

1 IN THE HOUSE

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2 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 61

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 Relating to garbage dumping in the
6 ocean.

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

8 WHEREAS the state and its citizens depend on the fish, marine mammals,
9 and other living resources of the ocean for their economy and welfare; and

10 WHEREAS the dumping of garbage in the ocean, even beyond state terri-
11 torial waters, affects the condition of the ocean's living resources and,
12 in turn, affects the economy, health, and welfare of the state; and

13 WHEREAS garbage has been found in fishing nets, which results in a
14 loss to fishermen, and garbage has been responsible for the death of a
15 significant number of important fisheries species, sea birds, marine
16 mammals, and other marine life; and

17 WHEREAS the United States is a party to the MARPOL convention, which
18 is an international agreement to prevent the pollution of the ocean by the
19 dumping of garbage from ships; and

20 WHEREAS the United States Congress has recently enacted legislation to
21 amend the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C. 1901 - 1911) to
22 combat garbage pollution of the ocean, including the growing problem of the
23 disposal of plastics in the ocean, and this legislation implements certain
24 provisions of the MARPOL convention; and

25 WHEREAS the MARPOL convention requires the United States to ensure
26 that its ports and terminals provide facilities for the reception of gar-
27 bage from ships and other vessels; and

28 WHEREAS 33 U.S.C. 1901 - 1911, as amended, requires that ports and
29 terminals in the United States provide reception facilities for certain

1 pollutants and garbage from ships; and

2 WHEREAS every year there is a large influx of ships to the coast of
3 Alaska to participate in the fisheries within state water and within the
4 200-mile exclusive economic zone; and

5 WHEREAS many of the ports required by federal law to accept garbage
6 and pollutants are run by small communities that are already experiencing
7 difficulties in disposing of their own wastes; and

8 WHEREAS many coastal communities in Alaska are economically dis-
9 tressed, unusually small, and remote, and have few resources to deal with
10 problems of waste collection and disposal; and

11 WHEREAS, although the prevention of garbage dumping in the ocean is
12 vitally important to these communities, many of them have no funds to
13 increase their capacity for accepting additional wastes, no authority to
14 pay for these facilities, and no expertise to handle some of these wastes;
15 and

16 WHEREAS the present shortfall in state revenue precludes the state
17 from providing funds to help coastal communities to upgrade their ports to
18 meet the standards established by federal law;

19 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United
20 States Congress and the federal government to help the ports in the coastal
21 communities of the state prevent the pollution of the ocean by providing
22 them with the financial and technical assistance necessary to handle the
23 ship garbage and pollutant reception requirements established by the Con-
24 gress.

25 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald
26 Reagan, President of the United States; to the Honorable George Bush,
27 Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the
28 Honorable Jim Wright, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; and to
29 the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators,

1 and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska
2 delegation in Congress.