

Introduced: 2/17/69  
Referred: Rules

1 IN THE HOUSE BY PERATROVICH AND DEVEAU  
2 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11  
3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
4 SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION  
5 Honoring the late Nick Bez.

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

7 WHEREAS Nick Bez died at Seattle, Washington, on February 5, 1969, at  
8 the age of 73 years; and

9 WHEREAS he immigrated to the United States from Austria at the age of  
10 14 years, worked as a dishwasher at New York and Tacoma, worked as a smelt  
11 fisherman in the State of Washington and came to Alaska as a seaman on a  
12 tugboat in 1915; and

13 WHEREAS he worked at Ketchikan as a seiner, sawmill worker and restaurant  
14 helper while saving money to purchase his first vessel in 1919, at the age  
15 of 24 years, at which time he was naturalized an American citizen; and

16 WHEREAS, by 1924, he owned three fishing vessels and was employed at  
17 Tenakee as a cannery superintendent where he attracted the attention of  
18 persons who joined with him and purchased the Todd Packing Company which  
19 operated for many years in Peril Straits; and

20 WHEREAS he pioneered air service between Seattle and Alaska as the  
21 principal shareholder of Southeast Alaska Flying Service which he merged  
22 with Pan American World Airways so the latter could inaugurate Flying Clipper  
23 air transportation to Alaska; and

24 WHEREAS he was the principal founder of West Coast Airlines which became  
25 one of the largest feeder air carriers in the United States, and was the  
26 chairman of its board of directors at the time of his death; and

27 WHEREAS Nick Bez, through confidence in his own ability and the future  
28 of the Alaska salmon industry, expanded his holdings in Alaska at great  
29 financial risk and at a time when others were withdrawing, until he became

1 for many years the leader in the industry; and

2 WHEREAS he gave employment to thousands of Alaska residents, expanded  
3 the available markets for the fishermen and contributed much to the economy  
4 of Alaska for over 50 years; and

5 WHEREAS, while he associated in the highest financial, industrial,  
6 political and social circles, his hundreds of friends and employees found he  
7 never changed from being the same humble, friendly, sincere and generous  
8 person he was when he first came to Alaska; and

9 WHEREAS the story of his life may well serve the youth of our state as  
10 proof that hard work, self confidence, ability and integrity are the real  
11 ingredients of success; and

12 WHEREAS his surviving family consists of his wife, Mrs. Lena Bez, whom  
13 he married in 1921, and two sons who can always be proud of their heritage;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS the Legislature of the State of Alaska desires to make official  
16 record of his contributions to the welfare of the state, the example he has  
17 set for future generations and the sympathy and interest it has for his  
18 family;

19 BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Sixth State Legislature extend  
20 their sincere regard and esteem for their friend, Nick Bez, take due recog-  
21 nition of his contributions to the state and express their sympathy and  
22 condolences to his family.

23 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to Mrs. Lena Bez and her two  
24 sons, Nick Bez, Jr. and John Bez.