

Introduced: 2/11/76
Referred: Select Committee on
Education

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY BRADLEY AND OSTROSKY

2 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 91

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 Relating to the Sitka Higher Educa-
6 tion Consortium.

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

8 WHEREAS the Sitka Higher Education Consortium was agreed to by Sheldon
9 Jackson College and the University of Alaska on January 28, 1972; and

10 WHEREAS this agreement was designed to provide additional postsecondary
11 educational opportunities for the residents of Sitka and to encourage coopera-
12 tion, thus avoiding devisive competition between the two institutions of
13 higher education - one public and one private - in that community; and

14 WHEREAS Sheldon Jackson College is the state's oldest institution of
15 higher education, having been founded in 1878 as an elementary school, be-
16 came a high school and was extended to include college-level courses in 1944;
17 it became a fully accredited two-year college in 1966; Sitka Community Col-
18 lege was established by the Regents of the University of Alaska at the behest
19 of the Legislature in 1970; and

20 WHEREAS Sheldon Jackson College has pioneered in developing educational
21 programs for all Alaskans, but especially - and almost alone in this state -
22 for Alaska's Native peoples; it has offered specialized programs in flight
23 training, data processing, business and commercial occupations, fisheries
24 and forestry technology and management, and at the same time has led the
25 revival of interest in preserving the Native languages of Southeastern Alaska,
26 Tlingit and Haida, by developing educational materials and teaching tech-
27 niques for use by teachers and students throughout the state; and

28 WHEREAS, despite explicit statements to the contrary in the consortium
29 agreement, the University of Alaska, virtually since the inception of the

1 Sitka Community College, has engaged in a course of conduct in expanding that
2 school and throughout Southeast Alaska of developing curriculum and offering
3 courses, programs and degrees in direct competition with the innovative pro-
4 grams offered by Sheldon Jackson College; this is most noticeable, for ex-
5 ample, in the University's founding of a four-year School of Education at the
6 Auke Lake Campus of the Southeast Senior College, whereas both the state and
7 nation suffer from an extraordinary number of unemployed teachers and while
8 Sheldon Jackson College for some years has been providing in-service training
9 and professional enhancement courses for teachers, especially in remote, rural
10 Southeast Alaska communities, as well as offering graduate work in education
11 in cooperation with Alaska Methodist University; and

12 WHEREAS it was this same pattern of conduct engaged in by the University
13 of Alaska in Anchorage that, in part, adversely affected the growth of private
14 higher education in the state's largest city and left Alaska Methodist Uni-
15 versity bereft of students, faculty and financial support in Anchorage; this
16 situation has been thoroughly documented since 1972 by the Alaska Legisla-
17 ture's consultants in higher education, McLean Associates, and published in
18 their annual reports to the legislature, Higher Education in Alaska; and

19 WHEREAS if the University of Alaska's deliberate policy of competing
20 with the private colleges and universities in the state for the attention of
21 students by organizing competitive courses and programs continues, it is
22 entirely possible that the virtually identical circumstances that have sur-
23 rounded the diminishing financial and academic posture of Alaska Methodist
24 University in Anchorage will reoccur in Sitka and cause the demise of the
25 respected Sheldon Jackson College;

26 BE IT RESOLVED that it is the sense of the Alaska State Legislature that
27 both the letter and spirit of the Memorandum of Understanding, joined in by
28 the University of Alaska in concert with Sheldon Jackson College in establish-
29 ing the Sitka Higher Education Consortium, must be honored and fully adhered

1 to; and be it

2 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
3 is respectfully requested to undertake an investigation of the present status
4 and operation of the Sitka Higher Education Consortium, and particularly the
5 role of the University of Alaska in offering courses, programs and degrees
6 competitive with those offered at Sheldon Jackson College and the impact of
7 that University policy on the financial stability and academic reputation and
8 standing of Sheldon Jackson College under its authority to resolve any dis-
9 putes arising under these consortia or other cooperative agreements between
10 public and private institutions of higher education in Alaska (AS 14.40.909-
11 (b)(6)) and to report its findings and recommendations to the legislature not
12 later than the convening of the Tenth Legislature, First Session.

13 COPIES of this Resolution shall be sent to the President of the Uni-
14 versity of Alaska, the Chancellor of the Southeastern Regional Center of the
15 University and the Director of the Sitka Community College and to the Presi-
16 dent of Sheldon Jackson College.
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