

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 11

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES PHILLIPS, James, Harris, Whitaker, Smalley, Rokeberg, Porter, Austerman, Hudson, Ogan, Mulder, Foster, Dyson, Green, Coghill, Barnes, Halcro, Williams, Bunde, Morgan, Murkowski, Joule

Introduced: 2/5/99

Referred: House Special Committee on Oil and Gas, Resources

SENATORS Mackie, Donley, Wilken, Green, Taylor, Tim Kelly, Adams, Ward, Halford

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** domestic demand for oil continues to rise while domestic crude
4 production continues to fall with the result that the United States imported additional oil from
5 foreign sources; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

10 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the
11 United States; the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and president
12 of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable
13 Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Trent Lott,
14 Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank
15 Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of
16 the Alaska delegation in Congress; and to all other members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S.
17 House of Representatives serving in the 106th United States Congress.