

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY WALLIS

2

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 49

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

Declaring House District 24 an economic

6

disaster zone.

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

8 WHEREAS House District 24 is composed of three federal census dis-
9 tricts, the Yukon-Koyukuk, Wade-Hampton, and Bethel districts; and

10 WHEREAS the Yukon-Koyukuk census district has an unemployment rate of
11 17 percent, the Wade-Hampton district has an unemployment rate of 13.6
12 percent, and the Bethel district has an unemployment rate of 10.1 percent,
13 for an average unemployment rate of 13.3 percent in the area; and

14 WHEREAS, when the state Department of Labor compiles data on levels of
15 employment and unemployment in the state, it is required to be consistent
16 with definitions and methodology of the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, to be counted as unemployed under the definitions used by the
19 department, a person must be actively looking for work unless the person
20 has accepted a job and is waiting for the job to begin; and

21 WHEREAS residents in rural communities generally know of job avail-
22 ability in their areas and do not look for work when no jobs are available;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, consequently, because of this and other factors the unemploy-
25 ment rate in House District 24 is substantially underestimated and is not
26 an adequate measure of the joblessness in rural Alaska;

27 BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that House District 24
28 is declared to be an economic disaster zone; and be it

29 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is respectfully requested to

1 consider the economic disaster in House District 24 when allocating state
2 resources to areas in the state; and be it

3 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Governor is respectfully requested to en-
4 courage the commissioner of labor to review the economic situation in House
5 District 24 and to declare the area a zone of underemployment and impose
6 resident hiring preferences for employment on public construction projects.