

1 IN THE HOUSE BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
2 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 70  
3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
4 FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION  
5 Relating to the need for ice-capable  
6 ships for Arctic research.

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

8 WHEREAS the renewable resources of the American Arctic, specifically  
9 fish and shellfish, represent one of the nation's greatest commercial  
10 assets with the value of the Bering Sea fisheries alone being estimated at  
11 \$2,000,000,000 per year; and

12 WHEREAS the American Arctic is a vitally important rearing and feeding  
13 ground for bottomfish, king crab, and a majority of the salmon stocks that  
14 serve as cornerstones for a large number of subsistence activities in the  
15 state; and

16 WHEREAS the biological and physical characteristics of the American  
17 Arctic are important with respect to producing large numbers of fish and  
18 shellfish in the area and in determining optimal opportunities for harvest-  
19 ing the fish and shellfish; and

20 WHEREAS the Arctic Research Commission has reported to the President  
21 and the Congress that research in the Arctic Ocean and marginal seas is  
22 vital not only to the management of renewable resources but also to na-  
23 tional security, prediction of weather and climate, and development of  
24 nonrenewable resources; and

25 WHEREAS the commission also reported that most Arctic-rim countries  
26 possess Arctic technologies far more advanced than those currently avail-  
27 able in the United States, which threatens our national security and se-  
28 verely affects the ability of United States citizens to compete in the  
29 development of the resources of the Arctic; and

1        WHEREAS the types of research needed to increase our understanding of  
2 the structure of the ecosystems of the Bering Sea, the Beaufort Sea, and  
3 the Chukchi Sea include elements related to physical features such as ice  
4 edges and hydrographic structures; and

5        WHEREAS the United States does not have the ships required to conduct  
6 this research, especially since the deactivation of the U.S. Coast Guard  
7 Icebreaker "Glacier"; and

8        WHEREAS several foreign icebreakers are currently idle because of the  
9 downturn in the oil industry, and one of these vessels might be modified  
10 and put under charter to meet immediate needs; and

11        WHEREAS sponsorship of currently neglected research in basic ocean-  
12 ographic science is a necessary and proper function of the federal govern-  
13 ment in order to fulfill national objectives in Arctic research;

14        BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature strongly urges the  
15 United States Congress to authorize

16            (1) construction of a new icebreaking vessel for use in Arctic  
17 research;

18            (2) upgrading of at least one of the planned U.S. Navy additions  
19 to the fleet or construction of an additional vessel capable of Arctic  
20 research; and

21            (3) immediate leasing, or leasing with an option to buy, of a  
22 foreign icebreaker for use in connection with Arctic research.

23        COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush,  
24 Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the  
25 Honorable Donald P. Hodel, Secretary of the Department of the Interior; the  
26 Honorable Jim Wright, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; and to  
27 the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators,  
28 and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska  
29 delegation in Congress.