underground mine on private land in Montana
8 outside of the park; and

9 **WHEREAS** a recent designation of a portion of Kamchatka as a "World Heritage Site"
10 was followed immediately by efforts from environmental groups to block investment insurance
11 for development projects on Kamchatka that are supported by the local communities; and

12 **WHEREAS** environmental groups and the National Park Service have been working
13 to establish an International Park, a World Heritage Site, and a Marine Biosphere Reserve
14 covering parts of western Alaska, eastern Russia, and the Bering Sea; and

15 **WHEREAS**, as occurred in Montana, such designations could be used to block
16 development projects on state and private land in western Alaska; and

17 **WHEREAS** foreign companies and countries could use such international designations
18 in western Alaska to block economic development that they perceive as competition; and

19 **WHEREAS** animal rights activists could use such international designations to
20 generate pressure to harass or block harvesting of marine mammals by Alaska Natives; and

21 **WHEREAS** such international designations could be used to harass or block any
22 commercial activity, including pipelines, railroads, and power transmission lines; and

23 **WHEREAS** the President and the executive branch of the United States have, by
24 Executive Order and other agreements, implemented these designations without approval by
25 the Congress; and

26 **WHEREAS** actions by the President in applying international agreements to lands
27 owned by the United States may circumvent the Congress; and

28 **WHEREAS** Congressman Don Young introduced House Resolution No. 901 in the
29 105th Congress entitled the "American Lands Sovereignty Protection Act of 1997" that
30 required the explicit approval of the Congress prior to restricting any use of United States land
31 under international agreements;

1 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the "American Lands
2 Sovereignty Protection Act" that reaffirms the constitutional authority of the Congress as the
3 elected representatives of the people over the land of the United States.

4 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the
5 Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
6 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.