

ORGANIC ACT

AN ACT to create a Legislative Assembly in the Territory of Alaska, to confer legislative power thereon, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled.

That the Territory ceded to the United States by Russia by the treaty of March thirtieth, eighteen hundred and sixty-seven, and known as Alaska, shall be and constitute the Territory of Alaska under the laws of the United States, the government of which shall be organized and administered as provided by said laws. Alaska Territory organized.

Sec. 2.—That the capital of the Territory of Alaska shall be at the city of Juneau, Alaska, and the seat of government shall be maintained there. Capital at Juneau.

Sec. 3.—That the Constitution of the United States, and all the laws thereof which are not locally inapplicable, shall have the same force and effect within the said Territory as elsewhere in the United States; that all the laws of the United States heretofore passed establishing the executive and judicial departments in Alaska shall continue in full force and effect until amended or repealed by Act of Congress; that except as herein provided all laws now in force in Alaska shall continue in full force and effect until altered, amended, or repealed by Congress or by the Legislature: Provided, That the authority herein granted to the Legislature to alter, amend, modify, and repeal laws in force in Alaska shall not extend to customs, internal revenue, postal or other general laws of the United States or to the game, fish and fur-seal laws and laws relating to fur-bearing animals of the United States applicable to Alaska, or to the laws of the United States providing for taxes on business and trade, or to the Act Entitled "An Act to provide for the construction and maintenance of roads, the establishment and maintenance of schools, and the care and support of insane persons in the District of Alaska, and for other purposes, approved January twenty-seven, nineteen hundred and five, and several Acts amendatory thereof: Provided, further, That this provision shall not operate to prevent the legislature from imposing other and additional taxes or licenses. Constitution and laws of United States extended.

And the legislature shall pass no law depriving the judges and officers if the district court of Alaska of any authority, jurisdiction, or function exercised by like judges or officers of district courts of the United States.

The
Legislature.

Sec. 4.—That the legislative power and authority of said Territory shall be vested in a legislature, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The Senate shall consist of eight members, two from each of the fourth judicial divisions into which Alaska is now divided by Act of Congress, each of whom shall have at the time of his election the qualifications of an elector in Alaska, and shall have been a resident and an inhabitant in the division from which he is elected for at least two years prior to the date of his election. The term of office of each member of the Senate shall be four years: Provided, That immediately after they shall be assembled in consequence of the first election they shall, by lot or drawing, be divided in each division into two classes; the seats of the members of the first class shall be vacated at the end of two years and the seats of the members of the second class shall be vacated at the end of four years, so that one member of the Senate shall, after the first election, be elected biennially at the regular election from each division. The House of Representatives shall consist of sixteen members, four from each of the four judicial divisions into which Alaska is now divided by Act of Congress. The term of office of each Representative shall be for two years and each representative shall possess the same qualifications as are prescribed for member of the Senate and the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes in each judicial division cast in said election for Senator or Representative shall be deemed and declared elected to such office. Provided, That in the event of a tie vote the candidates thus affected shall settle the question by lot. In case of a vacancy in either branch of the legislature the Governor shall, order an election to fill such vacancy, giving due and proper notice thereof. That each member of the legislature shall be paid by the United States the sum of fifteen dollars per day for each day's attendance while the legislature is in session, and mileage, in addition, at the rate of fifteen cents per mile for each mile from his home to the capital and return by the nearest traveled route.

Election of
members of
the Legislature.

Sec. 5.—That the first election for members of the Legislature of Alaska shall be on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, nineteen hundred and twelve, and all subsequent elections for the election of such members shall be held on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November biennially thereafter; that the qualifications of electors, the regulations governing

the creation of voting precincts, the appointment and qualification of election officers, the supervision of elections, the giving of notices thereof, the forms of ballots, the register of votes, the challenging of voters, and the returns and the canvass of the returns of the result of all such elections for members of the legislature shall be the same as those prescribed in the Act of Congress entitled "An Act providing for the election of a Delegate to the House of Representatives from the Territory of Alaska," approved May seventh, nineteen hundred and six, and all the provisions of said Act which are applicable are extended to said elections for member of the legislature, and shall govern the same, and the canvassing board created by said Act shall canvass the returns of such elections and issue certificates of election to each member elected to the said legislature; and all the penal provisions contained in section fifteen of the said Act shall apply to elections for members of the legislature as fully as they now apply to elections for Delegate from Alaska to the House of Representatives.

