

CS FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 2/28/03

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): SENATORS WILKEN, Therriault, Seekins, Taylor, Dyson, Gary Stevens, Ben Stevens, Cowdery, Hoffman, Green

REPRESENTATIVES Lynn, Ogg

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to economic development generated by new road construction and to the design**
2 **and construction of the Hot Springs Loop Road to connect Chena Hot Springs and**
3 **Circle Hot Springs, of a highway along the Bradfield/Iskut Rivers transportation**
4 **corridor, of the Knik Arm Crossing, of a road from Iliamna Bay to Pile Bay, and of**
5 **other roads and highways.**

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

7 **WHEREAS** new roads are needed to connect communities with the resources that
8 create the increased potential for commercial, industrial, recreational, and social activities for
9 residents and visitors; and

10 **WHEREAS** new local roads will allow Alaskans to get to local schools and health
11 facilities and to quickly respond to local emergency situations; and

12 **WHEREAS** improving the transportation infrastructure in Alaska is vital to the
13 economic growth and prosperity of the state; and

14 **WHEREAS** Alaska is the largest state in the Union, comprising one-fifth of the total
15 area of the continental United States, yet Alaska has barely 2,000 miles of roadways, less than

1 the state of Vermont; and

2 **WHEREAS** the proposed Hot Springs Loop Road from Chena Hot Springs to Circle
3 Hot Springs will complete a transportation loop connecting Fairbanks and the two resort areas
4 and will open areas of Interior Alaska for residents and visitors to explore, enjoy, and
5 develop; and

6 **WHEREAS** the Hot Springs Loop Road would connect the Steese Highway with the
7 Chena Hot Springs Road either through or around the Steese National Conservation Area; and

8 **WHEREAS** the Hot Springs Loop Road will allow residents and tourists an
9 opportunity to drive the scenic loop between Fairbanks and the resort areas at Chena Hot
10 Springs and Circle Hot Springs; and

11 **WHEREAS** the Hot Springs Loop Road will foster increased outdoor activities, new
12 tourism ventures, and economic growth in Interior Alaska; and

13 **WHEREAS** construction of a highway along the Bradfield/Iskut Rivers transportation
14 corridor would increase the traffic flow between Southeast Alaska and the Alaska marine
15 highway to British Columbia by permitting a more efficient flow of travelers into and out of
16 the region; and

17 **WHEREAS** a transportation corridor between Southeast Alaska and British Columbia
18 would generate recreational growth benefiting Alaskans and British Columbians; and

19 **WHEREAS** communities in southern Southeast Alaska have suffered immense and
20 catastrophic declines in their economic base due to removal of the timber industry as a key
21 component of their economies by the previous national administration; and

22 **WHEREAS** the Alaska marine highway system is placing severe constraints on the
23 shipment of fresh seafood to United States and Canadian markets because it has a policy to
24 maximize revenue in the summer period at the expense of reserved deck space for fresh
25 seafood containers, because the capacity to transport shipping vans has been severely
26 curtailed due to international SOLAS shipping standard requirements, and because the Prince
27 Rupert transfer bridge is not of sufficient weight carrying capacity; and

28 **WHEREAS** the shipment of fresh seafood, both caught and processed domestically,
29 by way of airlines is both capacity constrained and expensive, thus denying efficiencies and
30 potential markets for high margin fresh seafood products; and

31 **WHEREAS** a land transportation link to the North American highway system could

1 provide viable development of new vocations resulting from new economic growth; and

2 **WHEREAS** the southern region of Southeast Alaska has been negatively affected in
3 recent years with individual fishery quota (IFQ) landings moving to road-connected
4 communities such as Haines and Prince Rupert; and

5 **WHEREAS** the people of southern Southeast Alaska wish to increase trade with our
6 Canadian neighbors; and

7 **WHEREAS** the Knik Arm Crossing project has been identified as a project that
8 would have a profound effect on future development in Southcentral Alaska; and

9 **WHEREAS** construction of a road from Iliamna Bay to Pile Bay on Lake Iliamna will
10 provide a greatly enhanced transportation route to Lake Iliamna, Newhalen, Lake Clark, the
11 upper Bristol Bay area, several mineral deposits, and unparalleled recreational opportunities
12 and will provide for more economical transportation of food, fuel, and materials to the several
13 villages in the area; and

14 **WHEREAS** the Donlin Creek Road project has been identified as a project that will
15 greatly enhance economic development and establish a transportation corridor in the
16 Kuskokwim area, which will have a profound effect on future development in the region;

17 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes that the economic
18 development activity generated by the construction of new roads is important to the growth
19 and prosperity of the state; and be it

20 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the design and
21 construction of the Hot Springs Loop Road to provide a scenic loop route to connect
22 Fairbanks and the resort areas at Chena Hot Springs and Circle Hot Springs; and be it

23 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the efforts of
24 Governor Frank Murkowski and the City of Wrangell to continue their work with the
25 Province of British Columbia, and Cassiar and Yellowhead Highways communities in their
26 efforts to reach an agreement to construct a highway along the Bradfield/Iskut Rivers
27 transportation corridor; and be it

28 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the pre-National
29 Environmental Policy Act scoping and environmental impact statement process and the
30 design and construction of a highway along the Bradfield/Iskut Rivers transportation corridor
31 to connect southern Southeast Alaska to British Columbia; and be it

1 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the design and
2 construction of the Knik Arm Crossing and a road from Iliamna Bay to Pile Bay; and be it

3 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the continued
4 effort for construction of the Donlin Creek Road; and be it

5 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the design and
6 construction of a road to Rock Creek, bypassing Moon Light Springs, for development of
7 mineral extraction operations on the Seward Peninsula.