

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 5

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Introduced: 3/11/16
Referred: Taken up

A RESOLUTION

1 **Opposing the recent decisions of the Obama Administration to cancel future lease sales**
2 **in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas; urging the United States Department of the Interior**
3 **to continue including the Chukchi Sea and Beaufort Sea lease sales in the 2017-2022**
4 **Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program; and urging the Obama**
5 **Administration to support ongoing efforts to develop offshore oil and gas in the Arctic**
6 **Outer Continental Shelf responsibly and to acknowledge the support of Alaskans.**

7 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:**

8 **WHEREAS** the official Arctic policy of the state, passed by the Twenty-Ninth Alaska
9 State Legislature, states that "It is the policy of the state, as it relates to the Arctic, to uphold
10 the state's commitment to economically vibrant communities sustained by development
11 activities consistent with the state's responsibility for a healthy environment"; and

12 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission advises the state in its list of
13 strategic recommendations to "promote prudent oil and gas exploration and development in
14 the Arctic"; and

1 **WHEREAS** the United States Bureau of Ocean Energy Management estimates that
2 there are 23,000,000,000 barrels and 104,410,000,000,000 cubic feet of undiscovered,
3 technically recoverable oil and natural gas in the Chukchi and Beaufort seas; and

4 **WHEREAS** hundreds of exploration and development wells have been safely and
5 responsibly drilled in state and federal water off the coast of the state, including in the
6 Chukchi and Beaufort seas; and

7 **WHEREAS** the economic future of the state and the energy security and strategic
8 global position of the nation stand to benefit greatly from development of the state's outer
9 continental shelf; and

10 **WHEREAS** the state has a rich history of developing its resources in a sustainable
11 and responsible manner; and

12 **WHEREAS** development of the state's outer continental shelf is a well-understood
13 undertaking, and Alaskans have the benefit of over half a century's experience in managing
14 Arctic development; and

15 **WHEREAS** the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, a national strategic infrastructure
16 asset, is running at one-quarter of throughput capacity and would benefit from additional
17 future oil supply; and

18 **WHEREAS** Alaskans, including those living closest to the resource on the North
19 Slope, benefit from outer continental shelf exploration through direct employment, business
20 opportunities, and government revenue; and

21 **WHEREAS** there are many synergies between the types of infrastructure that would
22 facilitate Arctic oil and gas exploration and development and the infrastructure needs of local
23 communities, the state, and elements of the United States Coast Guard and Navy; and

24 **WHEREAS**, in January of 2015, the United States Department of the Interior
25 published a draft 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program that
26 proposed one lease sale each in the Chukchi Sea and Beaufort Sea Planning Areas; and

27 **WHEREAS** the federal government has limited immediate opportunities in several
28 areas in the Arctic, including, most importantly, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the
29 National Petroleum Reserve - Alaska, and the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf; and

30 **WHEREAS**, on October 16, 2015, the United States Department of the Interior
31 cancelled future outer continental shelf oil and gas lease sales in the Chukchi Sea Planning

1 Area and Beaufort Sea Planning Area, scheduled for 2016 and 2017, respectively;

2 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska Senate opposes the recent decisions of the
3 Obama Administration to cancel future lease sales in the Chukchi and Beaufort seas; and be it

4 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska Senate urges the United States Department
5 of the Interior to continue including the Chukchi Sea and Beaufort Sea lease sales in the 2017-
6 2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program; and be it

7 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska Senate urges the Obama Administration to
8 support ongoing efforts to develop offshore oil and gas in the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf
9 responsibly and to acknowledge the support of Alaskans.

10 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
11 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice President of the United States and
12 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Sally Jewell, United States Secretary of the
13 Interior; Brian Salerno, Director, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement; and the
14 Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the
15 Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.