Sec. 6.—That the Legislature of Alaska shall convene at the capitol at the city of Juneau, Alaska, on the first Monday in March in the year nineteen hundred and thirteen, and on the first Monday in March every two years thereafter; but the said legislature shall not continue in session longer than sixty days in any two years unless again convened in extraordinary session by a proclamation of the Governor, which shall set forth the object thereof and give at least thirty days' written notice to each member of said legislature, and in such case shall not continue in session longer than fifteen days. The Governor of Alaska is hereby authorized to convene the legislature in extraordinary session for a period not exceeding fifteen days when requested to do so by the President of the United States, or when any public danger or necessity may require it.

Convening
and sessions
of Legislature.

Sec. 7.—That when the legislature shall convene under the law, the Senate and House of Representatives shall each organize by the election of one of their number as presiding officer, who shall be designated in the case of the Senate as "President of the Senate" and in the case of the House of Representatives as "Speaker of the House of Representatives", and by the election by each body of the subordinate officers provided for in section eighteen hundred and sixty-one of the United States Revised Statutes of eighteen hundred and seventy-eight, and each of said subordinate officers shall receive the compensation provided in that section; Provided, That no person shall be employed for whom salary, wages or compensation is not provided in the appropriation made by Congress.

Organization
of the
Legislature.

Enacting
clause—Subject
of Act.

Sec. 8.—That the enacting clause of all laws passed by the legislature shall be "Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Territory of Alaska." No law shall embrace more than one subject, which shall be expressed in its title.

Legislative
Power—
Limitations.

Sec. 9.—The legislative power of the Territory shall extend to all rightful subjects of legislation not inconsistent with the Constitution and laws of the United States, but no law shall be passed interfering with the primary disposal of the soil; no tax shall be imposed upon the property of the United States; nor shall the lands or other property of nonresidents be taxed higher than the lands or other property of residents, nor shall the legislature grant to any corporation, association, or individual any special or exclusive privilege, immunity, or franchise without the affirmative approval of Congress; nor shall the legislature pass local or special laws in any of the cases enumerated in the Act of July thirtieth, eighteen hundred and eighty-six; nor shall it grant private charters or special privileges, but it may, by general act, permit persons to associate themselves together as bodies corporate for manufacturing, mining, agriculture, and other industrial pursuits, and for the conduct of business of insurance, savings banks, banks of discount and deposit (but not of issue), loans, trust, and guaranty associations, for the establishment and conduct of cemeteries, and for the construction and operation of railroads, wagon roads, vessels, and irrigating ditches, and the colonization and improvement of lands in connection therewith, or for colleges, seminaries, churches, libraries, or any other benevolent, charitable, or scientific association, but the authority embraced in this section shall only permit the organization of corporations or associations whose chief business shall be in the Territory of Alaska; no divorce shall be granted by the legislature nor shall any divorce be granted by the courts of the Territory unless the applicant therefor shall have resided in the Territory for two years next preceding the application, which residence and all causes for divorce shall be determined by the court upon evidence adduced in open court; nor shall any lottery or the sale of lottery tickets be allowed; nor shall the legislature or any municipality interfere with or attempt in any wise to limit the Acts of Congress to prevent and punish gambling, and all gambling implements shall be seized by the United States marshal or any of his deputies, or any constable or police officer, and destroyed; nor shall spirituous or intoxicating liquors be manufactured or sold, except under such regulations and restrictions as Congress shall provide; nor shall any public money be appropriated by the Territory or any municipal corporation therein for the support or benefit of any sectarian, denominational, or private school, or any school not under the exclusive control of the government; nor shall the

