

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 9

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATORS PEARCE, Adams, Green, Parnell, Taylor, Miller, Mackie, Donley, Sharp, Leman, Phillips

Introduced: 1/29/97

Referred: Resources

A RESOLUTION

**1 Urging the United States Congress to pass legislation to open the coastal plain
2 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, to oil and gas exploration,
3 development, and production.**

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

5 WHEREAS, in sec. 1002 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act
6 (ANILCA), the United States Congress reserved the right to permit further oil and gas
**7 exploration, development, and production within the coastal plain of the Arctic National
8 Wildlife Refuge, Alaska; and**

9 WHEREAS the oil industry, the state, and the United States Department of the Interior
**10 consider the coastal plain to have the highest potential for discovery of very large oil and gas
11 accumulations on the continent of North America, estimated to be as much as 10,000,000,000
12 barrels of recoverable oil; and**

13 WHEREAS the residents of the North Slope Borough, within which the coastal plain
14 is located, are supportive of development in the "1002 study area"; and

15 WHEREAS oil and gas exploration and development of the coastal plain of the refuge
16 and adjacent land could result in major discoveries that would reduce our nation's future need

1 for imported oil, help balance the nation's trade deficit, and significantly increase the nation's
2 security; and

3 **WHEREAS** demand for oil consumed in the United States rose by 2.5 percent in the
4 past year and domestic crude production continued to fall to 6,460,000 barrels per day;
5 consequently, the percentage of oil imported from foreign sources increased to more than 52
6 percent, and the price of imported oil increased over 35 percent in the year; and

7 **WHEREAS** development of oil at Prudhoe Bay, Kuparuk, Endicott, Lisburne, and
8 Milne Point has resulted in thousands of jobs throughout the United States, and projected job
9 creation as a result of coastal plain oil development will have a positive effect in all 50 states;
10 and

11 **WHEREAS** Prudhoe Bay production is declining by approximately 10 percent a year;
12 and

13 **WHEREAS**, while new oil field developments on the North Slope of Alaska, such as
14 Alpine, Badami and West Sak, may slow or temporarily stop the decline in production, only
15 giant coastal plain fields have the theoretical capability of increasing the production volume
16 of Alaska oil to a significant degree; and

17 **WHEREAS** opening the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge now
18 allows sufficient time for planning environmental safeguards, development, and national
19 security review; and

20 **WHEREAS** the oil and gas industry and related state employment have been severely
21 affected by reduced oil and gas activity, and the reduction in industry investment and
22 employment has broad implications for the state's work force and the entire state economy;
23 and

24 **WHEREAS** the 1,500,000-acre coastal plain of the refuge comprises only eight percent
25 of the 19,000,000-acre refuge, and the development of the oil and gas reserves in the refuge's
26 coastal plain would affect an area of only 2,000 to 7,000 acres, which is less than one-half of
27 one percent of the area of the coastal plain; and

28 **WHEREAS** 8,000,000 of the 19,000,000 acres of the refuge have already been set
29 aside as wilderness; and

30 **WHEREAS** the oil industry has shown at Prudhoe Bay, as well as at other locations
31 along the Arctic coastal plain, that it can safely conduct oil and gas activity without adversely

1 affecting the environment or wildlife populations; and

2 **WHEREAS** the oil industry is using innovative technology and environmental
3 practices in the new field developments at Alpine and North Star, and those techniques are
4 directly applicable to operating on the coastal plain and would enhance environmental
5 protection beyond traditionally high standards; and

6 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the Congress of the United
7 States is urged to pass legislation to open the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife
8 Refuge, Alaska, to oil and gas exploration, development, and production; and be it

9 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that that activity be conducted in a manner that protects the
10 environment and uses the state's work force to the maximum extent possible.

11 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the
12 United States; the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and president
13 of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Newt
14 Gingrich, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Trent Lott, Majority
15 Leader of the U.S. Senate; to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski,
16 U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska
17 delegation in Congress; and to all other members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of
18 Representatives serving in the 105th United States Congress.