

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
EIGHTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATOR SALO

Introduced: 1/12/93
Referred: RES, JUD

A RESOLUTION

1 Endorsing, in principle, legislation authorizing oil and gas leasing, exploration, and
2 development on the coastal plain within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge,
3 provided the legislation does not contain a provision decreasing this state's royalty.

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

5 WHEREAS the Alaska State Legislature has previously recognized the importance of
6 reasonable exploration and development of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife
7 Refuge (ANWR) and has adopted resolutions supporting federal legislation to authorize oil and
8 gas leasing, exploration, and development on the coastal plain; and

9 WHEREAS the Alaska Statehood Act contains a binding contract with Alaska that the
10 state will receive 90 percent of all oil, gas, and mineral royalties from federal land in Alaska;
11 and

12 WHEREAS the federal government has both a moral and a legal obligation to honor
13 all statehood acts; and

14 WHEREAS the people of the State of Alaska relied on that royalty sharing provision
15 in ratifying the Alaska Statehood Act; and

16 WHEREAS the United States Congress included that royalty sharing provision in the

1 compact because Alaska, unlike all other public land states, was not covered by the federal
2 Reclamation Act and derived no benefits from that Act; and

3 **WHEREAS** the Congress also intended in the Alaska Statehood Act to compensate
4 Alaska for the large federal land reservations that had the effect of stifling beneficial economic
5 development; and

6 **WHEREAS** the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge comprises a core
7 calving ground of the Porcupine Caribou herd; and

8 **WHEREAS** the Gwich'in Athabascan Indians of northeastern Alaska and northwestern
9 Canada have relied on caribou for subsistence for thousands of years, and continue to subsist
10 on the Porcupine Caribou herd, a herd that is essential to meet the nutritional, cultural, and
11 spiritual needs of the Gwich'in people; and

12 **WHEREAS** 65 percent of the remote communities in Alaska still lack piped water and
13 other essential services and the people of Alaska rely on that royalty sharing provision to
14 address this and other grave health, social, and economic problems; and

15 **WHEREAS** President Bush's National Energy Plan included provisions allocating 100
16 percent of any revenue derived from leasing, exploration, and development of the coastal plain
17 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to the federal government, in violation of the Alaska
18 Statehood Act; and

19 **WHEREAS** the Congress considered other legislation that authorized oil and gas
20 leasing in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge that

21 (1) provided that only 50 percent of royalty revenue from the wildlife refuge
22 would be shared with Alaska, and

23 (2) contained so called "blackmail clauses" that would void any lease sale
24 should the revenue division and sharing provisions be successfully challenged in court; and

25 **WHEREAS** the "blackmail clauses" infringe on our state's constitutional rights
26 because they penalize Alaska if it tries to protect its rights under the Statehood Act;

27 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the Legislature supports in
28 principle federal legislation authorizing oil and gas leasing, exploration, and development on
29 the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, but opposes any unilateral reductions
30 in royalty revenue from that exploration and development and any attempts by the Congress
31 or the President to coerce the State of Alaska into accepting less than was promised at
32 statehood; and be it

1 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Congress join with the state in providing strict
2 standards for the protection of land, water, and wildlife resources, including the habitat of the
3 Porcupine Caribou herd, during the exploration and development of the coastal plain of the
4 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

5 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush, President of
6 the United States; the Honorable Dan Quayle, Vice-President of the United States and
7 president of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the U.S. House of
8 Representatives; the Honorable George Mitchell, U.S. Senate Majority Leader; the Honorable
9 J. Bennett Johnston, Chair of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; the
10 Honorable George Miller, Chair of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; the
11 Honorable Manuel Lujan, Jr., Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Ted Stevens and the
12 Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
13 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and to the governors and the
14 presiding officers of the houses of the legislatures of each of our sister states.