

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE LABOR AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE

Introduced: 1/29/25

Referred: Labor and Commerce

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to safeguard the Universal Service Fund to ensure**
2 **continued funding for essential programs that support critical broadband and**
3 **telecommunication infrastructure and services for low-income rural residents of the**
4 **state.**

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

6 **WHEREAS** the Universal Service Fund provides vital support to programs that fund
7 Internet and telephone services to support health care, education, consumer services, and
8 Lifeline telephone services in rural areas of the state; and

9 **WHEREAS** the programs the Universal Service Fund supports are essential for
10 providing equitable access to educational, health care, and economic opportunities for
11 residents of the state; and

12 **WHEREAS** geographic and economic challenges in rural areas of the state make
13 funding from the Universal Service Fund vital for connectivity and fixed and mobile
14 infrastructure development; and

15 **WHEREAS** an interruption to Universal Service Fund funding would have

1 devastating consequences for schools, libraries, health care providers, and the communities
2 served by those entities; and

3 **WHEREAS** the Universal Service Fund provides essential support for connectivity
4 for residents of the state by providing more than \$500,000,000 annually in Universal Service
5 Fund funding; and

6 **WHEREAS**, if the Universal Service Fund terminates through inaction,
7 approximately 220 rural hospitals and health clinics would lose approximately \$221,000,000
8 in annual support; and

9 **WHEREAS**, if the Universal Service Fund ceases to exist, approximately 500 rural
10 schools would lose affordable broadband connection; and

11 **WHEREAS**, without Universal Service Fund funding, approximately 137,600 rural
12 students would lose access to communication services supported by schools and libraries; and

13 **WHEREAS**, if the Universal Service Fund ceases to exist, approximately 80 libraries
14 would lose affordable broadband connection; and

15 **WHEREAS**, if Universal Service Fund funding terminates, the state would lose
16 approximately \$167,000,000 to connect rural households to basic telephone services, mobile
17 telephone services, and broadband; and

18 **WHEREAS** lack of Universal Service Fund funding would result in approximately
19 19,000 residents of the state losing access to critical Lifeline-supported communications
20 services; and

21 **WHEREAS** losing Universal Service Fund funding would widen the connectivity gap
22 between state residents and the rest of the United States, further disadvantaging state residents
23 based on where they live;

24 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the Alaska
25 Congressional delegation and other members of the 119th United States Congress to
26 safeguard funding and the authority of the Universal Service Fund, including through
27 legislative measures if necessary to address legal concerns raised by judicial rulings; and be it

28 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages bipartisan
29 cooperation to ensure the sustainability of Universal Service Fund programs and the benefits
30 those programs offer to residents of underserved, rural areas of the state.

31 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President

1 of the United States; the Honorable J. D. Vance, Vice President of the United States and
2 President of the U.S. Senate; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan
3 Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Nick Begich, U.S. Representative, members of the
4 Alaska delegation in Congress.