

STATE OF ALASKA  
THE LEGISLATURE

1997

Source  
SJR 25

Legislative  
Resolve No.  
26



Supporting enhancement of visitor access to Denali National Park and Preserve through development of a northern railroad route corridor access to the vicinity of Wonder Lake.

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

**WHEREAS** a new northern railroad route will provide majestic views of Mt. McKinley, the opportunity to enjoy a wilderness experience, and the chance to encounter wildlife in its natural habitat, and would connect to the Alaska Railroad corridor; and

**WHEREAS** a new northern railroad access would enhance the Mt. McKinley experience for visitors to Denali National Park and Preserve, promote tourism statewide through greater visitor satisfaction, and provide a foundation for year-round visitation; and

**WHEREAS** insufficient transportation access to premier viewing areas in Denali National Park and Preserve and the lack of facilities at these areas are major obstacles to enhancing the wilderness experience that the park offers; and

**WHEREAS** a new northern railroad transportation system and visitor facilities can be designed and constructed so as not to detract from the qualities that make Denali National Park and Preserve the state's premier visitor attraction; and

**WHEREAS** the Wonder Lake area, located on the north side of Denali National Park and Preserve, has a dry interior climate, long daylight hours, and splendid viewing opportunities, and offers the potential to promote both summer and winter activities; and

**WHEREAS** creating a new northern railroad access into Denali National Park and Preserve, taking advantage of a long-established and historic transportation route previously used by the mining industry, would offer an opportunity for the private sector to meet the increased demand for tourism facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, without making a substantial claim on the state's financial resources, the state is uniquely able to assist in this effort to develop a new northern railroad route by supporting the private sector efforts underway, by making available for use the state land adjacent to Denali National Park and Preserve for the creation of a railroad route corridor, and by monitoring negotiations that would encourage development opportunities involving the private sector;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature strongly supports the efforts of the federal and state governments and the private sector to complete the necessary studies and acquire the necessary permits that would identify and open a new northern railroad route to the vicinity of Wonder Lake and spur the appropriate development of visitor facilities in the Wonder Lake area; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the Governor and the state's executive branch agencies to be aggressive in their resolve to support the consensus of Alaska opinion in supporting the creation of a new northern railroad access into Denali National Park and Preserve, as represented by resolutions of endorsement from the city councils of North Pole, Fairbanks, Nenana, and Seward, the Assembly of the Municipality of Anchorage, and the Assemblies of the Denali, Fairbanks North Star, and Matanuska-Susitna Boroughs, to enhance the Mt. McKinley experience for visitors and the creation of a rail connection between the Wonder Lake area and the Alaska Railroad; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that appropriate state agencies should work with the National Park Service and interested government officials and representatives of the private sector to investigate the potential of establishing a new northern railroad route into the Wonder Lake area of Denali National Park and Preserve, for the appropriate development of facilities in this area that would serve the needs of park visitors.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the United States; the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Strom Thurmond, President Pro Tempore of the U.S.

Senate; the Honorable Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; and Roger G. Kennedy, Director of the National Park Service; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.