

Introduced: 3/15/85  
Referred: Transportation

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY MARROU AND MARTIN

2 SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 21

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 Urging the repeal of certain portions of  
6 the Merchant Marine Act of 1920.

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

8 WHEREAS the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, commonly known as the Jones  
9 Act, requires that vessels carrying goods between United States ports be  
10 built and registered in the United States and owned and crewed by United  
11 States nationals; and

12 WHEREAS the Act gives vessels protection from free market competition  
13 by foreign ships that have much lower construction and crew costs; and

14 WHEREAS, as is typical of protected markets, higher freight rates may  
15 follow in the United States coastwise trade; and

16 WHEREAS the Act was originally passed to build a sheltered environment  
17 for United States vessels to create domestic prosperity and wartime secur-  
18 ity, yet the United States merchant fleet has dropped by half since World  
19 War II while the world tonnage has gone up sixfold; and

20 WHEREAS Alaska, Hawaii, and the noncontiguous territories of the  
21 United States bear the cost of that sheltered environment even though it  
22 was created to benefit all Americans; and

23 WHEREAS the Alaska trade now supports nearly one-third of the entire  
24 Jones Act fleet; and

25 WHEREAS the effect of the Act is to reduce Alaska's state oil revenue,  
26 to raise the cost of all domestic freight coming to Alaska, and to discour-  
27 age the development of new oil fields and mineral deposits in Alaska; and

28 WHEREAS the direct cost to Alaska's treasury due to the Act has been  
29 estimated at \$63 - \$176 million yearly and the direct cost to the federal

1 treasury has been estimated at \$135 - \$378 million yearly;

2 BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the United States  
3 Congress is urged in the national interest to repeal those portions of the  
4 Merchant Marine Act of 1920 that adversely effect the coastwise trade by  
5 prohibiting the use of foreign-built vessels; and be it

6 FURTHER RESOLVED that until the Act is so amended, the United States  
7 Congress is urged to allow foreign-built ships into the Jones Act trade if  
8 they meet American safety standards, are registered in the United States,  
9 and are owned and crewed by United States nationals.

10 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald  
11 Reagan, President of the United States; the Honorable Elizabeth Dole,  
12 Secretary of Transportation; the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable  
13 Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Repre-  
14 sentative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.