Government of the Territory of Alaska or any political or municipal corporation or subdivision of the Territory make any subscription to the capital stock of any incorporated company, or in any manner lend its credit for the use thereof; nor shall the Territory, or any municipal corporation therein, have power or authority to create or assume any bonded indebtedness whatever; nor to borrow money in the name of the Territory or of any municipal division thereof; nor to pledge the faith of the people of the same for any loan whatever, either directly or indirectly; nor to create, nor to assume, any indebtedness, except for the actual running expenses thereof; and no such indebtedness for actual running expenses shall be created or assumed in excess of the actual income of the Territory or municipality for that year, including as a part of such income appropriations then made by Congress, and taxes levied and payable and applicable to the payment of such indebtedness and cash and other money credits on hand and applicable and not already pledged for prior indebtedness; Provided, That all authorized indebtedness shall be paid in the order of its creation; all taxes shall be uniform upon the same class of subjects and shall be levied and collected under general laws, and the assessments shall be according to the actual value thereof. No tax shall be levied for Territorial purposes in excess of one per centum of the assessed valuation of property therein in any one year; nor shall any incorporated town or municipality levy any tax for any purpose, in excess of two per centum of the assessed valuation of property within the town in any one year; Provided, That the Congress reserves the exclusive power for five years from the date of the approval of this Act to fix and impose any tax or taxes upon railways or railway property in Alaska, and no acts or laws passed by the Legislature of Alaska providing for a county form of government therein shall have any force or effect until it shall be submitted to and approved by the affirmative action of Congress; and all laws passed, or attempted to be passed, by such legislature in said Territory inconsistent with the provisions of this section shall be null and void; Provided further, That nothing herein contained shall be held to abridge the right of the legislature to modify the qualifications of electors by extending the elective franchise to women.

Sec. 10.—That the Senate and House of Representatives shall each choose its own officers, determine the rules of its own proceedings not inconsistent with this Act, and keep a journal of its proceedings; that the ayes and noes of the members of either house on any question shall, at the request of one fifth of the members present, be entered upon the journal; that a majority of the members to which each house is entitled shall

Rules, Quorum,
and majority.

constitute a quorum of such house for the conduct of business, of which quorum a majority vote shall suffice; that a smaller number than a quorum may adjourn from day to day and compel the attendance of absent members, in such manner and under such penalties as each house may provide; that for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is a quorum present the presiding officer shall count and report the actual number of members present.

Legislators Shall
not hold other
office.

Sec. 11.—That no member of the legislature shall hold or be appointed to any office which has been created, or the salary or emoluments of which have been increased, while he was a member, during the term for which he was elected and for one year after the expiration of such term; and no person holding a commission or appointment under the United States shall be a member of the legislature or shall hold any office under the government of said Territory.

Exemptions of
Legislators.

Sec. 12.—That no member of the legislature shall be held to answer before any other tribunal for any words uttered in the exercise of his legislative functions. That the members of the legislature shall, in all cases except treason, felony, or breach of the peace, be privileged from arrest during their attendance upon the sessions of the respective houses, and in going to and returning from the same; Provided, That such privilege as to going and returning shall not cover a period of more than ten days each way, except in the second division, where it shall extend to twenty days each way, and the fourth division to fifteen days each way.

Passage of laws.

Sec. 13.—That a bill in order to become a law shall have three separate readings in each house, the final passage of which in each house shall be by a majority vote of all the members to which such house is entitled, taken by ayes and noes, and entered upon its journal. That every bill, when passed by the house in which it originated or in which amendments thereto shall have originated, shall immediately be enrolled and certified by the presiding officer and the clerk and sent to the other house for consideration.

The veto power.

