

HJR

81

HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND TOURISM

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX V, JUNEAU 99811
(907) 465-2973



MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 24, 1992

TO: Senator Drue Pearce, Chair
Senate Labor and Commerce Committee

FROM: Representative Tom Moyer, ^{TSM}Chair
House Special Committee on
International Trade and Tourism

RE: HJR 81 "Relating to travel advisories issued by the
Department of State"

I would like to respectfully request that you schedule HJR 81, which relates to travel advisories issued by the Department of State, for a hearing at your earliest convenience. I've attached back-up information on this resolution, along with copies of numerous articles on the Alaska-Canada Highway. The resolution passed the House unanimously on Friday, March 20.

As you probably know, the resolution is the direct result of a travel advisory issued by the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs in early February. The State Department issued this advisory on the Yukon and the Alaska-Canada (Alcan) Highway, which was very negative for both Alaska and the Yukon and there were many erroneous statements in the advisory. These advisories are issued in written form and also placed on a recording that can be accessed by dialing a hotline number.

After prodding from the Yukon and Alaska tourism offices and the Alaska Congressional delegation this advisory was finally reworded and the recording was also changed. I still believe that the Legislature should go on record urging the State Department to contact states and other entities that might be affected by such advisories in the future.

Thank you for your prompt scheduling of HJR 81.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

No. 1
Version: HJR 81
(H) Publish Date: 3-4-92

Revision Date: _____ Department Affect _____
Title: Relating to travel advisories BRU: _____
issued by the Dept. of State _____ Component: _____
Sponsor: House ITT
Requestor: House ITT 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						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0					

CAPITAL	0					
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REVENUE						
FUND SOURCE:	0					

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL	0					

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared By: Rep. Tom Moyer *Tom Moyer* Phone: 465-4930
Division: Chair, House ITT Date: 3-3-92

Approved by Commissioner: _____ Date: _____
Agency: _____

Distribution (by preparer): Leg. Fin., Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB/DBR, Gov. Legis. Ofc., & Impacted Agency(ies).

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 81**

HISTORY IN THE HOUSE

1992
Read first time and referred to:
ITT, L&C

2/26

3/4
ITT RPT CS() New Title
6 DP ~~DNP~~ ~~NR~~ ~~AM~~
FN OFN Previous FN

3/16
L&C RPT CS() New Title
4 DP ~~DNP~~ ~~NR~~ ~~AM~~
FN OFN Previous FN ~~AM~~

RPT CS() New Title
DP DNP NR AM
FN OFN Previous FN

3/20 Read second time
CS() Adopted

Amended

3/20 Advanced

3/20 Read third time

Return to second for specific amendment

3/20 PASSED EFD Same ___ or
Yeas 31 Yeas
Nays 0 Nays
Excused 9 Excused
Absent 1 Absent

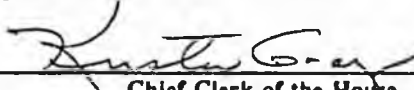
___ Intent adopted

Reconsideration
Reconsideration not taken up

PASSED ON RECON. EFD Same ___ or
Yeas Yeas
Nays Nays
Excused Excused
Absent Absent

___ Intent adopted

3/20 Reported correctly engrossed
Signed by Speaker, to the Senate


Chief Clerk of the House

HISTORY IN THE SENATE

1992
3/23 Read first time and referred to:
ITT, L&C

4/24
ITT RPT() CS 3 DP NR DNP AM
New Title Same Title HP Previous FN
FN OFN To date

RPT() CS DP NR DNP AM
New Title Same Title Previous FN
FN OFN To

RPT() CS DP NR DNP AM
New Title Same Title Previous FN
FN OFN To

Rules Calendar() CS AM Other
New Title Same Title Previous FN
FN OFN

Read second time

CS Adopted () New Title
Amended Advanced

Read third time

___ Letter of Intent adopted
___ Return to second for specific amendment

PASSED EFD Same ___ or
Yeas Yeas
Nays Nays
Excused Excused
Absent Absent

Reconsideration
Reconsideration not taken up

PASSED EFD Same ___ or
Yeas Yeas
Nays Nays
Excused Excused
Absent Absent

Reported correctly engrossed
Signed by President, to the House

___ Secretary of the Senate



House Special Committee on International Trade and
Tourism
Alaska State Legislature
P.O. Box V (MS 3100)
Juneau, Ak 99811

Dear People,

The 103 members of the Skagway Chamber of Commerce support House Joint Resolution No. 81. Many members of the community as well as paid members of the city staff have worked hard for an extended length of time to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the building of the Alaskan Highway. Some people may not be aware that Skagway played an important role in the building of this road. Most of the soldiers who worked on it came in through our town, as did much of the equipment and supplies. It had a major impact on our town, as well as our town and the availability of it's port had a major impact on the ability to build the road and therefore open up access to the rest of the state.

We have worked hard to build up this story and have invited many of the former soldiers to visit during this celebration.

In addition, many of our people drive the Alaskan Highway. We were quite disturbed by the issuance of the travel advisory. Our experiences with the road did not fit with what was stated.

