

**CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14(TRA)**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/25/25

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES MCCABE, Kopp, Tilton, Saddler, Prax, Underwood, Stapp, Coulombe, Johnson, Rauscher, Moore, Tomaszewski, Elam, Schwanke, Allard, Fields, Bynum

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Supporting the completion of the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension and the Northern Rail**  
2 **Extension; supporting the increase in defensive capabilities at Fort Greely, Alaska;**  
3 **encouraging a renewed commitment by the Alaska Railroad to a community-minded**  
4 **approach to future rail expansion; and encouraging the development of critical Arctic**  
5 **infrastructure.**

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

7 **WHEREAS** Alaska is the only state in the United States that borders the Arctic  
8 Ocean; and

9 **WHEREAS** the United States Department of Defense has expanded the anti-ballistic  
10 missile facility at Fort Greely, Alaska; and

11 **WHEREAS** the United States Army has developed new training range areas to  
12 support the Arctic Mission; and

13 **WHEREAS** Fort Greely is the only military base that is not currently connected to the  
14 railroad system in the state; and

15 **WHEREAS** a railroad is well suited to provide the transportation support required to

1 sustain military operations; and

2         **WHEREAS** a cost-efficient transportation system would benefit the world-class  
3 mining operations located near Delta Junction and projected mining operations near Tetlin;  
4 and

5         **WHEREAS** a railroad would provide an efficient and safer alternative to industrial  
6 hauling operations on public highways that are not designated as industrial use highways; and

7         **WHEREAS** a cost-efficient transportation system would benefit the agricultural  
8 industry in the Delta Junction area, allowing the agricultural industry to become more cost-  
9 efficient and competitive and increasing its ability to expand; and

10         **WHEREAS** a railroad would provide a cost-efficient method of transporting goods  
11 and services for both mining and agricultural activities in the Delta Junction region; and

12         **WHEREAS** the Alaska Railroad system has the capacity to provide efficient  
13 transportation services for heavy cargo and large quantities of supplies to the Delta Junction  
14 region from the ports of Port MacKenzie, Seward, Whittier, and Anchorage and to  
15 economically deliver mining and agricultural products from the region to market; and

16         **WHEREAS** the extension of the Alaska Railroad from Port MacKenzie to Houston,  
17 Delta Junction, and Fort Greely is consistent with the long-term goals of the Alaska Railroad  
18 Corporation and the State of Alaska to extend rail service to the contiguous United States; and

19         **WHEREAS** the Alaska Railroad has already completed phase 1 of the Northern Rail  
20 Extension project by crossing the Tanana River, which brings the rail line within 70 miles of  
21 Delta Junction and Fort Greely; and

22         **WHEREAS** the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Alaska Railroad have already  
23 completed nearly two-thirds of the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension, which brings Port  
24 MacKenzie within 33 miles of the Alaska Railroad rail line, which is in Houston and extends  
25 on to Fairbanks and the Northern Rail Extension project; and

26         **WHEREAS** the completion of the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension will reduce energy  
27 and transportation costs, improve air quality, increase the efficiency of shipping bulk  
28 commodities and materials to and from Interior Alaska, and provide direct rail access for  
29 shipments of liquefied natural gas from Cook Inlet to Fairbanks, North Pole, and beyond; and

30         **WHEREAS** the completion of the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension will enhance the  
31 state's resilience by establishing a strategic transportation alternative to ensure the continued

1 flow of essential goods to Interior Alaska residents in the event of a disruption at any ports in  
2 the state or damage to critical highways from an earthquake or other natural disaster; and

3 **WHEREAS** the completion of the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension will increase the  
4 available supply of natural gas and reduce energy costs for industry and residential customers  
5 in many Interior Alaska communities; with increased natural gas supply, that region will  
6 realize additional opportunities for natural gas conversion, which will aid in achieving air  
7 quality attainment; and

8 **WHEREAS** the communities, neighborhoods, and individuals served and affected by  
9 rail expansions should have an active role in planning, considering alternatives, and  
10 confirming decisions made by the Alaska Railroad regarding rail expansions;

11 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the completion of the  
12 Port MacKenzie Rail Extension and the Northern Rail Extension; and be it

13 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the urgency of  
14 developing key infrastructure and defense capabilities, considering the investments other  
15 nations have committed to the Arctic as well as the increased amount of time needed for those  
16 types of projects because of the extreme weather of the region; and be it

17 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the Alaska  
18 Railroad to renew its commitment to a community-minded approach to future rail expansions,  
19 including reporting to the legislature regarding the railroad's efforts to improve relations with  
20 private landowners, communities, and neighborhoods affected by past and current operations;  
21 and be it

22 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Alaska  
23 delegation in Congress to pursue the completion of the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension and  
24 the Northern Rail Extension for the purpose of securing the critical infrastructure that is  
25 necessary to improve defense capabilities in the state.

26 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President  
27 of the United States; the Honorable JD Vance, Vice President of the United States and  
28 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the U.S. House of  
29 Representatives; the Honorable Chuck Grassley, President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate; the  
30 Honorable Pete Hegseth, United States Secretary of Defense; the Honorable Douglas Burgum,  
31 United States Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Sean Duffy, United States Secretary of

1 Transportation; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S.  
2 Senators, and the Honorable Nicholas Begich, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska  
3 delegation in Congress.