

Introduced: 4/16/87
Referred: International Trade, State Affairs,
Labor and Commerce and Finance

5-1079A

1 IN THE SENATE

BY UEHLING

2 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 42

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 Relating to the use of state airports
6 for plutonium shipments under a proposed
7 United States agreement with Japan.

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

9 WHEREAS plutonium is an extremely toxic nuclear fuel that can be
10 lethal in minute amounts when ingested; and

11 WHEREAS the United States and Japan have recently concluded the nego-
12 tiation of a 30-year nuclear cooperation agreement that would permit the
13 shipping of plutonium by air over a polar route between Europe and Japan;
14 and

15 WHEREAS it is very likely that the agreement would result in the
16 designation of an Alaska airport as an intermediate refueling point for the
17 shipments from Europe to Japan; and

18 WHEREAS it is predicted that as much as 40 metric tons of plutonium
19 would be shipped from Europe to Japan over several years starting in the
20 early 1990's; and

21 WHEREAS the proposed agreement does not specify whether the standards
22 of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission or the less stringent standards of the
23 International Atomic Energy Agency would be followed to ensure the safety
24 of the shipments; and

25 WHEREAS a cask for safely shipping the large quantities of plutonium
26 by air has not yet been designed, and it is unclear whether it is possible
27 to build a cask that can survive an airplane crash and is large enough to
28 ship the quantities of plutonium contemplated by the agreement; and

29 WHEREAS an environmental impact statement has not been prepared for

1 the proposed agreement, although there is court precedent for the proposi-
2 tion that the movement of nuclear fuel qualifies as a major federal action
3 requiring preparation of an impact statement; and

4 WHEREAS allowing the planes carrying the plutonium shipments to land
5 in the state would have tremendous consequences for the health and safety
6 of the state's residents and the protection of the state's environment;

7 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature opposes the proposed
8 30-year nuclear cooperation agreement between the United States and Japan
9 that would allow the shipment of plutonium by air between Europe and Japan
10 by polar route, resulting in refueling stopovers in the state during the
11 shipments.

12 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald
13 Reagan, President of the United States; the Honorable George Bush, Vice-
14 President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honor-
15 able Caspar W. Weinberger, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Defense; the
16 Honorable John S. Herrington, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy;
17 the Honorable George P. Shultz, Secretary of the U.S. Department of State;
18 the Honorable Elizabeth Hanford Dole, Secretary of the U.S. Department of
19 Transportation; the Honorable Jim Wright, Speaker of the U.S. House of
20 Representatives; the Honorable Lando W. Zech, Jr., Chairman of the U.S.
21 Nuclear Regulatory Commission; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the
22 Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
23 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.