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Referred: Resources

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1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 44

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

Relating to the water quality standards

6

of the State of Alaska under the Clean

7

Water Act.

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

9 WHEREAS the Legislature of the State of Alaska believes that the  
10 federal Clean Water Act was enacted primarily to protect the water of the  
11 nation from degradation caused by chemical pollutants and to ensure that  
12 industrial water users would be held accountable for their effluent dis-  
13 charges; and

14 WHEREAS the water quality standard for turbidity adopted by the State  
15 of Alaska has interfered with reasonable economic opportunities for re-  
16 source development in Alaska; and

17 WHEREAS the Legislature of the State of Alaska has determined that  
18 there is no reasonable relationship between the economic and social costs  
19 of the retention of the turbidity standards for other than drinking water  
20 systems and the benefits obtained from its retention for all water uses;  
21 and

22 WHEREAS the Legislature of the State of Alaska is considering the  
23 repeal of the existing water quality standard for turbidity but wishes to  
24 comply with the requirements of sec. 303 of the Clean Water Act; and

25 WHEREAS the Legislature has sought to determine whether the repeal of  
26 the state turbidity standard is permitted under the Clean Water Act and  
27 whether there would be adverse environmental consequences if it relied on  
28 the remaining water quality standards; and

29 WHEREAS the drinking water standards now apply to all but two water

1 bodies in the state; and

2 WHEREAS each water body in Alaska does not naturally meet the cri-  
3 terion for drinking water and the Department of Environmental Conservation  
4 cautions the residents of the state on their use of natural water as drink-  
5 ing water without treatment; and

6 WHEREAS the Legislature believes that the application of the drinking  
7 water standard for turbidity has been incorrectly applied to Alaska water  
8 under the terms of the Clean Water Act and the multiple use classification  
9 of state water;

10 BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the members of the  
11 Alaska delegation in Congress are requested to seek legislation or regu-  
12 latory changes that would alter or waive each requirement of law that

13 (1) precludes the State of Alaska from applying water quality  
14 standards to state water that reflect the actual use of the water; or

15 (2) makes a turbidity criterion a necessary part of the state's  
16 water quality plan under sec. 303(c) of the Clean Water Act.

17 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ted Stevens  
18 and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don  
19 Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.