

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 56

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES HUDSON, Williams, Kookesh, Dyson

Introduced: 2/11/98

Referred: Resources

A RESOLUTION

**1 Relating to yttrium mining and transfer of the linear induction motor research
2 vehicle to Alaska.**

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

4 WHEREAS yttrium bearing and other rare earth minerals have been identified in large
5 quantities on Prince of Wales Island, and the quantity is sufficient to establish facilities for
6 the mining of yttrium on Prince of Wales Island; and

7 WHEREAS the Prince of Wales deposits are the only known deposits of yttrium
8 bearing minerals in North America; and

9 WHEREAS, based on the present world market, one pound of 99.9999 pure yttrium
10 has a market value of \$320,000; and

11 WHEREAS the presence of yttrium in the state offers Southeast Alaska an economic
12 development opportunity in the areas of mining, refining, research, and manufacturing; and

13 WHEREAS yttrium mining activity on Prince of Wales Island could result in
14 transportation of the extracted materials to the Metlakatla/Ketchikan area for further refining
15 and processing; and

16 WHEREAS the local availability of refined yttrium metal would promote the

1 establishment of a major research and manufacturing facility for yttrium-based products in
2 Metlakatla and Ketchikan, resulting in new career opportunities for Alaskans; and

3 **WHEREAS** products manufactured using yttrium and technology involving yttrium
4 include powerful frictionless motors and magnetic levitation equipment for use in
5 transportation systems, superconducting fault limiters, electromagnetic mass launchers, and
6 yttrium coated tapes and wire; yttrium wire can also be used in medical equipment, including
7 field magnets in MRI-scanning machines; and

8 **WHEREAS** the firm of Power Superconductor Applications Corporation, based in
9 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has expressed an interest in working with the state to establish
10 manufacturing and research facilities in the Metlakatla/Ketchikan area using the local
11 workforce and local facilities, including establishment of a high speed test track at the vacant
12 Annette Field at Metlakatla; and

13 **WHEREAS** Power Superconductor Applications Corporation has requested assistance
14 from the state in securing use of a 30-ton linear induction motor research vehicle (LIMRV)
15 currently in storage by the Federal Railroad Administration; and

16 **WHEREAS** the LIMRV is expected to become part of a four-year based retrofit and
17 research project involving yttrium, yttrium products, and yttrium technology; and

18 **WHEREAS** the retrofit and research project is expected to start in 1998 and is
19 expected to lead to the establishment of a new \$3,100,000 yttrium and yttrium products
20 manufacturing facility in the Metlakatla/Ketchikan area, employing 55 Alaskans; once transfer
21 of the LIMRV to the State of Alaska takes place, 15 new jobs for Alaskans are expected to
22 be established immediately; and

23 **WHEREAS** requests for funding to establish new yttrium industrial and research
24 sectors in Southeast Alaska are not currently being made by the state;

25 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature would welcome a transfer of the
26 linear induction motor research vehicle (LIMRV) to the state as a federal contribution to
27 establishment of a new industrial and research sector located near Metlakatla and Ketchikan,
28 the only known North American source of the valuable metal yttrium; and be it

29 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Federal Railroad
30 Administration, the Alaska Congressional delegation, and the Governor to facilitate transfer
31 of the LIMRV to Alaska for a period of at least four years.

1 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to Ms. Jolene M. Molitoris, Administrator,
2 Federal Railroad Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation; and to the Honorable Ted
3 Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young,
4 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.