

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 10**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

**BY REPRESENTATIVES KERTTULA, Miller, Thompson**

**Introduced: 1/21/11**

**Referred: House Special Committee on Fisheries, Resources**

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Supporting expanded research concerning the detrimental effects of ocean acidification.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** ocean waters and resources are vital to the economy, cultural identity,  
4 and daily lives of many Alaskans; and

5 **WHEREAS** it is estimated that the seafood industry contributed a total of  
6 \$5,800,000,000 to the state's economic output in 2007, including an estimated \$3,600,000,000  
7 in wholesale value and \$2,200,000,000 in indirect and induced economic output; and

8 **WHEREAS** Alaska is home to eight of the 20 largest seafood ports in the United  
9 States; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in 2007, Alaska seafood accounted for more than 62 percent, by volume,  
11 of the commercial seafood harvested in the United States; and

12 **WHEREAS** the seafood industry employs more workers than any other industry in  
13 the state; and

14 **WHEREAS** tourism is a major economic engine in the state, with a direct economic  
15 contribution that exceeds \$1,600,000,000 annually and an induced effect that exceeds  
16 \$2,000,000,000 annually; and

1           **WHEREAS** tourism is the state's third largest private sector employer, supplying  
2 more than 26,000 full time equivalent jobs; and

3           **WHEREAS** recreational fishing, whale watching, and other ocean-related activities  
4 constitute critical sectors of the state's tourism industry; and

5           **WHEREAS** coastal residents of the state depend on ocean resources for subsistence,  
6 recreation, and other uses; and

7           **WHEREAS** tourism, fishing, subsistence, and recreation are supported by healthy  
8 ocean ecosystems; and

9           **WHEREAS** the world's oceans have absorbed more than a quarter of the carbon  
10 dioxide released into the atmosphere since the start of the Industrial Revolution; and

11           **WHEREAS** carbon dioxide absorbed by the oceans has altered ocean chemistry,  
12 making ocean surface water 30 percent more acidic on average than at the start of the  
13 Industrial Revolution; and

14           **WHEREAS** the acidity of surface water could double by the end of this century if  
15 current trends continue; and

16           **WHEREAS** the process of ocean acidification is accelerated in Arctic waters because  
17 carbon dioxide is more soluble in cold water, and lower salinity diminishes the capacity of  
18 oceans to buffer against acidification; there is evidence that ocean acidification is both more  
19 severe and occurring more rapidly in the state's ocean waters than in tropical waters; and

20           **WHEREAS** the effects of ocean acidification could create conditions detrimental to  
21 marine ecosystems in the state within decades; and

22           **WHEREAS** ocean acidification will affect the growth, reproduction, disease  
23 resistance, and other biological and physiological processes of many marine organisms; and

24           **WHEREAS** ocean acidification threatens carbonate-forming species, such as coral,  
25 shellfish, and many species of marine plankton, and changes to those species may cause  
26 significant detrimental effects throughout marine ecosystems and food webs, affecting the  
27 largest marine organisms and many commercial fisheries; and

28           **WHEREAS** plankton, which form the base of the marine food web, King, Tanner,  
29 and Dungeness crab, deep-sea coral gardens, and pteropods, which serve as important prey for  
30 whales, salmon, and other marine life, are all at risk because of the effects of ocean  
31 acidification; and

1           **WHEREAS** the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, in its 2007 Aleutian  
2 Islands Fishery Ecosystem Plan, highlighted ocean acidification as both very likely to occur  
3 and likely to cause significant ecological and economic effects; and

4           **WHEREAS**, because there is a scarcity of relevant data necessary for assessing the  
5 potential effects of ocean acidification in the state, the North Pacific Fishery Management  
6 Council has recommended ocean acidification be a research priority;

7           **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes that ocean  
8 acidification is a threat to the state's marine ecosystems, tourism industry, and fisheries; and  
9 be it

10          **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the monitoring  
11 and research that are necessary to study the effects of ocean acidification on the state's marine  
12 ecosystem to determine potential effects on the state's economy and to assess opportunities to  
13 address the effects of ocean acidification.

14          **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of  
15 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and  
16 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the U.S. House of  
17 Representatives; the Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the  
18 Honorable Lisa P. Jackson, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Dr.  
19 Jane Lubchenco, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and National  
20 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Administrator; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
21 and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.  
22 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.