

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 55**  
**IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA**  
**EIGHTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION**

**BY THE HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE BY REQUEST OF THE HOUSE ECONOMIC TASK FORCE**

**Introduced: 2/11/94**  
**Referred: Resources**

**A RESOLUTION**

**1 Relating to the importance to the economy of Southeast Alaska of continued**  
**2 timber harvests on the Tongass National Forest.**

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

**4 WHEREAS** Tongass National Forest timber resources accounted for about 2,500 of  
**5 the annual average 3,600 private sector jobs directly generated by the forest products industry**  
**6 in Southeast Alaska in 1992, the last year for which accurate figures are available; and**

**7 WHEREAS** the forest products industry in Southeast Alaska accounted for 24 percent  
**8 of basic industry employment (including government), and 34 percent of all private basic**  
**9 industry employment, in 1992; and**

**10 WHEREAS** workers in the forest products industry in Southeast Alaska, including  
**11 loggers, road builders, stevedores, sawmill workers, and pulp mill workers earned**  
**12 approximately \$146,000,000 in wages and salaries during 1992; and**

**13 WHEREAS** forest products industry employment in Southeast Alaska has declined  
**14 sharply since 1990, marked by the loss of \$18,000,000 in payroll and more than 600 jobs, due**  
**15 to reduced timber harvests on the Tongass and the near completion of the first harvest on**  
**16 private land; and**

1           **WHEREAS** the United States Congress in 1980 enacted the Alaska National Interest  
2 Lands Conservation Act, which includes provisions designating 5,400,000 acres of the Tongass  
3 National Forest as part of the Wilderness Preservation System, and thus closed those lands to  
4 timber harvest; and

5           **WHEREAS** an increase in the availability of timber for harvest on the Tongass  
6 National Forest could offset the lack of production of timber from private lands and maintain  
7 the economic well-being of Southeast Alaska; and

8           **WHEREAS** a decline in the availability of timber to harvest on the Tongass National  
9 Forest will continue to cause the loss of jobs in the timber industry in Southeast Alaska and  
10 will significantly impair the economic well-being of the area as many communities are totally  
11 or otherwise very dependent on the timber industry as the sole or one of the largest employers  
12 in the community; and

13           **WHEREAS** the United States Congress in 1990 enacted the Tongass Timber Reform  
14 Act, thus closing an additional 1,100,000 acres of land to timber harvest through wilderness  
15 designations and management practices; and

16           **WHEREAS** timber availability is critical to the health of the forest products industry  
17 in Alaska, and the availability of timber in the Tongass National Forest will likely determine  
18 the future of the forest products industry in Alaska; and

19           **WHEREAS** the United States Congress controls the level of timber harvesting in the  
20 Tongass in part through the budget process and by these land designations acts; and

21           **WHEREAS** the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, manages the  
22 Tongass National Forest and determines the availability of timber for harvest on the lands not  
23 closed to timber harvest;

24           **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the United  
25 States Congress to review the economic impact on the Southeast Alaska economy and the  
26 forest products industry of the wilderness designations imposed by the Alaska National Interest  
27 Lands Conservation Act of 1980, and the wilderness designations and changes in management  
28 practices mandated by the Tongass Timber Reform Act of 1990; and be it

29           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the  
30 United States Congress to increase the amount of timber available for harvest in the Tongass  
31 National Forest; and be it

32           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the

1 United States Congress to provide sufficient funding to the United States Department of  
2 Agriculture, Forest Service, to facilitate offering for harvest the maximum amount of Tongass  
3 timber possible under current law; and be it

4 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests the United States  
5 Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, to manage the Tongass National Forest in order  
6 to provide maximum opportunity for timber harvest.

7 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the  
8 United States; the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President  
9 of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the U.S. House of  
10 Representatives; the Honorable George Mitchell, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the  
11 Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the  
12 Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska Delegation in Congress;  
13 and to Mr. Michael Espy, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Mr. Jack Ward  
14 Thomas, Chief of the U. S. Forest Service.