

HJR

32

3/26



REPRESENTATIVE FRED DYSON

Alaska State Legislature

MEMORANDUM

- Interim (May-Dec.) -
10928 Eagle River Rd., Suite 140
Eagle River, Alaska 99577
☎ (907) 694-6683
FAX (907) 694-1015

March 18, 2002

- Session (Jan-May) -
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
☎ (907) 465-2199
FAX (907) 465-4587

To: Representative Morgan, Co-Chair
House Community and Regional Affairs Committee

Toll free (800) 342-2199

From: Fred Dyson 
State Representative

RE: Request for scheduling HJR 32 for HCRA Committee

HJR 32 is a resolution related to naming and renaming Alaska geographic features.

I respectfully request scheduling of HJR 32 at your convenience.

Thank you.

- E-mail -
Representative_Fred_Dyson
@Legis.state.ak.us

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<http://www.akrepublicans.org>



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HJR 32, ALASKA NAMES FOR ALASKA PLACES

The names of Alaska's geographical features come from a variety of sources, many of which have no connection or relevance to Alaska or its peoples.

Another bill, HB 299, will allow the State Place Names Commission to begin to substitute relevant Alaskan names that are local Alaskan Native names, honor a local citizen, honor a famous Alaskan, uniquely describe an identifying feature, or describe a local event.

HJR 32 is a companion resolution to encourage the US Geological Bureau to follow the lead of the State Agency in renaming the features on Federal maps and documents.

Many of Alaska's geographical names were given by European explorers to honor a benefactor or curry favor with some powerful politician or ruler. Some of these people never saw Alaska or made any contribution to it. Most of the European explorers had no concept of recognizing the contributions and names used by Alaska's Native people who had been here for at least 10,000 years. Some of the American, Asian, Canadian, and European settlers who later came to Alaska made profound contributions to Alaska. It is far more fitting that our geographical place names should honor its people instead of the Alma Mater of some rich tourist on a quasi-scientific expedition.

Alaskans tend to give rivers, bays, glaciers, mountains and lakes far more descriptive names than did the Europeans. "Purgatory Creek" and "Murder Lake", are descriptive of conditions and events. "Looks like a Neck" is far more apropos than "Bainbridge Passage". "Place of the Last Great Battle" is much more colorful than "Green Lake".

Under the Alaska Native Lands Claim Act, Section H, a group under the US Department of the Interior, has done extensive work researching Native place names. The Native Language School at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks also has a large amount of similar information.

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Representative Carl Morgan
Co-Chairman
Committee Aide, Bill Lawrence
(907) 465-3882

Representative Kevin Meyer
Co-Chairman
Committee Aide, Lorali Meier
(907) 465-6588

Date: March 18

To: Committee Members and Staff

From: Committee Co-chair Staff

Re: HJR 32

HB 299 was noticed and is scheduled to be heard by the committee on 3/19. HJR 32 is a "companion measure" on the same subject. HJR 32 was inadvertently not scheduled. Accordingly, the committee cannot hear or act on this resolution. HJR 32 will be scheduled next week (3/26).

The packets for HJR 32, however, are being distributed today. We suggest you look at both bills as a unit. As such, should the committee choose to act on 3/26, minimal time will be necessary.



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