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1 IN THE SENATE

BY BINKLEY

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 68

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

Relating to radioluminescent runway

6

lights.

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

8 WHEREAS air transportation is the primary mode of travel throughout
9 the State of Alaska, particularly in the rural areas; and

10 WHEREAS due to high cost of construction and maintenance, many rural
11 airports are without runway lights and currently rely on flare pots or the
12 headlights of the community's vehicles when the runway must be lit in an
13 emergency; and

14 WHEREAS, since 1978, the state Department of Transportation and Public
15 Facilities in conjunction with the United States Department of Energy has
16 been seeking an alternative method of lighting runways in rural Alaska; and

17 WHEREAS in 1981 these two departments began the development of a
18 self-powered lighting system called radioluminescent lights that use a
19 radioactive isotope, tritium, as the energy source and that would meet the
20 needs of airports in rural Alaska; and

21 WHEREAS through extensive testing and refining, the radioluminescent
22 lights, known as RL lights, are now 25 percent brighter than the original
23 system, are less expensive to install than electrically powered lights, and
24 are virtually maintenance free; and

25 WHEREAS although radioluminescent lighting systems appear to be a
26 reliable and cost-effective alternative to electrically generated runway
27 lights for rural Alaska, without approval of the Federal Aviation Adminis-
28 tration, commercial carriers cannot officially utilize RL lighting systems,
29 so installation of the RL lighting system is still not practical;

1 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests
2 the Federal Aviation Administration to expedite its review process for
3 certifying radioluminescent runway lights by making the testing of RL
4 lights a priority project.

5 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable James H.
6 Burnley IV, Secretary, United States Department of Transportation; the
7 Honorable T. Allen McArtor, Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration;
8 the Honorable Franklin L. Cunningham, Alaska Region Director, Federal
9 Aviation Administration; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable
10 Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Repre-
11 sentative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.