

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY SWANSON

2 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 46

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 Requesting amendment of the Organic Act of
6 1897 to permit management of the national
7 forests in Alaska according to modern
8 silvicultural techniques.

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

10 WHEREAS the application of the recent decision of the U.S. District
11 Court for the District of Alaska in the case of Zieski v. Butz, et al will
12 require, unless overturned by a higher court, that outmoded and scientifi-
13 cally discredited timber management practices be applied to the national
14 forests in Alaska and the other western states; and

15 WHEREAS the application of these practices to the national forests of
16 Alaska will virtually destroy the forest products industry in the state by
17 making it economically impossible to harvest Alaska's timber; and

18 WHEREAS the forest products industry in Alaska provides direct employ-
19 ment to 3,800 men and women on a permanent and seasonal basis, and indirect
20 employment to thousands of others; and

21 WHEREAS implementation of the court's decision will create massive unem-
22 ployment and untold human suffering among this group, whose homes are concen-
23 trated in a part of the state already facing economic uncertainty; and

24 WHEREAS selective cutting of mature or over-mature trees as would be
25 required under the decision will result, in many Alaska forests, in extensive
26 wind damage and "blow down" of the remaining timber, creating fire hazards in
27 the forests of interior Alaska and potential breeding grounds for forest
28 disease and insect pests in coastal Alaska forests; and

29 WHEREAS the application of the decision will make it impossible to

1 suppress certain types of forest disease and pest infestation, resulting in
2 the loss of billions of board feet of usable timber and prime recreation
3 land; and

4 WHEREAS the federal law which has now been interpreted to require out-
5 moded practices was written more than three-quarters of a century ago, at a
6 time when modern silvicultural science did not exist;

7 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests
8 that urgent and immediate consideration be given to amendment of the Organic
9 Act of 1897, 16 U.S.C. secs. 473-482, so that the U.S. Forest Service is able
10 to manage the national forests in Alaska according to modern silvicultural
11 techniques, including allowance of the practice of clearcutting; and be it

12 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is respectfully requested to work
13 with Alaska's delegation in Congress for the purpose of effecting appropriate
14 amendments to the Organic Act of 1897.

15 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Gerald R. Ford,
16 President of the United States; the Honorable Earl Butz, Secretary, Depart-
17 ment of Agriculture; the Honorable Herman E. Talmadge, Chairman, Senate
18 Agriculture and Forestry Committee; the Honorable Thomas Foley, Chairman,
19 House Agriculture Committee; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honor-
20 able Mike Gravel, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Represen-
21 tative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.