

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 19
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES KAPSNER, Kott, Guttenberg, McGuire, Hawker, Morgan, Meyer, Heinze, Gara, Kookesh, Gruenberg, Cissna, Kerttula, Berkowitz, Ogg, Williams, Foster, Croft, Crawford, Lynn, Fate, Joule, Coghill

Introduced: 4/24/03

Referred: Health, Education and Social Services, House Special Committee on Education

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging implementation of an Alaska history curriculum in public schools.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** an education rich in history and government is vital to the development
4 of a representative democracy and a civil society; and

5 **WHEREAS** knowledge of a person's own state history, state government, and
6 cultures is fundamental to informed and effective participation in state and local affairs; and

7 **WHEREAS** the study of Alaska history should be as rich as Alaska's origins and
8 evolution as a political community, and should examine the ancient, historic, and modern
9 interactions of ethnic cultures, economies, governments, and values; and

10 **WHEREAS** the face of Alaska is changing demographically, economically, and
11 socially, and the speed of this change makes it imperative for Alaska's citizens and leaders to
12 have a sound understanding of the state's history and its people; and

13 **WHEREAS** an educated Alaska populace with a full appreciation for the history of
14 Alaska will make better decisions for the good of all Alaska citizens; and understanding of
15 Alaska's history will help Alaska avoid mistakes of the past and will contribute to a
16 prosperous, successful future for all Alaskans; and

1 **WHEREAS** interest in having Alaska history and cultural studies taught in our
2 schools dates back to the early years of statehood; progress has been steady but slow, and
3 Alaska history and cultural studies has not always been offered at the high school level; and

4 **WHEREAS** a broad-based Alaska history and cultural studies curriculum that meets
5 state social studies standards could be offered as either a separate course or incorporated into
6 a district's existing curriculum, averting the need to add to the credit requirements for high
7 school graduation; and

8 **WHEREAS** funding for the development of a standards-based curriculum has been
9 secured through the efforts of the Alaska Humanities Forum and will result in curriculum
10 development available to school districts at no cost; and

11 **WHEREAS** the majority of Alaskans polled favor Alaska high school students being
12 required to take an Alaska history course; and

13 **WHEREAS** the network of community support to bring about a high school Alaska
14 history course requirement includes the Alaska Municipal League, Anchorage Chamber of
15 Commerce, Commonwealth North, the Alaska Humanities Forum, the Alaska Native Heritage
16 Center, the United Way of Anchorage, the YWCA, the Alaska Historical Commission, the
17 University of Alaska, NEA-Alaska, Bridge Builders, the First Alaskans Foundation, and
18 others; the effort is supported by a breadth of citizenry that ranges from former governors,
19 mayors, and judges, to cultural groups;

20 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the State
21 Board of Education to require by regulation the equivalent of at least one semester of Alaska
22 history before graduation from high school.

23 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Frank Murkowski, Governor
24 of Alaska; the Honorable Loren Leman, Lieutenant Governor of Alaska; Richard I. Mauer,
25 Chair, Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development; and to the Honorable Karen
26 Rehfeld, Acting Commissioner, Department of Education and Early Development.