

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES HUDSON, Gruenberg

Introduced: 2/11/91
Referred: State Affairs, Finance

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to the cost-of-living adjustment for federal employees in Alaska.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** approximately 13,000 federal employees are employed in Alaska, approximately
4 9,000 of whom receive a cost-of-living adjustment; and

5 **WHEREAS** the federal Office of Personnel Management has recently commissioned a study of
6 the cost of living in Alaska, which asserts that the cost of living in the state has recently equaled the cost
7 of living in Washington, D.C.; and

8 **WHEREAS** the reduction or elimination of the cost-of-living adjustment will result in a
9 considerable economic hardship on federal employees in Alaska; and

10 **WHEREAS** medical and dental facilities and services are more readily available and more easily
11 accessible to residents of Washington, D.C., typically at a lower cost than comparable services are
12 available in Alaska, and many residents of Alaska must leave their towns and villages, and in many
13 cases, even the state, to obtain medical care; and

14 **WHEREAS** many federal employees in Alaska have relied on the cost-of-living adjustment in
15 making financial commitments, including purchasing their homes, and a reduction in the adjustment
16 would have a devastating effect on their ability to continue to make housing payments; and

17 **WHEREAS** prior cost-of-living surveys have always utilized personal interviews of federal

1 employees as a means of gathering data, but this study did not include direct employee interviews; and

2 **WHEREAS** the cost of living in Alaska is higher than the average cost of living in the nation,
3 Alaska's climate is much colder for longer periods than the climate in Washington, D.C., resulting in
4 Alaskans having to pay higher home heating costs, Alaskans pay a higher cost for gasoline and other
5 motor fuels than do residents of Washington, D.C., and Alaskans pay a higher cost for airline travel
6 within the state and from the state to other world destinations; and

7 **WHEREAS** these costs are not adequately addressed in the cost-of-living study prepared for the
8 Office of Personnel Management;

9 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Office of
10 Personnel Management to conduct another cost-of-living study for federal employees in the state, which

11 (1) factors in the higher costs for energy, medical care and services, and transportation;

12 (2) uses direct personal interviews of federal workers in the state as part of its
13 methodology; and

14 (3) compares the cost of living in Alaska to the average cost of living in the nation; and

15 be it

16 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Congress
17 of the United States to adequately provide for the cost-of-living adjustment for Alaska's federal
18 employees in the federal budget.

19 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Constance B. Newman, Director, Office
20 of Personnel Management; the Honorable Dan Quayle, Vice-President of the United States and President
21 of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; and
22 to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable
23 Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.