

SCR

10

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

First Committee of Referral

DATE: 4/9/97

FURTHER:

Date of 5-Day Notice: 4/17/97
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 4/23/97

Resources Committee considered SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 10

Supporting continued use of Alaska's renewable furbearer resources.

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to the _____ Committee

- Senate Bill:**
- same title
 - new title
- House Bill:**
- same title
 - technical title
 - new: SCR# _____

SIGNING DP PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	NR	DNP	AM
<i>Loren A. Seman</i>	✓				
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓				
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓				
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓	<i>IM FUR IT!</i>			
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓				
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓				
CHAIR: <i>Rick Halford</i>	✓	CHAIR:			

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal
<i>S. RESOURCES</i>	<i>4/21</i>	<i>X</i>	

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):*

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal

APPROPRIATION -- no fiscal note

*Include fiscal notes accompanying Governor's bill

GARY WILKEN

SENATOR

Districts 29 & 30
West Fairbanks



Senate Standing Committees

Chairman: Health, Education,
and Social Services (HESS)
Vice Chairman: Transportation
Vice Chairman: Community and
Regional Affairs

Special Committee

Member: Administrative Regulation Review

During Session:

State Capitol, Room 510
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
(907) 465-3709 (v)
(907) 465-4714 (f)

www: akrepublicans.org/wilken.htm
E-mail: Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

Interior:

119 N. Cushman St., Room 213
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 452-3421
Fax (907) 452-3426

SPONSOR STATEMENT

SCR 10 - Supporting Use of Furbearer Resources

Senate Concurrent Resolution 10 calls for the Alaska State Legislature's endorsement of continued harvest and use by Alaskans of the state's renewable furbearer resources, consistent with the principles of sustained yield.

There are some that feel trapping should no longer be allowed in our state. I strongly disagree and through this legislation I hope the Legislature will too.

We, in Alaska, are blessed with abundant furbearer populations and renewable natural resources. Not only is trapping an important management tool for helping to maintain healthy furbearer populations; it is also a traditional activity for many Alaskans that helps to promote self-reliance by providing income, food, and clothing. Trapping ties Alaska to its pioneer roots, and helps to keep alive the very values that built the forty-ninth state.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1997 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SCR 10

Revision Date 4/9/97 Dept. Affected _____
 Title Supporting use of furbearer resource BRU _____
 Component _____
 Sponsor Wilken _____
 Requester _____ Component Serial No. _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES []						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
1091 Designated Program Receipts						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY97) cost: 0.0

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This resolution will have no fiscal impact on state agencies.

Prepared by Senate Resources Committee
 Division _____
 Approved by Senator Rick Halford, Chairman
 Agency _____

Phone 485-4907
 Date _____
 Date 4/21/97

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ALASKA NATIVE HARBOR SEAL COMMISSION

April 17, 1997

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Senator Gary Wilken
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS 3100)
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

REFERENCE: Senate Concurrent Resolution #10,
Supporting Continued Use of Alaska's
Renewable Furbearer Resources.

Dear Senator Wilken:

The Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission supports the Senate Concurrent Resolution #10. The Commission especially supports the statement made in SCR #10 that trapping provides social benefits by enhancing self-reliance and maintaining traditional lifestyles.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Monica Riedel

Monica Riedel, Chair
Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission

P.O. Box 2729 • Cordova, Alaska 99574 • (907) 424-5882 • Fax (907) 424-5883

Conserving and sustaining the harbor seal for our cultural well-being

Indigenous Survival International



I.S.I. (Alaska)
P.O. Box 200908
Anchorage, Alaska
99520-0908
(907) 279-2511
Fax: (907) 279-6343

April 18, 1997

Senator Gary Wilken
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS-3100)
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

REFERENCE: Senate Concurrent Resolution #10, Supporting
Continued Use of Alaska's Renewable Furbearer
Resources

Dear Senator Wilken:

Indigenous Survival International - Alaska would like to extend its support for Senate Concurrent Resolution #10. The Indigenous trappers of Alaska appreciate this positive resolution in favor of continued use of furbearer resources since using furbearer resources is a part of our way of life, and has been since time immemorial. Our winter clothing in particular is made from the pelts of furbearers, which is necessary in minus 50 degree temperatures on a continuous basis.

There have been many animal rights protectionists in Alaska in the past winter, speaking against the use of fur. Their activities can only harm our endeavors to feed and clothe our families by the use of furbearing animals. Therefore it is essential to let them know of our dependence on furbearer resources.

