

**STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE**

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Source

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**Legislative
Resolve No.**

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Encouraging the United States Congress to pass S. 2214, a bill opening the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to responsible exploration, development, and production of its oil and gas resources.

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

WHEREAS, in 1973, during the Arab oil embargo, the United States was 36 percent dependent on foreign supplies, while today the United States relies on imports to supply over 56 percent of its energy consumption; and

WHEREAS, in the last eight years, the nation's demand for petroleum products has grown by 14 percent while domestic production has declined by 17 percent; and

WHEREAS, by 2020, the United States expects to be 64 percent dependent on other countries to fuel its industry, transportation, and homes; and

WHEREAS United States consumers are paying the price, with home heating oil costs in the Northeastern states surpassing \$1.70 a gallon, while gasoline prices have climbed to \$2 a gallon for mid-range gasoline in California; and

WHEREAS some airplane passengers are currently paying a \$20 fuel surcharge on tickets; and

WHEREAS the nation's growing reliance on foreign oil is strengthening the aggressive pricing policies of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC); and

WHEREAS the United States is currently receiving 44 percent of its imported oil from OPEC countries, including 1,400,000 barrels a day from Saudi Arabia and 700,000 barrels a day from Iraq; and

WHEREAS Iraq has emerged as the fastest growing source of United States oil imports; and

WHEREAS the United States is spending \$300,000,000 a day on foreign oil, accounting for one-third of the entire trade deficit; and

WHEREAS the United States Secretary of Energy recently visited the OPEC countries of Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait and non-OPEC member Mexico to urge increased production, but did not visit Alaska; and

WHEREAS it will take 10,000 dockings of foreign supertankers carrying 500,000 barrels of oil each to provide 65 percent of the nation's oil needs in 2020; and

WHEREAS, if the United States is going to reduce its dependence on foreign oil, it must look toward domestic sources, including Alaska's Arctic; and

WHEREAS federal legislation has been introduced by Senator Murkowski calling for the opening of the 1,500,000-acre coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to environmentally sound exploration, development, and production of oil and gas resources; and

WHEREAS the coastal plain is America's best possibility for the discovery of another giant, Prudhoe Bay-sized oil and gas discovery in North America; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, a three-year study by the United States Geological Survey estimated the recoverable oil potential of the coastal plain to be as high as 16,000,000,000 barrels of oil, which could replace Saudi oil imports to the United States for 30 years; and

WHEREAS the vast majority of Alaskans, including the Native residents of Kaktovik, the only community located in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, supports coastal plain development; and

WHEREAS the state will ensure the continued health and productivity of the Porcupine Caribou herd and the protection of land, water, and wildlife resources during the exploration and development of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS coastal plain development could provide hundreds of thousands of jobs

and billions of dollars in government revenue, and could contribute billions of dollars to the nation's economy; and

WHEREAS many national groups may argue against the development of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge gas reserves because there is no vehicle to bring the gas to market;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska Legislature supports Alaska's role in providing this nation with a major portion of its domestic oil and encourages the United States Congress to pass S. 2214, a bill opening the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to responsible exploration, development, and production of its oil and gas resources; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that oil exploration and development activity be conducted in a manner that protects the wildlife and the environment and utilizes the state's work force to the maximum extent possible; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Legislature opposes any efforts to declare the coastal plain a national monument; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Legislature urges the current leaseholders on the North Slope to make every effort to promptly build a natural gas pipeline to bring Alaska's natural gas to market and thereby avoiding resistance by national organizations that the gas resources in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge would be stranded.

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