Section 14.—That, except as herein provided, all bills passed by the legislature shall, in order to be valid, be signed by the Governor. That every bill which shall have passed the legislature shall be certified by the presiding officers and clerks of both houses, and shall thereupon be presented to the Governor. If he approves it, he shall sign it and it shall become a law at the expiration of ninety days thereafter, unless sooner given effect

by a two-thirds vote of said legislature. If the Governor does not approve such bill, he may return it, with his objections, to the legislature. He may veto any specific item or items in any bill which appropriates money for specific purposes, but shall veto other bills, if at all, only as a whole. That upon the receipt of a veto message from the Governor each house of the legislature shall enter the same at large upon its journal and proceed to reconsider such bill, or part of a bill, and again vote upon it by ayes and noes, which shall be entered upon its journal. If, after such reconsideration, such bill or part of a bill shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of all the members to which each house is entitled, it shall thereby become a law. That if the Governor neither signs nor vetoes a bill within three days (Sundays excepted) after it is delivered to him, it shall become a law without his signature, unless the legislature adjourns sine die prior to the expiration of such three days. If any bill shall be returned by the Governor within three days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the legislature, by its adjournment, prevents the return of the bill, in which case it shall not be a law.

Sec. 15.—That there shall be annually appropriated by Congress a sum sufficient to pay the salaries of members and authorized employees of the Legislature of Alaska, the printing of the laws, and other incidental expenses thereof; the said sums shall be disbursed by the Governor of Alaska, under sole instructions from the Secretary of the Treasury, and he shall account quarterly to the Secretary for the manner in which the said funds shall have been expended; and no expenditure, to be paid out of money appropriated by Congress, shall be made by the Governor or by the legislature for objects not authorized by the Acts of Congress making the appropriations, nor beyond the sums thus appropriated for such objects.

Payment of legislative expenses.

Sec. 16.—That the Governor of Alaska shall, within ninety days after the close of each session of the Legislature of the Territory of Alaska, transmit a correct copy of all laws and resolutions passed by the said legislature, certified to by the Secretary of the Territory, with the seal of the Territory attached; one copy to the President of the United States, and one to the Secretary of State of the United States; and the legislature shall make provisions for printing the session laws and resolutions within ninety days after the close of each session and for their distribution to public officials and sale to the people of the Territory.

Laws transmitted to President and printed.

Election of
Delegates.

Sec. 17.—That after the year nineteen hundred and twelve the election for Delegate from the Territory of Alaska, provided by "An Act providing for the election of a Delegate to the House of Representatives from the Territory of Alaska," approved May seventh, nineteen hundred and six, shall be held on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November in the year nineteen hundred and fourteen, and every second year thereafter on the said Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, and all of the provisions of the aforesaid Act shall continue to be in full force and effect and shall apply to the said election in every respect as is now provided for the election to be held in the month of August therein; Provided, That the time for holding an election in said Territory for Delegate in Alaska to the House of Representatives to fill a vacancy, whether such vacancy is caused by failure to elect at the time prescribed by law, or by the death, resignation, or incapacity of a person elected, may be prescribed by an act passed by the legislature of the Territory of Alaska; Provided, further, That when such election is held it shall be governed in every respect by the laws passed by Congress governing such election.

Creating
railroad
commission.

Sec. 18.—That an officer of the Engineer Corps of the United States Army, a geologist in charge of Alaska surveys, an officer in the Engineer Corps of the United States Navy, and a civil engineer who has had practical experience in railroad construction and has not been connected with any railroad enterprise in said Territory be appointed by the President as a commission hereby authorized and instructed to conduct an examination into the transportation question in the Territory of Alaska; to examine railroad routes from the seaboard to the coal fields and to the interior and navigable waters; to secure surveys and other information with respect to railroads, including cost of construction and operation; to obtain information in respect to the coal fields and their proximity to railroad routes; and to make report of the facts to Congress on or before the first day of December, nineteen hundred and twelve, or as soon thereafter as may be practicable, together with their conclusions and recommendations in respect to the best and most available routes for railroads in Alaska which will develop the country and the resources thereof for the use of the people of the United States; Provided further, That the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated to defray the expenses of said commission.