Thank you for introducing this resolution.

Sincerely,

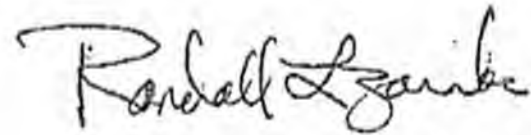
Clarence Alexander, Chairman
Indigenous Survival International-Alaska

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony. My comments are made on behalf of the several hundred members of the Alaska Trappers Association. We are pleased that you are considering Senate Concurrent Resolution #10. We respectfully request that you join us in support of SCR #10.

There are several reasons why we believe that it is appropriate to request this support:

- (1) Alaska's furbearer populations are RENEWABLE natural resources,
- (2) Alaska trappers espouse and practice wise use of these resources,
- (3) Trapping is compatible with many other land uses,
- (4) Trapping provides an important financial impact for many residents,
- (5) Trapping helps to build and maintain ties between humans and Nature.

For these reasons, and many others, we encourage you to approve SCR #10.


Randall L. Zarwke

My name is Pete Bulst, Box 71561, Fairbanks.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of SCR 10.

I have trapped in the Interior for nearly 30 years and 24 years ago I am proud to say that I helped organize our state trapping association. We were a small group, now much bigger; city dwellers and bush residents, Native and caucasian. We organized because we envisioned a time when extremists would try to take away the tools of our trade and indeed our right to operate our traplines. Unfortunately, it appears as if that time is upon us. I suggest that this resolution can help forestall or prevent these misguided political efforts.

SCR 10, by Senator Wilken and the other sponsors draws upon extremely diverse support. There is no urban-rural split here, nor is there a partisan difference. A way of life is at risk and all who practice it or understand it are asking for your help in rising to its defense.

As you know, the resolution speaks to the many economic, biological and sociological benefits of this incredibly important Alaskan tradition.

I urge the Committee's support. Thank you.





TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, INC.



122 FIRST AVENUE, SUITE 600
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701-4897
PHONE 907/452-8251 • FAX 907/459-3850

APR 21 1997

April 18, 1997

Senator Rick Halford
State Capitol, Room 121
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

RE: Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 10

Dear Honorable Halford:

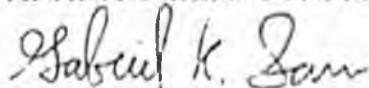
Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. supports SCR 10, "Supporting continued use of Alaska's renewable furbearer resources" for three reasons:

1. Trapping provides income to the people that only have an opportunity to work in a seasonal summer job. For the rest of the winter they trap to make payments on bills that are still coming in. Trapping season begins November 1st and ends in early March.
2. Trapping helps to keep the furbearer population at a health number. Other wise the population could explode and disease may set in and wipe out what is left of the healthy population.
3. Trapping teaches values of respect for the land and how to only take what you need. It also teaches the next generation how to manage the land through wildlife conservation. After a trapper reaches the limit of what they are regulated to catch, the trapper quit trapping. He knows that the land could only sustain so much harvest, this way he could ensure that there will be something to trap next year.

This resolution will promote trapping of furbearing animals in a positive atmosphere. Trapping is a way of life to many Alaskans. It has shown to be good for the economy and generates a healthy cash flow in the rural communities.

Sincerely,

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, INC.



Gabe Sam
Director Wildlife & Parks

GARY WILKEN

SENATOR
Districts 29 & 30
West Fairbanks

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There are some that feel trapping should no longer be allowed in our state. I strongly disagree and through this legislation I hope the Legislature will too.

We, in Alaska, are blessed with many renewable resources including abundant furbearer populations. Not only is trapping an important management tool for helping to maintain healthy furbearer populations, it is also a traditional activity for many Alaskans and helps promote self-reliance by providing income, food, and clothing. Trapping ties Alaska to its pioneer roots, and helps to keep alive the very values that built the forty-ninth state.



ALASKA OUTDOOR COUNCIL, INC.

**P.O. Box 73902
Fairbanks, AK 99707-3902
907-455-4262 ph/FAX**

January 2, 1997

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Division of Refuges
Attention: Trapping Project
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Rm 670
Arlington, VA 22203

To whom it may concern:

This letter responds to your solicitation of comments regarding the use of "animal traps" or "steel jaw leghold traps" in the National Wildlife Refuge System on behalf of the Alaska Outdoor Council.

