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Referred: Labor and Commerce and
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1 IN THE SENATE

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2

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 48

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

Relating to the development of the musk

6

ox industry in the state.

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

8 WHEREAS musk oxen, known by the Eskimo people as "Oomingmak," the
9 bearded one, are native to the Arctic and, after being hunted to extinction
10 in Alaska by 1850, were successfully reintroduced to the state; and

11 WHEREAS musk oxen have been raised domestically in the state since
12 1964, most recently at a farm in Palmer, which has a herd of just over 100
13 head; and

14 WHEREAS musk ox underwool, called qiviut, is warmer than sheep's wool
15 and softer than cashmere, is spun into fine yarn, and provides the raw
16 material for one of the few Native cottage industries in remote coastal
17 Eskimo villages; and

18 WHEREAS the Musk Ox Producers' Cooperative has a membership of more
19 than 200 knitters who produce the beautiful and uniquely Alaskan articles
20 from qiviut that are sold around the state and worn by such dignitaries as
21 the President and Mrs. Reagan; and

22 WHEREAS this industry provided nearly \$90,000 to the village homes of
23 the knitters in the last year, an amount that has steadily risen, but is
24 limited by the amount of available qiviut harvested at the Palmer farm each
25 spring; and

26 WHEREAS, because the farm has been forced to move four times in its 24
27 years of existence, expansion of the herd has been curtailed; and

28 WHEREAS, in order to finalize the permanent establishment of the musk
29 ox industry in the state the Musk Ox Development Corporation is attempting

1 to purchase the land and buildings at the Palmer farm and is working with
2 the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to match funds appropriated by the state; and

3 WHEREAS the herd raised on this farm is the only domesticated musk ox
4 herd in the world raised for its qiviut;

5 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature, recognizing that
6 economic development often comes one job at a time, respectfully requests
7 the Governor to direct the Department of Commerce and Economic Development
8 and the Department of Natural Resources to assist the further development of
9 the musk ox industry in the state.

10 COPIES of the resolution shall be sent to the Honorable J. Anthony
11 Smith, commissioner of commerce and economic development; and the Honorable
12 Judith M. Brady, commissioner of natural resources.