

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY KOPONEN, BROWN, DAVIDSON,  
MACLEAN, AND FINKELSTEIN

2

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 56

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

Relating to the promotion of a nuclear

6

weapons-free treaty for the arctic and

7

subarctic.

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

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WHEREAS the unprecedented thawing of the cold war following the con-  
versations between former President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev  
necessitates a continuing restructuring of the relationship between Alaska  
and the neighboring areas of the Soviet Union; and

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WHEREAS the main purpose of negotiating a nuclear weapons-free treaty,  
as of all rational security policies, is to prevent nuclear war; and

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WHEREAS an emphatic expression of feeling by citizens and their local  
and state governments can help initiate steps by the United States, the  
Soviet Union, and other nuclear powers towards world peace and away from  
the brink of nuclear war; and

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WHEREAS over the past five years more than 4,225 communities in 23  
nations have adopted resolutions calling for the establishment of nuclear-  
free zones; and

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WHEREAS 42 of the 50 states in the United States have proposals for  
nuclear-free zones introduced or approved at state or local levels; and

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WHEREAS there are five treaties in existence with as many as 83 signa-  
tories, including the United States and the Soviet Union, pertaining to  
nuclear-free zones in the Antarctic, outer space, Latin America, the South  
Pacific, and on the ocean floor; and

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WHEREAS nuclear weapons are themselves nuclear targets, and to remove  
the targets will reduce the risk of destruction to the territory in which

1 they were located in case of nuclear war; and

2 WHEREAS 58.4 percent of Alaska voters in the August 1986 election  
3 expressed their strong support for Ballot Measure No. 1, which declared as  
4 the policy of the state the promotion of a mutual and verifiable nuclear  
5 weapons freeze to be followed by a reduction in nuclear warheads, missiles,  
6 and other delivery systems in order to halt the nuclear arms race and  
7 reduce the risk of nuclear war; and

8 WHEREAS the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster in the Soviet Union  
9 has resulted in the spread of nuclear poison to neighboring territories,  
10 including arctic regions of Scandinavia; and

11 WHEREAS the environmental devastation of these regions has seriously  
12 jeopardized the health and lifestyle of the Saami people; and

13 WHEREAS the radioactive contamination of the region above the Arctic  
14 Circle from the previous use and testing of nuclear weapons has caused the  
15 permanent inhabitants of the arctic region to carry body-burdens of long-  
16 lived, biologically dangerous radionuclides in amounts in excess of all the  
17 world's people except for the atomic bomb victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki  
18 during August 1945; and

19 WHEREAS any further deposition of nuclear materials in the food-chain  
20 of the arctic and subarctic regions will result in biologically unaccept-  
21 able radiation standards for people and ecosystems; and

22 WHEREAS the storage or transportation of high level radioactive nu-  
23 clear wastes in Alaska could pose serious health, safety, and environmental  
24 risks to the state's residents; and

25 WHEREAS the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the legislative bodies of  
26 the Northwest Territories, the Yukon, and Greenland have unanimously ap-  
27 proved resolutions calling for restriction of the arctic to uses that are  
28 peaceful and environmentally safe, and prohibiting the deployment and  
29 testing of nuclear weapons in this area; and

1           WHEREAS a ban on nuclear weapons testing, the deployment of most  
2 nuclear weapons delivery systems, and the production of fissile materials  
3 can be verified with high confidence by on-site inspections, and a world-  
4 wide network of seismic monitors, satellites, and other verification tech-  
5 nology; and

6           WHEREAS the people of Alaska desire to continue to live in freedom in  
7 a world that is at peace and safe from nuclear pollution; and

8           WHEREAS the ratification of a multi-lateral and verifiable nuclear-  
9 free arctic and subarctic treaty represents a creative and meaningful first  
10 step towards establishing a nuclear-weapons free world, which is the ulti-  
11 mate intent of this resolution;

12          BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the Governor and  
13 the Alaska congressional delegation are requested to promote and initiate  
14 efforts to

15                 (1) encourage verifiable bilateral and multilateral agreements  
16 and treaties between the United States, the Soviet Union, and other nations  
17 establishing the arctic and subarctic regions as a nuclear weapons-free  
18 zone;

19                 (2) obtain verifiable bilateral and multilateral agreements and  
20 treaties between the United States, the Soviet Union, and other nations to  
21 ban nuclear weapons from the arctic and subarctic regions;

22                 (3) prevent all parties, including military forces, from dispos-  
23 ing of radioactive and nuclear wastes and materials in the arctic and  
24 subarctic regions;

25                 (4) obtain verifiable bilateral and multilateral agreements and  
26 treaties between the United States, the Soviet Union, and other nations to  
27 prevent nuclear weapons testing or the placement of nuclear weapons-related  
28 devices in the arctic and subarctic regions; and

29                 (5) promote and encourage the location of the next US/USSR

1 summit conference to be in Alaska so that world attention and concern can  
2 be drawn to the environmental and security concerns of arctic and subarctic  
3 areas; and be it

4 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature does not seek to  
5 limit the use of nuclear technology for medical treatment or other safe and  
6 benign purposes; and be it

7 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature does not seek to  
8 discourage or prohibit United States Navy nuclear-powered vessels from  
9 entering Alaska waters or visiting Alaska ports.

10 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush,  
11 President of the United States; the Honorable Mikhail Gorbachev, General  
12 Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; the Honorable James  
13 A. Baker, III, U.S. Secretary of State; to the Honorable Richard R. Burt,  
14 Head of Delegation and Negotiator; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the  
15 Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.  
16 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.