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Referred: Health, Welfare
and Education and Finance

1 IN THE HOUSE

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2 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 31

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 Requesting the Department of Education
6 to institute an environmental education
7 plan for the state and to establish the
8 position of conservation and environ-
9 mental education consultant in the de-
10 partment.

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

12 WHEREAS, although Art. VIII, Sec. 2 of the Constitution of the State of
13 Alaska declares that, "The Legislature shall provide for the utilization,
14 development, and conservation of all natural resources belonging to the
15 State . . . for the maximum benefit of its people", the state does not now
16 provide any formal means of educating its people regarding the wise use or
17 conservation of natural resources; and

18 WHEREAS Alaska's rich store of natural resources provides the constant
19 flow of raw materials that we as a people are socially and economically de-
20 pendent on, as well as providing over half the jobs in the state through the
21 fishing, lumber, recreation and oil and mining industries; and

22 WHEREAS in order to manage these resources properly now and for future
23 generations, the state must have an informed citizenry who can properly
24 assess the value of natural resources in relation to their lives and who can
25 make rational choices by voting for and supporting proper resource legisla-
26 tion, making proper use of land as recreationists or land managers and being
27 aware of the important implications of land management problem decisions; and

28 WHEREAS an informed citizenry can only become a reality through educa-
29 tion, thus, making it imperative to develop in people the ability to think

1 critically and intelligently about the relationship of man to his environment
2 and to cope rationally with the problems of environmental management which
3 will become their legacy; and

4 WHEREAS there is an increased interest on the part of Alaska teachers
5 and education administrators concerning the implementation and utilization
6 of the outdoors as an effective learning environment and in the establishment
7 of an integrated conservation curriculum for use in the traditional classroom
8 environment; and

9 WHEREAS conservation and outdoor education programs, in many instances,
10 are now being developed without any, or a bare minimum of, guidance and
11 standards, resulting in poor quality courses which impart incomplete con-
12 ceptual knowledge concerning our natural environment and its preservation;
13 and

14 WHEREAS it is of utmost importance that an environmental education plan
15 with guidelines be developed for and established in, the state; and

16 WHEREAS a full-time conservation and environmental education consultant
17 is needed immediately on the staff of the Department of Education to provide
18 guidance, coordination and training for public school educators and adminis-
19 trators in the implementation of a quality conservation and environmental
20 educational program to be integrated into the total curriculum;

21 BE IT RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to direct the Department
22 of Education to develop and institute a plan with guidelines for conservation
23 and environmental education including provisions for, but not limited to,
24 the following: integration of environmental concepts into the curriculum at
25 all educational levels, funding local outdoor education projects, planning
26 outdoor environmental education areas, establishment of summer student pro-
27 grams and vocational education programs, establishment of teacher workshops
28 and field training through universities, establishment of University of
29 Alaska and community college courses in environmental education, development

1 of classroom materials and aids relating directly to Alaska, and cooperation
2 with federal and state resource agencies; and be it

3 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to direct the Depart-
4 ment of Education to establish the position of conservation and environmental
5 education consultant in the department.

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