

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 20
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND TOURISM

Introduced: 2/6/91

Referred: House Special Committee on International Trade and Tourism, State Affairs

A RESOLUTION

1 Encouraging the United States and Soviet national governments to establish consulates in
2 Alaska and the Soviet Far East.

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

4 WHEREAS Alaska is the only state with a Soviet border and is geographically closer to the
5 Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) than any other state, separated by only 2.5 miles at the
6 closest point; and

7 WHEREAS Alaska and the Soviet Union share a common history and heritage and many Native
8 people of both countries are related by blood and speak a common language; and

9 WHEREAS regular contact between Alaska and the Soviet Far East resumed about three years
10 ago following more than 40 years of separation by the "Ice Curtain"; and

11 WHEREAS citizens of Alaska and the Soviet Far East are at the forefront of opening trade,
12 scientific, and cultural relations between the United States and the U.S.S.R. and Alaska and Soviet air
13 carriers make frequent flights across the Bering Strait; and

14 WHEREAS the growing number of visits by Alaskans and Soviets to each other's countries and
15 an increasing number of trade, tourist, scientific, and cultural ventures require visas and other approvals
16 by both national governments; and

1 **WHEREAS** there is a considerable burden on and delay for those seeking to travel and pursue
2 joint ventures because Soviets must personally travel to Vladivostok or Moscow, the U.S. Embassy in
3 Moscow is cutting back on approvals, and the Soviet Embassy in San Francisco processes an estimated
4 5,000 visa applications monthly;

5 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests the United States and U.S.S.R.
6 national governments to establish as soon as possible a U.S. consulate in the Soviet Far East and a
7 Soviet consulate in Alaska to more quickly and efficiently process the required approvals for Alaska-
8 Soviet exchanges and visits, and to further encourage the warming relations between our two countries.

9 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush, President of the United
10 States; the Honorable Mikhail S. Gorbachev, President of the Soviet Union; the Honorable James A.
11 Baker, III, U.S. Secretary of State; the Honorable Alexander Bessmertnyk, Minister for Foreign Affairs
12 of the U.S.S.R.; the Honorable James Matlock, U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union; the Honorable
13 Viktor Kamenev, Soviet Consulate General in San Francisco; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the
14 Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative,
15 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.