

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATOR STEVENS

Introduced: 4/21/21

Referred: State Affairs, Finance

A RESOLUTION

1 **Establishing a legislative commission to review and make recommendations to the**
2 **legislature relating to the official state seal and motto.**

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

4 **WHEREAS**, following the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867, the first governor
5 of the District of Alaska designated an official seal for the district featuring icebergs, northern
6 lights, igloos, and ice fishing; and

7 **WHEREAS**, in 1910, the seal was redesigned, and the new seal was retained through
8 Alaska's territorial days up to statehood, when it became the official state seal; and

9 **WHEREAS** the state seal reflects Alaska at one point in time and places significant
10 emphasis on western exploration, resource extraction, and agricultural activity while
11 excluding other values held by many in the state today; and

12 **WHEREAS** review and reconsideration of the state seal and motto to adequately
13 reflect the state's original inhabitants, Alaska Native cultures, and contemporary themes
14 serves an important public purpose; and

15 **WHEREAS** it is timely and appropriate to reimagine the symbols that represent the
16 state values of justice and perseverance in a manner that honors the shared heritage of the

1 people of the state and respects the Native people of Alaska;

2 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the Legislative Commission
3 to Review the State Seal of Alaska is established as a joint commission of the Alaska State
4 Legislature for the purposes of

5 (1) evaluating the current official seal and motto of the state, including those
6 features that may be harmful to or misunderstood by residents of the state and citizens of the
7 world;

8 (2) recommending changes to the official seal and motto of the state, including
9 preparing draft legislation necessary to carry out the recommendations of the commission, so
10 that the official seal and motto might better represent the historical and contemporary
11 commitment of the people of the state to peace, justice, liberty, and equality;

12 (3) making recommendations to the legislature relating to the design and
13 content of an educational program concerned with the history and meaning of the official seal
14 and motto of the state;

15 (4) submitting recommendations and accompanying materials to the
16 legislature in a report to the secretary of the senate and the chief clerk of the house of
17 representatives on or before February 15, 2022, along with a summary of the commission's
18 work, findings, and recommendations, and notifying the members of the legislature that the
19 report is available; and

20 (5) making its report available to the public on the legislature's Internet
21 website; and be it

22 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission consists of 14 members who, except
23 for those in (1) - (3) of this clause, shall be appointed jointly on the basis of their cultural and
24 historical expertise by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of
25 representatives, as follows:

26 (1) three members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of
27 the house of representatives, including one member of the minority organizational caucus;

28 (2) three members of the senate appointed by the president of the senate,
29 including one member of the minority organizational caucus;

30 (3) the lieutenant governor or the lieutenant governor's designee;

31 (4) one member representing the Alaska State Council on the Arts;

- 1 (5) one member representing the Alaska Humanities Forum;
- 2 (6) one member representing the Alaska Historical Society;
- 3 (7) one member representing the University of Alaska;
- 4 (8) one member representing the Rasmussen Foundation;
- 5 (9) one member representing the First Alaskans Institute;
- 6 (10) one student enrolled in good standing at a public high school who will be
- 7 in the student's senior year on the date of the first meeting of the commission; and be it

8 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that

- 9 (1) the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate
- 10 shall jointly appoint the chair of the commission from among the legislative members of the
- 11 commission;
- 12 (2) commission members shall be appointed not later than 30 days after the
- 13 effective date of this resolution;
- 14 (3) the commission shall meet at the call of the chair;
- 15 (4) a majority of the commission constitutes a quorum;
- 16 (5) the commission may meet and vote telephonically and by videoconference;
- 17 (6) if meeting in person, the commission shall observe all applicable pandemic
- 18 protocols;
- 19 (7) a vacancy on the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the
- 20 original selection or appointment;
- 21 (8) the commission may request data and other information from state and
- 22 legislative agencies; and be it

23 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the staff of the legislator who chairs the commission

24 shall provide administrative and other support to the commission; and be it

25 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that, to fund its work, the commission

- 26 (1) shall seek, accept, and use grants or gifts of money and professional,
- 27 consulting, clerical, or other services and supplies from the federal government and other
- 28 public and private sources; and
- 29 (2) may accept appropriations from the legislature; and be it

30 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that members of the commission serve without

31 compensation but are entitled to per diem and travel expenses; and be it

1 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission expires on March 15, 2022, unless
2 two-thirds of the members vote that an extension is necessary to complete the work of the
3 commission, in which case, the commission expires upon completion of its work or on
4 June 30, 2022, whichever occurs first.