

Original sponsor(s): SEN. COGHILL

1 IN THE SENATE BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
2 CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 36 (Finance)
3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION
5 Requesting the Congress to honor the
6 recommendations of the Southeast Confer-
7 ence in the classification of land along
8 the east shoreline of Lynn Canal.
9 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:
10 WHEREAS, of all the continental states of the United States, Alaska's
11 capital, Juneau, is the only one that is not connected by highway to the
12 rest of the state, denying most Alaskans direct land access to the seat of
13 government; and
14 WHEREAS one option for improved access that is under consideration by
15 the Alaska legislature is a road on the east side of Lynn Canal, known as
16 the Lynn Canal Highway Project; and
17 WHEREAS it is estimated that opening the Lynn Canal Highway would
18 precipitate a four-fold increase in visitor traffic between Juneau and the
19 communities of Upper Lynn Canal; and
20 WHEREAS completion of the Lynn Canal Highway Project would allow the
21 Alaska Marine Highway System to improve ferry services to communities
22 of Southeastern Alaska; and
23 WHEREAS the proposed highway route of the Lynn Canal Highway Project
24 would pass almost entirely through federal and state land, requiring almost
25 no purchase of private property; and
26 WHEREAS, at the time of withdrawal of land for designation of wilder-
27 ness area within the Tongass National Forest known as the Endicott River
28 Wilderness area, Congress established a six-mile corridor or setback along
29 the west side of Lynn Canal for future economic and access needs; and

1 WHEREAS a similar corridor or setback along the east side of Lynn
2 Canal would allow continued consideration of the Lynn Canal Highway
3 Project; and

4 WHEREAS the legislature has directed the Department of Transportation
5 and Public Facilities to conduct an environmental impact statement analysis
6 of all possible options that will result in improved access to and from
7 Juneau, including roads up both the east and west sides of Lynn Canal; and

8 WHEREAS commitment by the state to proceed with construction of the
9 project identified as most feasible in the environmental impact statement
10 will result in eligibility of the project for federal-aid highway funding;
11 and

12 WHEREAS the legislature has demonstrated its commitment to improved
13 access through a 1989 general fund appropriation of \$100,000 for completion
14 of phase I of the environmental impact statement; and

15 WHEREAS phase I of the environmental impact statement is nearing
16 completion and the legislature is committed to providing an appropriation
17 for the remaining two phases of the environmental impact statement; and

18 WHEREAS there is legislation currently pending in the Congress that
19 may designate certain areas within the Tongass National Forest as wilder-
20 ness, including an area located in Berners Bay, north of Juneau; and

21 WHEREAS designation of a portion of a possible road route on the east
22 side of Lynn Canal as wilderness would effectively eliminate that option as
23 a means of improving access;

24 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature asks the United
25 States Congress, in its deliberations relating to the Tongass National
26 Forest in the Lynn Canal area north of Juneau, to conform to recommenda-
27 tions of the Southeast Conference that land along the east shoreline of
28 Lynn Canal be classified as protected against commercial timber harvest
29 without disallowing other necessary uses.

1 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush,
2 President of the United States; the Honorable Dan Quayle, Vice-President of
3 the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Thomas S.
4 Foley, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable George
5 J. Mitchell, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Samuel K.
6 Skinner, U.S. Secretary of Transportation; the Honorable Robert A.
7 Mosbacher, U.S. Secretary of Commerce; the Honorable Clayton K. Yeutter,
8 U.S. Secretary of Agriculture; and the Honorable Manuel Lujan, Jr., U.S.
9 Secretary of the Interior; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honor-
10 able Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
11 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.