

Introduced: 4/7/69
Referred: State Affairs

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY METCALF AND RETTIG

2 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 57

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 Requesting the construction of two
6 additional sea-train slip facilities
7 at the Port of Seward.

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

9 WHEREAS Seward, Alaska, the southern terminus of the Alaska Railroad,
10 has served as the principal port of entry for steamships carrying freight
11 destined for the interior of Alaska via the Alaska Railroad for over 50 years,
12 and such transportation has been the major source of revenue for the commu-
13 nity; and

14 WHEREAS the earthquake of March 27th, 1964, with the accompanying tidal
15 wave, completely destroyed the freight handling facilities at the Port of
16 Seward and forced steamship carriers engaged in Alaska shipping to seek
17 alternate routes to the interior of Alaska, leaving Seward without a single
18 scheduled carrier ship for nearly two years; and

19 WHEREAS the Task Force for the reconstruction of the 1964 disaster area
20 recommended that the Port of Seward be restored to its former capacity and
21 that the railroad track between Seward and Portage be rehabilitated and re-
22 stored; and

23 WHEREAS subsequently a modern dock was constructed at the Port of Seward
24 at a cost of approximately 15 million dollars, providing for berthing and un-
25 loading facilities for the conventional van carrying ships enroute from
26 Seattle to Alaska, but no provision was made for sea-train slip unloading
27 facilities; and

28 WHEREAS Seward Harbor is the only year-round ice free deep water port
29 with three-way transportation access to the interior of Alaska by railroad,

1 highway and airfield facilities; and

2 WHEREAS recognizing the increased volume of merchandise shipped to
3 Alaska in rail cars, the Alaska Steamship Company, in January of 1969,
4 completely suspended the operation of vanships to the Port of Seward, leaving
5 that port without shipping; and

6 WHEREAS, at present, when world conditions are so unsettled and millions
7 of dollars are being spent for national defense, it would seem imperative
8 that a three-way transportation access port of entry be continually main-
9 tained on an operational basis, so that in case of an international
10 emergency it could be made available for the handling of emergency shipping
11 to the interior of Alaska;

12 BE IT RESOLVED that the Sixth Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-
13 quests in the interests of national defense, and the economic well-being of
14 the state, the construction of two modern and adequate sea-train slip facili-
15 ties at the year-round ice free deep water Port of Seward, Alaska.

16 COPIES of this Resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Richard M.
17 Nixon, President of the United States; the Honorable John A. Volpe, Secretary
18 of Transportation; the Honorable Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of Defense; the
19 Honorable Walter J. Hickel, Secretary of the Interior; and to the Honorable
20 Ted Stevens and the Honorable Mike Gravel, U. S. Senators, and the Honorable
21 Howard W. Pollock, U. S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in
22 Congress.