

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Introduced: 2/17/97

Referred: Finance

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to reauthorization of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation**
2 **Efficiency Act of 1991.**

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

4 **WHEREAS** the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
5 (ISTEA) substantially revamped the federal-aid highway program and the federal
6 transportation program; and

7 **WHEREAS** ISTEA gave more flexibility to state and local governments to apply
8 innovative solutions to the transportation problems that they face; and

9 **WHEREAS** ISTEA has shifted the focus of the federal surface transportation program
10 toward preservation of highway and transit systems, increased efficiency of existing
11 transportation networks, and integration of transportation modes to enhance efficiency of the
12 transportation system; and

13 **WHEREAS** the states and regional and local governments have invested time and
14 energy in making ISTEA work and this investment should not be lost by significantly altering
15 the programs initiated by ISTEA; and

16 **WHEREAS** the ISTEA programs can be strengthened by allowing greater flexibility

1 between programs and within programs, by allowing greater flexibility to address maintenance
2 needs, by reducing time-consuming federal reviews, mandates, and sanctions, and by allowing
3 self-certification at the state level; and

4 **WHEREAS** Congress should retain the critical role of the federal government to help
5 fund highway, bridge, ferry, and transit projects and to focus the national transportation policy
6 on mobility, connectivity, integrity, safety, and economic competitiveness; and

7 **WHEREAS** the State of Alaska receives money under ISTEA for construction and
8 improvement of roads, highways, and the marine highway system and for bridge replacement
9 and rehabilitation, state and metropolitan transportation planning, transit programs, highway
10 safety programs, and enforcement of truck and bus safety requirements; and

11 **WHEREAS** the state also receives assistance under ISTEA for transportation projects
12 to alleviate air pollution in two areas of the state where air quality does not meet national
13 ambient air quality standards; and

14 **WHEREAS** 4,300 miles, or about 32 percent of the total mileage, of roads in the state
15 are eligible for federal assistance under ISTEA; and

16 **WHEREAS** the State of Alaska has relied heavily on federal assistance to support
17 construction and improvement of the surface transportation system in the state; and

18 **WHEREAS** continued federal assistance is essential to the establishment of the surface
19 transportation system in the state; and

20 **WHEREAS** the existing surface transportation system in Alaska needs significant
21 repair and maintenance in order to remain a safe and efficient system; and

22 **WHEREAS** the State of Alaska cannot maintain or expand the surface transportation
23 system in Alaska without continued federal assistance; and

24 **WHEREAS** the funding authorizations for federal assistance and transportation
25 programs under ISTEA will expire September 30, 1997;

26 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the
27 Congress to reauthorize the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
28 (ISTEA) as soon as possible; and be it

29 **FURTHER RESOLVED** the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the
30 Congress to authorize increased funding for surface transportation projects under ISTEA, if
31 possible, but, in any case, to maintain the current levels of funding available under ISTEA;

1 and be it

2 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the
3 Congress to authorize greater use of ISTEA funds for maintenance and repair of existing roads
4 and highways.

5 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President
6 of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Newt Gingrich, Speaker
7 of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable John McCain, Chair, Committee on
8 Commerce, Science, and Transportation, U.S. Senate; and the Honorable Bud Shuster, Chair,
9 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable
10 Rodney E. Slater, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation; and to the Honorable Ted
11 Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young,
12 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.