Sec. 19.—That the Committee on Territories of the Senate and the Committee on Territories of the House of Representatives are hereby authorized, empowered, and directed to jointly codify, compile, publish, and annotate all the laws of the United States applicable to the Territory of Alaska, and said committees are jointly authorized to employ such assistance as may be necessary for that purpose; and the sum of five thousand dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury, not otherwise appropriated, to cover the expenses of said work, which shall be paid upon vouchers properly signed and approved by the chairman of said committees.

Appropriation for codifying U. S. laws applicable to Alaska.

Sec. 20.—That all laws passed by the Legislature of the Territory of Alaska shall be submitted to the Congress by the President of the United States, and, if disapproved by Congress, they shall be null and of no effect.

Laws shall be submitted to Congress.

Approved, August 24, 1912.

AMENDMENT TO ORGANIC ACT.

AN ACT to amend an Act entitled "An Act creating a legislative assembly in the Territory of Alaska and conferring legislative power thereon, and for other purposes," approved August twenty-fourth, nineteen hundred and twelve.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

That nothing in that Act of Congress entitled "An Act creating a legislative assembly in the Territory of Alaska and conferring legislative power thereon, and for other purposes," approved August twenty-fourth, nineteen hundred and twelve, shall be so construed as to prevent the courts now existing or that may be hereafter created in said Territory from enforcing within their respective jurisdictions all laws passed by the legislature within the power conferred upon it, the same as if such laws were passed by Congress, nor to prevent the legislature passing laws imposing additional duties, not inconsistent with the present duties of their respective offices, upon the governor, marshals, deputy marshals, clerks of the district courts, and United States Commissioners acting as justices of the peace, judges of probate courts, recorders, and coroners, and providing the necessary expenses of performing such duties, and in the prosecuting of all crimes denounced by Territorial laws the cost shall be paid the

same as is now or may hereafter be provided by Act of Congress providing for the prosecutions of criminal offenses in said Territory, except that in prosecutions growing out of any revenue law passed by the legislature the costs shall be paid as in civil actions and such prosecutions shall be in the name of the Territory.

Approved August 29, 1914.

AMENDMENT TO ORGANIC ACT.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled:

That the Legislature of Alaska is hereby empowered to establish and maintain schools for white and colored children and children of mixed blood who lead a civilized life in said Territory and to make appropriations of Territorial funds for that purpose; and all laws or parts of laws in conflict with this Act are to that extent repealed.

Approved March 3, 1917.

ACT OF CONGRESS, APPROVED JULY 30, 1886

July 30, 1886.

CHAPT. 818.—An Act to prohibit the passage of local or special laws in the Territories of the United States, to limit Territorial indebtedness, and for other purposes.

Territorial
Legislatures.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, That the legislatures of the Territories of the United States now or hereafter to be organized shall not pass local or special laws in any of the following enumerated cases, that is to say:

Forbidden to
pass certain
local or
special laws.

Granting divorces.

Changing the names of persons or places.

Laying out, opening, altering, and working roads or high-ways.

Vacating roads, town-plats, streets, alleys, and public grounds.

Locating or changing county seats.

Regulating county and township affairs.

Regulating the practice in courts of justice.

Regulating the jurisdiction and duties of justices of the peace, police magistrates, and constables.

Providing for changes of venue in civil and criminal cases.

Incorporating cities, towns, or villages, or changing or amending the charter of any town, city, or village.

For the punishment of crimes or misdemeanors.

For the assessment and collection of taxes for Territorial, county, township, or road purposes.

Summoning and impaneling grand or petit jurors.

Providing for the management of common schools.

Regulating the rate of interest on money.

The opening and conducting of any election or designating the place of voting.

The sale of mortgage of real estate belonging to minors or others under disability.