The Council is a statewide Alaskan umbrella organization comprised of over 50 conservation - outdoor user clubs plus 1100 individual members with a total membership of about 12,000. The purposes of the Outdoor Council are to promote sound scientific fish and wildlife and habitat management, public access to public resources consistent with the Alaska state constitution, and ethical uses of these resources. As the official state association of the National Rifle Association, the Council also supports the individual right to keep and bear arms, and safe, ethical, legal firearm uses.

The Council advocates fishing, hunting, trapping and other outdoor activities. These activities are regularly challenged at local, state and federal government levels by various groups and individuals. The Council supports well regulated fish, wildlife and habitat uses, but opposes unsound and discriminatory laws. The Council categorically rejects arguments that fishing, hunting and trapping should be prohibited. Such arguments are not based on fact, reflect an unacceptable intolerance of others' values, and threaten the traditional values and lifestyles of fishers, hunters, trappers and many others.

Trapping furbearers is a way of life for thousands of Alaskans, and an important element of Alaskan lifestyles for thousands more. Trapping provides income for people living where jobs are scarce and for those who need supplementary income and are willing to work for it. Trapping provides furs widely used for practical Alaskan winter clothing. Trapping contributes to scientific management of wildlife resources.

The main kinds of "animal traps" used in Alaska are leghold traps, snares, and body-grip traps. Leghold traps are most common and are used for species ranging from weasels to wolves. Leghold traps are sometimes used for bears and other species by wildlife agencies for research, management, and depredation control.

Snares probably rank second in extent of use. The use of bodygrip traps is increasing, but is probably still third in the extent of uses.

Alaska contains 76 million acres of National Wildlife Refuge lands. That's about 85 % of the entire National Wildlife Refuge system acreage. Most federal refuges in Alaska were established by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). The lands designated "refuge" in ANILCA were mostly those with important wildlife populations and habitats. All have supported trapping using steel traps, snares and home-made traps for up to 200 or more years. Historically, trapping intensity varied from highly commercialized with high harvests to limited personal use, depending on various social, political and economic factors.

None of that detracted from the suitability of these areas for Refuge designation by ANILCA. Indeed, the rallying cry was to preserve these pristine ecosystems..

Because the Alaskan refuges (85% of the entire refuge system) were designated on prime wildlife lands, they almost always surrounded numerous towns and villages. People of these towns and villages fish, hunt, trap and gather natural resources as part of their lifestyle and life support. They use steel traps, snares, bodygrip traps, guns, boats, snowgos, etc. People from larger towns also fish, hunt and trap on refuges--many of them trap as part of their livelihood and lifestyle, just as local people do.

There is no evidence that trapping as regulated over the last 40 to 50 years has caused ecological problems on any of the refuges. There is no reason to believe that traps as a capture tool will cause conservation problems in the future.

If future conservation problems arise it will be because ANILCA's "customary and traditional" language allows for fishing, hunting and trapping with no closed season and no bag limit under the rural subsistence priority, not because traps or any other particular tool or tolls are used.

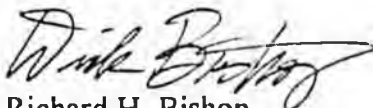
There are not endangered species subject to trapping on refuges in Alaska--85 % of the entire federal refuge system.

Wildlife lives and dies by tooth and claw, disease and starvation. Big animals eat little animals. Prey is often eaten while still alive--bleeding, broken, disemboweled, struggling to escape while pieces are torn from its body, until it can struggle no more. Animals die lingering deaths if small game, mice, berries, moose, caribou or other foods are scarce. Beaver get frozen in, unable to reach their feed--or flooded out, drowning kits in spring. While some trapping techniques do cause physical trauma to trapped animals, trapping can scarcely be more inhumane than nature. In

general, trappers work to minimize physical damage to furbearers for two reasons: a) they wish to minimize physical trauma and suffering; and b) for economic and esthetic reasons, they wish to minimize damage to the furs they've worked hard to obtain.

In summary, there are no substantive reasons to categorically propose elimination or significant restriction of the use of traps on federal refuges, and certainly not on the 85% of the refuge system in Alaska.

Sincerely,



Richard H. Bishop
Executive Director

P.S. Alaska is also affected by trapping practices on lower 48 refuges. Waterfowl populations that migrate between Alaska and the lower 48 can be severely impacted by high populations of skunk, raccoon, and other furbearing predators. There is no need to further discourage the trapping of these abundant predators on refuges.