We support your efforts to head off any other ill-thought out advisories.

Sincerely,

Sharon Bolton
President

Travel Advisory

United States Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20520



There are three types of travel advisories. Warnings recommend deferral of travel to all or part of a country. Cautions advise about unusual security conditions, including the potential for unexpected detention, unstable political conditions, or serious health problems. Not intended to deter travel to a country. Notices provide information on situations that do not present a broad-scale risk, but which could result in inconvenience or difficulty for traveling Americans.

Canada — Notice

Canada - Notice
February 4, 1992

Summary: There has been an increased number of cases of meningococcal disease in several areas of eastern Canada. Although the risk for travelers is very low, U.S. travelers may wish to consider having their children between the ages of 2 and 19 vaccinated against the disease. In addition, in Western Canada, the Yukon territory is commemorating the 50th anniversary of the building of the Alcan Highway - its "Rendezvous 92." U.S. travelers planning to attend "Rendezvous 92" should be aware of and take appropriate precautions related to travel in the far north. End summary.

Meningitis: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the Quebec and Ontario Health Ministries have issued a health alert concerning the increased number of cases of meningococcal disease in several areas of eastern Canada. The affected areas include the Ottawa-Carleton area, the Laurentides region north of Montreal, the Lanaudiers region, the Outaouais area in West Quebec, and Prince Edward Island. As a preventive measure, a program of vaccination is being instituted for children in those areas. The risk for short-term travelers is very low and no particular precautions are needed for those traveling to the affected areas for most activities, such as skiing or shopping. However, because the number of cases among school-aged children is substantially above normal, vaccinations should be considered for children 2 through 19 years of age traveling to the affected areas if they will be in very close physical contact with local school-aged children, or will be staying more than three days and expect to have social contact with local school-aged children. Ideally, the vaccine should be administered at least 10 days before travel. Vaccination is not recommended for children under two years of age, and adults are considered at very low risk. For further information, contact the Centers for Disease Control's International Hotline at (404) 392-4559.

"Rendezvous 92": 1992 marks the 50th anniversary of the building of the Alcan Highway. The Yukon territory is commemorating the event with a series of highly publicized celebrations throughout the year as part of its "Rendezvous 92" celebration. As Canadian officials anticipate a large influx of U.S. visitors, it is worthwhile for U.S. citizens to keep in mind potential problems when traveling in the far north.

The Frontier: The Yukon is definitely frontier territory. Facilities for car repair outside of the capital, Whitehorse, are extremely limited. Almost all consumer goods must be brought in from other parts of Canada or Alaska over long distances. It is 1200 miles from Edmonton to Whitehorse and 1500 miles from Vancouver to Whitehorse. The cost of food, gas, etc. can be triple what it would be in the U.S.

The Highway: The Alcan highway runs from Edmonton, Alberta, through British Columbia (Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson) through the Yukon (Watson Lake, Whitehorse) and into Alaska. For most of its length it is a two or four lane divided highway. Most of it is in good condition and previously rough sections have been repaired for the celebrations. The distances are vast. The highway runs through some spectacularly beautiful areas, but much of the area is essentially uninhabited. Even during peak tourist season, traffic outside of towns can be very sparse.

Lodging: A full range of camping and motel lodging can be found in the Yukon. Further away from population centers, the facilities can range from primitive to non-existent. Several new motels and campgrounds are opening this year, but travelers are advised to have confirmed reservations, especially for the Whitehorse area, during the peak summer months.

Medical Care: As with car repair, medical facilities are extremely limited outside of Whitehorse. Care can be expensive and most hospitals and clinics will insist on payment before discharge. While some (but not all) now accept Visa or Mastercard, most will not wait for payment from insurance companies. Problems with collecting bills from Americans have made medical institutions increasingly cautious. Travelers should check to make sure their medical and auto insurance covers them while in Canada. In many instances a supplemental policy is required.

Firearms: While not limited to the Yukon, all travelers to Canada should keep in mind Canada's extremely strict laws regarding firearms. In general, handguns are not permitted in Canada. Canadian law requires that officials must confiscate guns from anyone crossing the border who denies having a gun in his/her possession. The confiscated guns are never returned. It is possible to take hunting rifles into Canada under certain circumstances. Anyone considering it should contact the nearest Canadian consulate in advance for detailed information and instruction. In all cases, travelers should declare any firearms in their possession to Canadian customs authorities when entering Canada. If the traveler is denied permission to bring the firearm into Canada, in many cases there are facilities near the border crossing where firearms could be surrendered and stored pending the traveler's return to the U.S.

Information: For further information/assistance U.S. citizens traveling to "Rendezvous 82" may contact the Consular Section of the U.S. Consulate General at 1075 West Georgia St., Vancouver, Canada V6E 4E9 at tel.: (604) 885-4311. Those traveling to eastern Canada may contact the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy at 100 Wellington St., Ottawa, Canada K1P 5T1 at tel.: (613) 298-5395.

No. 82-018

This advisory alerts U.S. citizens to an increased number of cases of meningitis in eastern Canada and potential problems in the Yukon territory due to the anticipated large influx of visitors for "Rendezvous 82."