

STATE OF ALASKA  
THE LEGISLATURE

1992

Source  
SCR 30

Legislative  
Resolve No.  
67



Supporting open primary elections.

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**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

**WHEREAS** Alaskans have a proud tradition of freedom and independence and reflect that tradition in the manner in which they exercise their franchise; and

**WHEREAS** in excess of 55 percent of all registered voters in Alaska have chosen not to affiliate with an organized political party; and

**WHEREAS** this tradition is reflected in the open primary system that has been used since 1968 and is open to all voters, allowing maximum participation and freedom of choice in the electoral process; and

**WHEREAS** there has been a national decline in voter registration and participation in the electoral process, particularly among young people who are less likely to identify with political parties; and

**WHEREAS** forcing voters to vote an exclusively partisan ballot that eliminates the current wide range of choices may discourage them from voting; and

**WHEREAS** Alaska's primary elections already have significantly lower voter turnout than general elections even under an open unrestricted system of voting and this level will

likely be even further reduced by a closed primary; and

**WHEREAS** the State of Alaska and its agencies have a consistent record of encouraging voter registration and participation in elections; and

**WHEREAS** among the stated goals of closing primaries are strengthening parties and providing greater party discipline, both of which run counter to Alaska voting traditions; and

**WHEREAS** in the current open election process Alaskans have the option of voting for the person they prefer for each separate office, while a closed primary will limit voters' opportunity to vote for the candidates of their choice; and

**WHEREAS** there will be a significant added cost to the state to print ballots for each separate party primary;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature opposes a change to Alaska's open primary elections system and affirms support for maintaining our open primary; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the governing bodies of the political parties to reconsider their decisions to hold separate closed primaries that force limitations and restrictions on Alaska voters.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Walter J. Hickel, Governor of Alaska; the Honorable John B. Coghill, Lieutenant Governor of Alaska; Ms. Connie Zawacki, Chair, Republican Party of Alaska; Ms. Rhonda Roberts, Chair, Alaska Democratic Party; Joe Vogler, Chair, Alaska Independence Party; and to Ms. Joni Whitmore, Chair, Green Party of Alaska.