

**CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15(WTR)**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

**BY THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON WORLD TRADE AND STATE/FEDERAL RELATIONS**

**Offered: 3/5/99**

**Referred: Resources**

**Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE JAMES**

**A RESOLUTION**

**1 Relating to support for the "American Land Sovereignty Protection Act" in the  
2 United States Congress.**

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

**4 WHEREAS** the United Nations has designated 67 sites in the United States as "World  
**5 Heritage Sites" or "Biosphere Reserves," which altogether are about equal in size to the State  
6 of Colorado, the eighth largest state; and**

**7 WHEREAS** art. IV, sec. 3, United States Constitution, provides that the United States  
**8 Congress shall make all needed regulations governing lands belonging to the United States;  
9 and**

**10 WHEREAS** many of the United Nations' designations include private property  
**11 inholdings and contemplate "buffer zones" of adjacent land; and**

**12 WHEREAS** some international land designations such as those under the United States  
**13 Biosphere Reserve Program and the Man and Biosphere Program of the United Nations  
14 Scientific, Educational, and Culture Organization operate under independent national  
15 committees such as the United States National Man and Biosphere Committee that have no  
16 legislative directives or authorization from the Congress; and**

1           **WHEREAS** these international designations as presently handled are an open invitation  
2 to the international community to interfere in domestic economies and land use decisions; and

3           **WHEREAS** local citizens and public officials concerned about job creation and  
4 resource based economies usually have no say in the designation of land near their homes for  
5 inclusion in an international land use program; and

6           **WHEREAS** former Assistant Secretary of the Interior George T. Frampton, Jr., and  
7 the President used the fact that Yellowstone National Park had been designated as a "World  
8 Heritage Site" as justification for intervening in the environmental impact statement process  
9 and blocking possible development of an underground mine on private land in Montana  
10 outside of the park; and

11           **WHEREAS** a recent designation of a portion of Kamchatka as a "World Heritage Site"  
12 was followed immediately by efforts from environmental groups to block investment insurance  
13 for development projects on Kamchatka that are supported by the local communities; and

14           **WHEREAS** environmental groups and the National Park Service have been working  
15 to establish an International Park, a World Heritage Site, and a Marine Biosphere Reserve  
16 covering parts of western Alaska, eastern Russia, and the Bering Sea; and

17           **WHEREAS**, as occurred in Montana, such designations could be used to block  
18 development projects on state and private land in western Alaska; and

19           **WHEREAS** foreign companies and countries could use such international designations  
20 in western Alaska to block economic development that they perceive as competition; and

21           **WHEREAS** animal rights activists could use such international designations to  
22 generate pressure to harass or block harvesting of marine mammals by Alaska Natives; and

23           **WHEREAS** such international designations could be used to harass or block any  
24 commercial activity, including pipelines, railroads, and power transmission lines; and

25           **WHEREAS** the President and the executive branch of the United States have, by  
26 Executive Order and other agreements, implemented these designations without approval by  
27 the Congress; and

28           **WHEREAS** the United States Department of Interior, in cooperation with the Federal  
29 Interagency Panel for World Heritage, has identified the Aleutian Island Unit of the Alaska  
30 Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Cape Krusenstern  
31 National Monument, Denali National Park, Gates of the Arctic National Park, and Katmai

1 National Park as likely to meet the criteria for future nomination as World Heritage Sites; and  
2           **WHEREAS** the Alaska State Legislature objects to the nomination or designation of  
3 any World Heritage Sites or Biosphere Reserves in Alaska without the specific consent of the  
4 Alaska State Legislature; and

5           **WHEREAS** actions by the President in applying international agreements to lands  
6 owned by the United States may circumvent the Congress; and

7           **WHEREAS** Congressman Don Young introduced House Resolution No. 901 in the  
8 105th Congress entitled the "American Land Sovereignty Protection Act of 1997" that required  
9 the explicit approval of the Congress prior to restricting any use of United States land under  
10 international agreements; and

11           **WHEREAS** Congressman Don Young has reintroduced this legislation in the 106th  
12 Congress as House Resolution No. 833, which is entitled the "American Land Sovereignty  
13 Protection Act";

14           **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports House Resolution 833,  
15 the "American Land Sovereignty Protection Act," that reaffirms the constitutional authority  
16 of the Congress as the elected representatives of the people over the federally owned land of  
17 the United States and urges the swift introduction and passage of such act by the 106th  
18 Congress; and be it

19           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature objects to the nomination  
20 or designation of any sites in Alaska as World Heritage Sites or Biosphere Reserves without  
21 the prior consent of the Alaska State Legislature.

22           **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the  
23 United States; Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of  
24 the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Trent Lott, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable  
25 J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; and to the Honorable Ted  
26 Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young,  
27 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.