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SENATE CS FOR CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15(STA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/6/11

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES HERRON, Kerttula, Peggy Wilson, Gardner, Tuck, Johnson, Cissna, Pruitt

SENATORS McGuire, Dyson, Giessel, Wagoner, Huggins, Meyer, Ellis, Menard, Paskvan, Davis, Thomas, Stedman

A RESOLUTION

- 1 **Relating to collaboration with the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through the**
 2 **Pacific NorthWest Economic Region and its Arctic Caucus to address common issues.**

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

4 **WHEREAS** the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region was formed in 1991 as a forum
 5 for collaborative public and private sector planning among the states of Alaska, Montana,
 6 Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, the Canadian provinces and territories of the Northwest
 7 Territories, Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, and the national capitals of
 8 Washington, D.C., and Ottawa, Canada; and

9 **WHEREAS** the Arctic Caucus of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region was
 10 formed in November 2009 as an informal group of legislators, government officials, business
 11 leaders, and leaders of nonprofit organizations committed to the responsible development of
 12 North America's Arctic regions; and

13 **WHEREAS** the purpose of the Arctic Caucus is to provide a forum within the Pacific
 14 NorthWest Economic Region for the Arctic jurisdictions of Alaska, the Yukon, and the
 15 Northwest Territories to share information, discuss issues of mutual concern, and identify
 16 areas for collaboration, including working with other jurisdictions and providing Arctic-

1 related input to the working groups of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region; and

2 **WHEREAS**, on December 1 - 3, 2010, the Arctic Caucus met in Barrow, Alaska, to
3 discuss the federal Arctic policies of the United States and Canada, the Arctic transportation
4 and communication infrastructure needs of the Arctic Caucus member regions, and the
5 priorities and action of the Arctic Caucus; and

6 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Northern Waters Task Force attended the 2010 meeting of the
7 Arctic Caucus in Barrow, and future cooperative action between the Alaska Northern Waters
8 Task Force and the Arctic Caucus was outlined; and

9 **WHEREAS** the 21st Annual Summit of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region will
10 be held July 19 - 22, 2011, in Portland, Oregon, and will provide a forum for continued Arctic
11 Caucus collaboration; and

12 **WHEREAS** Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories, the three northern
13 regions of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region, have problems in common, including
14 limited educational opportunities; a minimal distance-delivery education infrastructure; a need
15 for expanded workforce development programs; a need for better cold climate housing; a high
16 rate of suicide; a high rate of domestic violence; a high rate of substance abuse; an economic
17 reliance on resource-extraction industries and a corresponding need for economic
18 diversification; remote and inaccessible communities that face high costs for fuel and
19 commodities; and an urgent need for investment in transportation and communication
20 infrastructure; and

21 **WHEREAS** there is much to be gained by Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest
22 Territories more closely sharing strategies to solve common problems and working together to
23 solve those problems; and

24 **WHEREAS** some of the issues that the Arctic Caucus might address include
25 increasing cooperation on scientific research and vessel tracking; exploring strategies to
26 address and mitigate tension between local users and industry; identifying economic
27 development opportunities through tourism, infrastructure development, and regional
28 partnerships; supporting Arctic marine safety through appropriate jurisdictional licensing of
29 marine pilots; exploring increased cooperation in emergency and disaster preparedness; and
30 increasing coordination of search and rescue efforts;

31 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature will collaborate with the

1 legislative assemblies of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through the Pacific
2 NorthWest Economic Region and its Arctic Caucus to facilitate communication and
3 cooperation among the Arctic Caucus member regions and, as a result, to address more
4 effectively problems common to those regions; and be it

5 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature will work with the
6 legislative assemblies of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through the Pacific
7 NorthWest Economic Region and the Arctic Caucus to promote a synchronized message
8 detailing the common needs of the Arctic Caucus member regions to their respective federal
9 governments and emphasizing that coordinated United States and Canadian federal policies
10 are vital to the welfare of Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories; and be it

11 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature invites the governments of
12 the Yukon and the Northwest Territories to join Alaska in an enduring alliance to pursue the
13 common goals of their regions.

14 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Right Honourable Stephen Harper,
15 Prime Minister of Canada; the Honourable John Morris Duncan, Canadian Minister of Indian
16 Affairs and Northern Development; the Honourable Jim Kenyon, Member of the Legislative
17 Assembly of the Yukon; the Honourable Bob McLeod, Member of the Legislative Assembly
18 of the Northwest Territories; the Honourable Denis Stevens, Consul General of the Consulate
19 General of Canada in Seattle, Washington; the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the
20 United States; the Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, United States Secretary of State; the
21 Honorable Robert M. Gates, United States Secretary of Defense; the Honorable Ken Salazar,
22 United States Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Sean Parnell, Governor of Alaska; the
23 Honorable Mead Treadwell, Lieutenant Governor of Alaska; and the Honorable Lisa
24 Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young,
25 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.