

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 35

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES KERTTULA, McGuire, Morgan, Gara, Crawford, Cissna, Kapsner, Croft

Introduced: 2/5/04

Referred: Labor and Commerce, Resources

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to mad cow disease and country-of-origin labeling for meat products.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** the first cow in the United States infected with bovine spongiform
4 encephalopathy, commonly known as mad cow disease, was identified in December, 2003;
5 and

6 **WHEREAS** bovine spongiform encephalopathy is a neurological disease in cattle
7 caused by an aberrant protein called a prion, most commonly found in specified risk materials
8 such as the skull, brain, trigeminal ganglia, eyes, vertebral column, spinal cord, and dorsal
9 root ganglia; and

10 **WHEREAS** humans can develop variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease from eating
11 contaminated beef products; and

12 **WHEREAS** cattle most commonly contract bovine spongiform encephalopathy from
13 feed contaminated by infectious prions; and

14 **WHEREAS**, in 1997, the United States Food and Drug Administration prohibited the
15 use of most mammalian protein in the manufacture of animal feed intended for cattle; and

16 **WHEREAS** the United States Department of Agriculture has taken steps to identify

1 and destroy cattle that are from the same herd as the infected cow and other animals that may
2 have been exposed to that cow; and

3 **WHEREAS**, among those steps, the United States Department of Agriculture has
4 banned all nonambulatory disabled cattle from the food chain, prohibited the use of specified
5 risk materials in human food consumption, and prohibited slaughter practices that may cause
6 the dislocation of brain material and its inclusion with other tissue; and

7 **WHEREAS** the cow infected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy was imported
8 from outside the United States; and

9 **WHEREAS** country-of-origin labeling for meat products has been postponed for two
10 years by the United States Congress; and

11 **WHEREAS** Americans deserve to know what is in their food and where it comes
12 from; and

13 **WHEREAS** Americans deserve to have a safe food supply;

14 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports efforts by the United
15 States Department of Agriculture to control and eradicate bovine spongiform encephalopathy
16 in United States cattle; and be it

17 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports any efforts by
18 the Alaska congressional delegation to implement country-of-origin labeling for meat
19 products sooner than the current implementation date.

20 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ann Veneman, United
21 States Secretary of Agriculture; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Lisa
22 Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of
23 the Alaska delegation in Congress.