

Introduced: 3/4/81
Referred: Resources and
Judiciary

1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 25

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 TWELFTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 Relating to the Klondike Gold Rush

6 National Historical Park.

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

8 WHEREAS the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park was established
9 with the full cooperation and support of the City of Skagway and the State
10 of Alaska as a means of preserving and restoring the historic buildings and
11 relics of the Klondike Gold Rush in that city; and

12 WHEREAS during the planning of the park, the people of Skagway were
13 promised by the National Park Service that:

14 (1) traditional uses on land within the park would be allowed to
15 continue;

16 (2) historic structures within the park would be restored and
17 leased back to the business community;

18 (3) the establishment of the park would benefit the business
19 community;

20 (4) the City of Skagway and the National Park Service would
21 cooperate in good faith in planning and zoning;

22 (5) condemnation of private property within the park would not be
23 used or threatened; and

24 WHEREAS the first superintendent of the park reaffirmed the promises of
25 the National Park Service at two public meetings in Skagway; and

26 WHEREAS the National Park Service has closed traditionally used picnic
27 areas within the park, has refused an agricultural permit for a garden
28 traditionally used by members of the community which is located in an area
29 rarely visited by tourists, and has announced plans to close certain spur

1 roads traditionally used for firewood access; and

2 WHEREAS the National Park Service has proposed these actions without
3 the benefit of public meetings; and

4 WHEREAS the April 1980 National Park Service Draft Plan for Land Acqui-
5 sition for the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park proposes to
6 eliminate as an incompatible use of land within the City of Skagway the
7 construction of any kind on undeveloped land which includes a "new separate
8 residence or new residences physically linked to the existing structure on
9 developed land"; and

10 WHEREAS public hearings on the Draft Plan for Land Acquisition were
11 promised by the Acting Deputy Director of the National Park Service in
12 June 1980, but no public meetings have been scheduled to date; and

13 WHEREAS the National Park Service policy of rotating superintendents
14 makes it difficult for the City of Skagway and the people of the state to
15 have access to a consistent policy from the National Park Service and is
16 frustrating to the community; and

17 WHEREAS the National Park Service may acquire title to land in an
18 estate less than fee simple; and

19 WHEREAS acquisition of land by an estate in fee simple as a means of
20 controlling development is not always in the best interests of the City of
21 Skagway and the people of the state; and

22 WHEREAS the National Park Service has always acquired land in Skagway
23 by an estate in fee simple; and

24 WHEREAS a General Accounting Office report entitled, "The Federal Drive
25 to Acquire Private Lands Should be Reassessed" dated December 14, 1979,
26 reports mismanagement of land acquired by the National Park Service in 18
27 out of 19 national park areas and criticizes National Park Service land
28 acquisition policy; and

29 WHEREAS the National Park Service is ignoring the rights of the citizens

1 of Alaska to determine the best use of their private land, is treating as a
2 sham the right of the citizens and residents of the City of Skagway, the
3 first incorporated city in Alaska to plan and zone land within the boundaries
4 of the city, and has disregarded its promises made by the personnel of the
5 National Park Service; and

6 WHEREAS the State of Alaska reaffirms its duty to protect the rights of
7 its citizens;

8 BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the Secretary of
9 the Interior is respectfully requested to investigate promptly the charges
10 made against the actions and policies of the National Park Service at the
11 Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park unit in Skagway; and be it

12 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Interior is requested to
13 direct the National Park Service to adhere to the commitments made by
14 Congress to the people of Skagway in establishing the Klondike Gold Rush
15 National Historical Park.

16 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable James Watts,
17 Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Russell E. Dickinson, director of
18 the National Park Service; and the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable
19 Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representa-
20 tive, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.

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