



Alaska State Legislature

1975

Source:

HCR 36 am

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 36

Requesting a comprehensive feasibility study of the extension of state ferry service to Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Island communities.

BE IT RESOLVED

BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS residents of Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Island communities are experiencing skyrocketing costs for delivery of freight from Seattle and for personal transportation by air between Anchorage and these communities; and

WHEREAS the air fare, roundtrip, for example, between Anchorage and Sand Point is \$255; furniture is barged to the Alaska Peninsula for 34 cents a pound; the charge for transporting an automobile by barge from Seattle to Cold Bay is \$1,100, and to Sand Point, \$900; the barge freight rate for a mobile home is approximately \$10,000, and for a modular home, \$17,000; all of which have become prohibitively costly to most residents of the area; and

WHEREAS, although the United States Navy has a contract with Sea-Land for bimonthly freighter service to Adak Island aboard the SUMMIT, frequently that 590-foot vessel is unable to dock at such ports as Sand Point due to rough weather, thus, because of that ship's undependable schedule, freight accumulates in Seattle for a three to four month period; and

WHEREAS extension of state ferry service to Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Island communities would mean residents would be able to make less expensive grocery and construction material purchases that could be acquired in Anchorage rather than in Seattle, thus retaining more dollars in the Alaska economy; and

WHEREAS the M/V TUSTUMENA, the only United States Coast

Guard certificated ocean-going vessel in the state ferry system fleet, is more maneuverable in all weather conditions than the Sea-Land chartered freighter that serves these Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Island communities because the TUSTUMENA is but half the length of the SUMMIT; and

WHEREAS the M/V TUSTUMENA is the state ferry fleet's most versatile vessel: it can put into any port, regardless of tidal conditions, that has a cannery wharf, pier or other standard docking facility because the TUSTUMENA's unique 60-ton elevator lifts vehicular traffic from the ship's hold to any suitable loading platform, thus avoiding the necessity of an elaborate, expensive on-shore system of transfer spans and aprons at each port of call; and

WHEREAS the waters in the vicinity of the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian communities that require state ferry service are ice free the year around and are relatively protected by comparison to those near the Barren Islands in Shelikoff Straits traversed weekly by the M/V TUSTUMENA between Kodiak, Homer and Seward; and

WHEREAS there is a marine fueling station in the Aleutian chain port of Dutch Harbor, one of the largest supplies of marine fuels on the West Coast, if not in the entire Pacific Basin, thus permitting the refueling of a ferry at that final stop on an Alaska Peninsula-Aleutian Island route;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the Governor is respectfully requested to direct the Division of Marine Transportation, Department of Public Works, to undertake a comprehensive feasibility study of the extension of the state ferry system into Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Island communities, including but not limited to a consideration of the following:

- (1) the need for, and level of service required, in the affected communities, including but not limited to Chignik, Sand Point, Squaw Harbor, King Cove, Cold Bay, False Pass, Ivanoff Bay, Akutan, Dutch Harbor and Unalaska (Captain's Bay);
- (2) interconnections with other modes of transportation, and comparisons of the cost of using other means of transportation for moving freight, passengers, and vehicles versus extension of the ferry system for this purpose;
- (3) capital improvement costs including the cost of designing, acquiring, constructing and equipping an appropriate ocean-going certified vessel of the TUSTUMENA type and docking and terminal facilities where required;
- (4) operating costs;
- (5) frequency of service and scheduling, proposed tariffs and charges for service; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the department is requested, as a part of the feasibility study, to hold hearings in, and to consult with, the affected communities as to level of service desired; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the department is requested to present its findings and recommendations to the Governor and to the

Legislature not later than 10 days after the Ninth Legislature,
Second Session convenes.