The protection of game or fish.

Chartering or licensing ferries or toll bridges.

Remitting fines, penalties, or forfeitures.

Creating, increasing, or decreasing fees, percentages, or allowances of public officers during the term for which said officers are elected or appointed.

Changing the law of descent.

Granting to any corporation, association, or individual the right to lay down railroad tracks, or amending existing charters for such purpose.

Granting to any corporation, association, or individual any special or exclusive privilege, immunity, or franchise whatever.

In all other cases where a general law can be made applicable, no special law shall be enacted in any of the Territories of the United States by the Territorial legislatures thereof.

No special law to be enacted where general law can apply.

2. That no Territory of the United States now or hereafter to be organized, or any political or municipal corporation or subdivision of any such Territory, shall hereafter make any subscription to the capital stock of any incorporated company, or company or association having corporate powers, or in any manner loan its credit to or use it for the benefit of any such company or association, or borrow any money for the use of any such company or association.

Not to subscribe, etc., to any corporation.

Sec. 3. That no law of any Territorial legislature shall authorize any debt to be contracted by or on behalf of such Territory except in the following cases: To meet a casual deficit in the revenues, to pay the interest upon the Territorial debt, to suppress insurrections, or to provide for the public defense, except that in addition to any indebtedness created for such purposes, the legislature may authorize a loan for the erection of penal, charitable or educational institutions for such Territory, if the

In what cases debts may be incurred by Territories.

Limit.

total indebtedness of the Territory is not thereby made to exceed one per centum upon the assessed value of the taxable property in such Territory as shown by the last general assessment for taxation. And nothing in this Act shall be construed to prohibit the refunding of any existing indebtedness of such Territory or of any political or municipal corporation, county, or other subdivision therein.

Not to prohibit refunding.

Limit of indebtedness which may be incurred by counties, etc.

Sec. 4. That no political or municipal corporation, county, or other sub-division in any of the Territories of the United States shall ever become indebted in any manner or for any purpose to any amount in the aggregate, including existing indebtedness, exceeding four per centum on the value of the taxable property within such corporation, county, or subdivision, to be ascertained by the last assessment for Territorial and county taxes previous to the incurring of such indebtedness; and all bonds or obligations in excess of such amount given by such corporation shall be void: That nothing in this Act contained shall be so construed as to affect the validity of any Act of any Territorial legislature heretofore enacted, or of any obligations existing or contracted thereunder, nor to preclude the issuing of bonds already contracted for in pursuance of express provisions of law; nor to prevent any Territorial legislature from legalizing the Acts of any county, municipal corporation, or subdivision of any territory as to any bonds heretofore issued or contracted to be issued.

Not to be retroactive.

R.S., sec. 1899, p. 333, amended.

Sec. 5. That section eighteen hundred and eighty-nine, title twenty-three of the Revised Statutes of the United States be amended to read as follows:

General Incorporation acts.

"The legislative assemblies of the several Territories shall not grant private charters or special privileges, but they may, by general incorporation acts, permit persons to associate themselves together as bodies corporate for mining, manufacturing, and other industrial pursuits, and for conducting the business of insurance, banks of discount and deposit (but not of issue) loan, trust, and guarantee associations, and for the construction or operation of rail-roads, wagon-roads, irrigating ditches and the colonization and improvement of lands in connection therewith, or for colleges, seminaries, churches, libraries, or any other benevolent, charitable, or scientific association."

Insurance, banking, etc., associations included.

Power of Congress to annul, etc., laws, not abridged.

Sec. 6. That nothing in this Act contained shall be construed to abridge the power of Congress to annul any law passed by a Territorial legislature, or to modify any existing law of Congress requiring in any case that the laws of any Territory shall be submitted to Congress.

Sec. 7. That all Acts and parts of Acts hereafter passed by any Territorial legislature in conflict with the provisions of this Act shall be null and void. Acts in conflict to be null and void.

Approved July 30, 1886.