

SENATE CS FOR CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 20(RES)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/6/12
Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES JOHANSEN, Thomas, Stoltze, Peggy Wilson, Muñoz, Johnson, Chenault, Dick, Lynn

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and the Secretary**
2 **of the United States Department of Agriculture not to implement protection of**
3 **inventoried roadless areas under the "roadless rule" or otherwise restrict the**
4 **development of necessary hydroelectric and other natural resource projects in the**
5 **Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest.**

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

7 **WHEREAS** inventoried roadless areas, as defined in 36 C.F.R. 294.11, constitute
8 approximately 57 percent of the acreage in the Tongass National Forest; and

9 **WHEREAS** the United States Congress has designated an additional 35 percent of the
10 acreage in the Tongass National Forest as wilderness; and

11 **WHEREAS** there is an extensive system of federally protected areas in the state; and

12 **WHEREAS**, on May 28, 2010, the Secretary of the United States Department of
13 Agriculture issued Secretary's Memorandum 1042-155 that reserves to the Secretary the
14 authority to approve or disapprove road construction or reconstruction and the cutting, sale, or
15 removal of timber in areas identified in the set of inventoried roadless area maps contained in

1 volume 2 of the Forest Service Roadless Area Conservation Final Environmental Impact
2 Statement, dated November 2000; and

3 **WHEREAS** the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture has
4 approved only seven projects under the authority reserved in Secretary's Memorandum 1042-
5 155; and

6 **WHEREAS** Southeast Alaska has some of the largest deposits of precious metals in
7 the world, and the region's economy is dependent on the responsible development of these
8 natural resources; and

9 **WHEREAS** 14 of the 15 hydroelectric projects in the Tongass National Forest and
10 Chugach National Forest are subject to the protection of inventoried roadless areas under 36
11 C.F.R. 294.10 - 294.18 ("roadless rule") and will require approval by the Secretary of the
12 United States Department of Agriculture; and

13 **WHEREAS** failure of the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture to
14 approve the hydroelectric and other natural resource projects in the Tongass National Forest
15 and the Chugach National Forest would jeopardize the approval of necessary preliminary
16 permits by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other federal agencies because,
17 without the Secretary of Agriculture's approval, the projects would not be able to proceed
18 with the field studies and planning that are required for permitting; and

19 **WHEREAS** the inability to develop hydroelectric projects and construct power lines
20 to bring electricity to communities in the state will result in continued diesel power generation
21 that emits pollutants into the environment; and

22 **WHEREAS** the protection of inventoried roadless areas under the "roadless rule" in
23 36 C.F.R. 294.10 - 294.18 and the inability to produce and distribute hydro-generated
24 electricity and develop abundant natural resources will adversely affect communities in the
25 Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest and will thwart the policies of the
26 state, as stated in sec. 1, ch. 82, SLA 2010, to generate 50 percent of the energy in the state
27 from renewable sources and, under AS 44.99.110, to encourage mineral development; and

28 **WHEREAS** the President of the United States has pledged to embrace and encourage
29 the development of renewable energy sources and has set a goal of having 25 percent of the
30 energy generated in the United States come from renewable energy resources by 2025;

31 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the President of the

1 United States, the United States Congress, and the Secretary of the United States Department
2 of Agriculture not to implement protection of inventoried roadless areas under 36 C.F.R.
3 294.10 - 294.14 or otherwise restrict the development of necessary hydroelectric and natural
4 resource projects in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest.

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