

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES KAWASAKI, Gardner

Introduced: 2/9/09

Referred: Community and Regional Affairs, Resources

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to change the name of Mount McKinley to Denali.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** the Athabaskan name "Denali" for Alaska's highest mountain has been in
4 use for thousands of years before the renaming of the mountain to McKinley in 1896, is still
5 widely used across the state, and is recognized throughout the world as synonymous with
6 Mount McKinley; and

7 **WHEREAS** "Denali" means "The High One" in the Athabaskan language and the
8 name Denali is indicative of its worldwide recognition as the highest mountain on the
9 continent of North America, standing at 20,320 feet; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in 1896, when prospector William A. Dickey christened the mountain
11 "Mt. McKinley," William McKinley of Ohio had recently been named the Republican
12 candidate for President of the United States but had not yet assumed the office of President;
13 and

14 **WHEREAS** President McKinley never visited the territory of Alaska; and

15 **WHEREAS** officially recognizing the Athabaskan name of Denali may help to rectify
16 past injustices toward Alaska Native peoples; and

1 **WHEREAS** the State of Alaska recognizes the Denali name as it applies to the
2 mountain; and

3 **WHEREAS** members of Congress have blocked any attempt by Alaska officials to
4 rename the mountain Denali since 1975, effectively revoking the right of the people of the
5 State of Alaska to name their own geographical landmarks;

6 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States
7 Congress to pass legislation to change the name of Mount McKinley to Denali.

8 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
9 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and
10 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Ken Salazar, United States Secretary of the
11 Interior; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the
12 Honorable John Boehner, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the
13 Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mitch McConnell,
14 Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chair of the Energy and
15 Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the
16 Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative,
17 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the 111th United
18 States Congress.