

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 7

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES MASEK, Ogan, James, Wilson

Introduced: 1/16/01

Referred: House Special Committee on Oil and Gas, Resources

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to pass legislation to open the coastal plain of the**
2 **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, to oil and gas exploration, development, and**
3 **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
10 Interior consider the coastal plain to have the highest potential for discovery of very large oil
11 and gas accumulations on the continent of North America, estimated to be as much as
12 10,000,000,000 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

1 and adjacent land could result in major discoveries that would reduce our nation's future need
2 for imported oil, help balance the nation's trade deficit, and significantly increase the nation's
3 security; and

4 **WHEREAS** domestic demand for oil continues to rise while domestic crude
5 production continues to fall with the result that the United States imports additional oil from
6 foreign sources; 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 makes up only eight
25 percent of the 19,000,000-acre refuge, and the development of the oil and gas reserves in the
26 refuge's coastal plain would affect an area of only 2,000 to 7,000 acres, which is less than
27 one-half of 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 state will ensure the continued health and productivity of the
3 Porcupine Caribou herd and the protection of land, water, and wildlife resources during the
4 exploration and development of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge,
5 Alaska; and

6 **WHEREAS** the oil industry is using innovative technology and environmental
7 practices in the new field developments at Alpine and Northstar, and those techniques are
8 directly applicable to operating on the coastal plain and would enhance environmental
9 protection beyond traditionally high standards;

10 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the Congress of the United
11 States is urged to pass legislation to open the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife
12 Refuge, Alaska, to oil and gas exploration, development, and production, and that the Alaska
13 State Legislature is adamantly opposed to further wilderness or other restrictive designation in
14 the area of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska; and be it

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

17 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George W. Bush, President-
18 elect of the United States; the Honorable Richard B. Cheney, Vice-President-elect of the
19 United States and president-elect of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Gale Norton, Secretary of
20 the Interior-designee; the Honorable J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the U.S. House of
21 Representatives; the Honorable Trent Lott, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; to the
22 Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the
23 Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress;
24 and to all other members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives serving in
25 the 107th United States Congress.