

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 26

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES FAIRCLOUGH, Joule, Foster, Thomas, Stoltze, Herron

Introduced: 3/18/09

Referred:

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to adequately fund land surveys in Alaska in order to**
2 **issue patents to the State of Alaska and Alaska Native corporations.**

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

4 **WHEREAS**, at Statehood, Alaska was granted a land entitlement from the federal
5 government in excess of 103,000,000 acres; and

6 **WHEREAS** Alaska Natives, through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, were
7 granted a land entitlement from the federal government of more than 44,000,000 acres; and

8 **WHEREAS**, in 2004, the United States Congress passed the Alaska Land Transfer
9 Acceleration Act with the intent of largely completing land entitlement conveyance under the
10 Alaska Statehood and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Acts by 2009, the 50th anniversary of
11 Statehood; and

12 **WHEREAS** the United States Bureau of Land Management has aggressively and
13 diligently worked to implement the Act; and

14 **WHEREAS**, despite the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management, considerable
15 land conveyance work remains to be accomplished, particularly in the area of land survey;
16 and

1 **WHEREAS** land surveys are necessary to issue patents to the state and Alaska Native
2 corporations and are essential to determining with certainty what lands are owned by the state
3 and Native corporations; and

4 **WHEREAS** that certainty is needed for long-term land use and development; and

5 **WHEREAS** the United States Congress provided interim title by granting tentative
6 approval to the state and interim conveyance to Native corporations, but with the
7 understanding that the land would eventually be surveyed and patent issued; and

8 **WHEREAS**, as of December 31, 2008, more than 66,000,000 acres of land still await
9 patent, including more than 40,000,000 acres of land that has been tentatively approved to the
10 state, and 14,000,000 acres subject to interim conveyance to Alaska Native corporations, and
11 more than 12,000,000 additional acres await conveyance;

12 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States
13 Congress to appropriate sufficient funds to the United States Bureau of Land Management to
14 ensure the timely completion of land surveys in Alaska so that land promised to Alaska
15 Natives and the State of Alaska can be patented.

16 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
17 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and
18 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Ken Salazar, United States Secretary of the
19 Interior; Ron Wenker, Acting Director, United States Bureau of Land Management; the
20 Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Steny
21 Hoyer, Majority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable John Boehner,
22 Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Harry Reid, Majority
23 Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader of the U.S.
24 Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and
25 the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in
26 Congress; and all other members of the 111th United States Congress.