

BY REP. COTTEN, Menard, Barnes

1 IN THE HOUSE

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 61

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

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SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

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Requesting the President not to imple-

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ment the "no net loss" of wetlands

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policy as to the State of Alaska.

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

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WHEREAS the Domestic Policy Council, the United States Environmental

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Protection Agency, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the United

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States Fish and Wildlife Service, and other federal agencies are advancing

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a new wetlands policy for the nation; and

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WHEREAS the proposed policy calls for "no net loss" of wetlands in the

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United States; and

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WHEREAS the rationale for a "no net loss" policy is based on the loss

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of 54 percent of the total wetlands in the continental United States; and

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WHEREAS less than one percent of the 170,000,000 acres of wetlands in

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the state have been affected by encroachment; and

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WHEREAS Alaska has land characteristics that are unique to the state

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and require special consideration in a wetlands policy for the nation; and

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WHEREAS the "no net loss" policy fails to recognize that permafrost

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qualifies as wetlands; and

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WHEREAS Alaska, through its state and municipal governments, has done

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an outstanding job in protecting and preserving highly valued wetlands; and

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WHEREAS the subjection of the state to a "no net loss" policy con-

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ceived without an understanding of Alaska's unique characteristics would

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prevent the reasonable, responsible, and appropriate development of wet-

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lands in Alaska; and

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WHEREAS the future development and extraction of Alaska's natural

1 resources and diversification of the state's economy would be deleteriously
2 affected by subjection to this "no net loss" policy;

3 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the President
4 of the United States to determine that application of a "no net loss"
5 policy to wetlands in Alaska would not be in the best interest of the state
6 or nation, and would jeopardize the energy security of our nation; and be
7 it

8 FURTHER RESOLVED that the President direct federal agencies to account
9 for the unique circumstances and needs of the State of Alaska in developing
10 and implementing national wetlands policy.

11 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush,
12 President of the United States; Lieutenant General Henry J. Hatch, Chief of
13 Engineers, Commanding General, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; William K.
14 Reilly, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and to the
15 Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and
16 the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delega-
17 tion in Congress.