

HCR

50

February 10, 1992

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information:  
Senator Sam Cotten  
465-3711  
Rep. Gene Kubina  
465-4843

COTTEN AND KUBINA SPONSOR RESOLUTIONS SUPPORTING OPEN  
PRIMARIES.

Today Sen. Sam Cotten D-Eagle River and Rep. Gene Kubina D-Valdez introduced SCR 30 and HCR 50, resolutions supporting open primary elections. The resolutions have strong bipartisan support. SCR 30 has fourteen cosponsors, who comprise two-thirds of the Senate's total membership. Eight are Democrats and six are Republicans.

The resolutions express strong support for the open system under which elections are currently conducted and requests that the parties reconsider their earlier decisions to conduct closed primaries

"I disagree with those who feel Alaska's primaries must be closed in order to strengthen political parties and provide for party discipline." said Cotten. "I oppose the idea of forcing Alaskans to only vote for one party."

Both Cotten and Kubina added that they had hoped that the resolutions, which have strong bipartisan support from the Senate, and strong support in the House would spur the

Republican Party of Alaska to back off from their position to force the change to the more restrictive closed primaries.

"I don't think that closed primaries enhance the democratic process." stressed Kubina. "Alaskans, by and large, like to vote across party lines, making their decision based upon the particular candidate."

This past weekend the Republican State Central Committee reaffirmed support for closed primaries so Cotten and Kubina felt that it was necessary to introduce the resolutions.

The Supreme Court has ruled that parties can force the closure of state primary elections.

The House and Senate State Affairs Committees are also working jointly on legislation which will attempt to resolve the problem of abiding with the the desires of a political party yet will keep Alaska's primary system as open and unrestricted as possible.

-end-

# Alaska State Legislature

Chairman  
State Affairs  
Committee

Legislative Council

Transportation  
Committee

During Session:  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811  
(907) 465-4859

During Interim:  
P.O. Box 2463  
Valdez, Alaska 99686  
(907) 835-2111

Representative Eugene Kubina

## SPONSOR STATEMENT

HCR 50 was introduced to express strong support for the open primary system under which Alaska has operated since 1968. It further requests the parties to reconsider their decisions to close their primaries. HCR 50 has bipartisan support and would enhance the democratic process for Alaskans.

— DISTRICT SIX —

• Chenega Bay • Chitina • Cooper Landing • Cordova • Hope • Moose Pass • Seward • Tatitlek • Valdez • Whittier •



(7)

Date Referred: February 10, 1992

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 2/19/92

The STATE AFFAIRS Committee considered:

HCR 50

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 50  
Supporting open primary elections.

SUPPORT OPEN PRIMARY ELECTIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS:  the same title  
 be replaced with \_\_\_\_\_  a new title

have attached amendments(s)  
 do pass  
 do not pass  
 no recommendations  
 individual recommendations  
 additional referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

ADOPTS: \_\_\_\_\_ letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S): (Dept)

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Dept/Date)

fiscal impact \_\_\_\_\_

fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

zero fiscal note LAA

zero fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNING <u>DO</u> PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	DNP	NR	AM
<i>Eugene G. Kubisa</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<i>T. J. ...</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<i>...</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<i>...</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<i>...</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<i>...</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<i>...</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

*Eugene G. Kubisa*  
CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE

CHUGIAK EAGLE RIVER STAR 2/13/92

## *Resolutions urge open primaries*

Concurrent State Senate and House resolutions were introduced Monday by Sen. Sam Cotten and Rep. Gene Kubina (D-Vaidez), respectively, supporting open primary elections. The resolutions have strong bipartisan support, their sponsors say.

The resolutions express strong support for the open system under which elections are currently conducted and requests the parties reconsider their earlier decisions to conduct closed

primaries. In Cotten's Senate resolution, which has 14 co-sponsors, the traditional cross-voting of Alaskans, and possible discouraging effect closed primaries might have on voter turn-out are cited, among other reasons, as incentives to maintain the current system.

In a press release, Cotten and Kubina said they felt it was time to introduce the resolutions because of the Republican State Central Committee's reaffirmed support for closed primaries this

past weekend. The Supreme Court has ruled that parties can force the closure of state primary elections.

Proponents of closed primaries claim that the current system allows opposing parties to determine candidates, by cross-voting.

Both the House and Senate State Affairs Committees are also working to reconcile the desires of political parties with the open primary system.

STATE OF ALASKA  
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HCR 50

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Department Affected: Legislative Affairs Agency  
 Title: SUPPORT OPEN PRIMARY ELECTIONS BRU: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Component: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor: Rep. Gene Kubina  
 Requestor: House State Affairs Committee COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 

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EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES	0	0	0	0	0	0
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
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REVENUE FUND SOURCE:						
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	0	0	0	0	0	0
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS: N/A

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year impact: 0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared By: House State Affairs Committee Phone: 465-4859  
 Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 2-17-92  
 Approved by Commissioner: Representative Gene Kubina, Chairman  
 Agency: House State Affairs Committee Date: 2-17-92