

House Joint Memorials

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 1

TO THE HONORABLE, THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Your Memorialist, the Legislature of the Territory of Alaska in the Seventeenth Regular Session assembled does most respectfully submit that:

WHEREAS, this Legislature now convened is facing the task of devising ways and means of safeguarding the Territory's population and welfare during the present conflict and of planning for a broader economic development that will insure a sound future for our own returning veterans and thousands of others in the armed forces and large numbers of civilians all of whom are looking forward to a home in the northern frontier; and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States and the Secretary of State are proclaiming the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter and are supporting the right of small nations and minorities to choose their own government and to have control of their own destinies and have pledged the resources and life blood of the nation to that end; and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of the Interior while publicly voicing a desire to aid and assist in populating the Territory and developing its resources has notwithstanding followed a persistent course to the contrary and through questionable interpretation of his powers has withdrawn vast areas of land and water from the public domain and prohibited their use and development by the people, and has continued and accentuated his policy during the present war under the guise of national emergency and has created a condition of confusion and uncertainty among the people, and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of the Interior has exercised his vast bureaucratic powers to the point where the principles of Democratic Government are evaded in fact if not in intent, in direct conflict with the principles of the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms; and

WHEREAS, the resources of Alaska are generally controlled by a single man and the existence of such an un-Democratic condition prevents our planning for the logical development of our great Territory, and

WHEREAS, the Department of the Interior, at the direction of its Secretary, is now proposing to establish huge reservations in Southeastern Alaska, covering both land and water, and such reservations, if created, will operate to withdraw from development and use in the normal and customary manner, most of the resources of that section, consisting, among other things, of 78,500,000,000 board feet of timber with a possible yearly cut in perpetuity of 1,000,000,000 board feet; undeveloped water power resources totalling 800,000 horsepower, or sufficient to meet the needs of a population of over 200,000 people; and

WHEREAS, the areas of Southeastern Alaska located within the reservation actually proposed and described by notices published in the Federal Register, produce an average of 704,000 cases of canned salmon, consisting of 48 1-lb. cans per case, annually, besides millions of pounds of halibut, King salmon and other species of commercial fish; and,

WHEREAS, the annual production of canned salmon and other commercial fishery products in the other and greater areas of Southeastern Alaska where reservations have been requested but not yet approved, or the boundaries definitely described are beyond accurate calculation, but will total more than 2,000,000 cases per year of canned salmon alone.

NOW, THEREFORE, your Memorialist, the Legislature of the Territory of Alaska, in Seventeenth regular session assembled, respectfully petitions that the Congress of the United States immediately investigate the policies of the Secretary of the Interior to the end that relief may be granted the people from the ever-growing burden resulting from such policies.

AND YOUR MEMORIALIST WILL EVER PRAY.

Passed by the House, January 26, 1945.

Passed by the Senate, February 1, 1945.