

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR

Introduced: 1/30/91
Referred: Transportation

A RESOLUTION

1 Relating to the dredging of Dry Strait.

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

3 WHEREAS the Wrangell Narrows is the only route accessible to commerce and travel between
4 Wrangell and Petersburg, Alaska; and

5 WHEREAS strong tidal currents, a shallow channel, and numerous reefs constitute navigational
6 hazards to all ships using the Wrangell Narrows; and

7 WHEREAS a fuel spill of 57,000 gallons occurred on January 20, 1990, when the small fuel
8 tanker Frank H. Brown hit a submerged reef in the Wrangell Narrows; and

9 WHEREAS the U.S. Coast Guard cutter Planetree ran aground and sustained hull damage while
10 passing through the Wrangell Narrows on January 25, 1990; and

11 WHEREAS there has been a dramatic increase in large cruise ships and commercial vessels
12 traveling through southeast Alaska during the past 20 years; and

13 WHEREAS Alaska Marine Highway ferries and other medium size vessels are subject to vessel
14 damage from obstructions in the Wrangell Narrows and to delays and schedule deviations caused by
15 waiting for the high tides necessary to pass through the Wrangell Narrows; and

16 WHEREAS the composition of the ocean floor and serpentine course of the Wrangell Narrows
17 prohibits channel improvements that would eliminate the navigational hazards and allow large vessels

1 to travel between Wrangell and Petersburg; and

2 **WHEREAS** the alluvial sand bottom in Dry Strait, a channel near Wrangell Narrows, could be
3 easily dredged to develop a deeper, straighter, and safer channel that could be used as an alternative to
4 traveling through the Wrangell Narrows; and

5 **WHEREAS** the dredging of Dry Strait would create a safe channel for ships of all sizes at all
6 tides and would provide a cost efficient and scenic alternative shipping lane through southeast Alaska;

7 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests the United States Army Corps of
8 Engineers to dredge Dry Strait in southeast Alaska and urges the members of the state's congressional
9 delegation to support and pursue this project.

10 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush, President of the United
11 States; Lieutenant General Henry J. Hatch, Chief of Engineers and Commander of the U.S. Army Corps
12 of Engineers; the Honorable Quentin N. Burdick, Chair of the Senate Committee on Environment and
13 Public Works; the Honorable Ernest F. Hollings, Chair of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science,
14 and Transportation; the Honorable Walter B. Jones, Chair of the House Committee on Merchant Marine
15 and Fisheries; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators,
16 and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.