

1 IN THE SENATE

BY ELIASON

2 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 66

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 TWELFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 Relating to Coast Guard user fees.

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

7 WHEREAS the United States Coast Guard is considering a proposal to
8 offset its operating costs by imposing user fees on boat owners; and

9 WHEREAS it is inappropriate to require boat owners, rather than the
10 general public, to bear the cost of basic governmental functions, such as
11 search and rescue, aiding navigation, and protecting the marine environment;
12 and

13 WHEREAS it would be inequitable for boat owners to bear the entire cost
14 of user fees, since in Alaska, unlike other states, the "users" of the above-
15 mentioned Coast Guard services include not only boat owners, but also mountain
16 climbers, hikers, hunters, users of canoes and kayaks, persons in need of
17 medivac and other emergency aid in rural villages and remote areas, aviators
18 who rely on navigation aids, and persons dependent upon marine shipments for
19 necessities; and

20 WHEREAS the user fee rate structure being considered does not distinguish
21 between domestic and foreign boat owners, even though foreign boat owners are
22 not subject to other federal taxes that provide revenue for the Coast Guard;
23 and

24 WHEREAS because the proposed user fee rate structure discriminates
25 against small boat owners by establishing a single rate for all boats up to
26 100 tons gross weight, smaller gross weight classifications should be estab-
27 lished; and

28 WHEREAS the user fees proposed for the owners of small fishing boats in
29 Alaska would, in many cases, exceed the owners' annual net income and thereby

1 force the owners out of business; and

2 WHEREAS the fixed rate structure for user fees being considered does not
3 allow for adjustments during lean years in the Alaska commercial fishing
4 industry;

5 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests
6 that the President of the United States direct the Secretary of Transportation
7 to reject the proposed imposition of Coast Guard user fees on boat owners, or
8 in the alternative, to approve the proposed user fees only if the rate struc-
9 ture equitably distributes the economic burden of the fees among all users of
10 Coast Guard services and avoids a severe economic impact on Alaska commercial
11 fishermen.

12 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald Reagan,
13 President of the United States; the Honorable Drew Lewis, Secretary of Trans-
14 portation; Admiral John B. Hayes, Commandant of the Coast Guard; and to the
15 Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and
16 the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delega-
17 tion in Congress.

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