

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

1998

Source

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Legislative
Resolve No.

46



Relating to reauthorization of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991.

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

WHEREAS the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) substantially revamped the federal-aid highway program and the federal transportation program; and

WHEREAS ISTEA gave more flexibility to state and local governments to apply innovative solutions to the transportation problems that they face; and

WHEREAS ISTEA has shifted the focus of the federal surface transportation program toward preservation of highway and transit systems, increased efficiency of existing transportation networks, and integration of transportation modes to enhance efficiency of the transportation system; and

WHEREAS the states and regional and local governments have invested time and energy in making ISTEA work and this investment should not be lost by significantly altering the programs initiated by ISTEA; and

WHEREAS the ISTEA programs can be strengthened by allowing greater flexibility

between programs and within programs, by allowing greater flexibility to address maintenance needs, by reducing time-consuming federal reviews, mandates, and sanctions, and by allowing self-certification at the state level; and

WHEREAS the Federal Highway Administration has adopted a regulation requiring that a major investment study be undertaken by metropolitan planning organizations whenever the need for a major metropolitan transportation investment is identified; and

WHEREAS the major investment study requirement overlaps and duplicates planning and project development processes that are already in place under requirements for long-range planning and congestion management systems; and

WHEREAS Congress should retain the critical role of the federal government to help fund highway, bridge, ferry, and transit projects and to focus the national transportation policy on mobility, connectivity, integrity, safety, and economic competitiveness; and

WHEREAS the State of Alaska receives money under ISTEA for construction and improvement of roads, highways, and the marine highway system and for bridge replacement and rehabilitation, state and metropolitan transportation planning, transit programs, highway safety programs, and enforcement of truck and bus safety requirements; and

WHEREAS the state also receives assistance under ISTEA for transportation projects to alleviate air pollution in two areas of the state where air quality does not meet national ambient air quality standards; and

WHEREAS 4,300 miles, or about 32 percent of the total mileage, of roads in the state are eligible for federal assistance under ISTEA; and

WHEREAS the State of Alaska has relied heavily on federal assistance to support construction and improvement of the surface transportation system in the state; and

WHEREAS continued federal assistance is essential to the establishment of the surface transportation system in the state; and

WHEREAS the existing surface transportation system in Alaska needs significant repair and maintenance in order to remain a safe and efficient system; and

WHEREAS surface transportation in Alaska is subject to extreme Arctic and sub-Arctic climate and soil conditions; and

WHEREAS the State of Alaska cannot maintain or expand the surface transportation system in Alaska without continued federal assistance; and

WHEREAS the funding authorizations for federal assistance and transportation programs under ISTEA expired September 30, 1997;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Congress to reauthorize the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) as soon as possible; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Congress to authorize increased funding for surface transportation projects under ISTEA, if possible, but, in any case, to maintain the current levels of funding available under ISTEA; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Congress to allow for a portion of the enhancement set aside funds to be used to maintain or improve pioneer access trails and historical roadways; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Congress to allow for a portion of the enhancement set aside funds to be used to maintain trails and other facilities that are constructed under that program; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Congress to authorize greater use of ISTEA funds for maintenance and repair of existing roads and highways; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Congress to eliminate the requirement for major investment studies under 23 C.F.R. 450.318 as part of the reauthorization of ISTEA; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Congress to authorize greater flexibility in the construction of low volume roads suited to Alaska's remoteness and sub-Arctic and Arctic environment.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable John McCain, Chair, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, U.S. Senate; and the Honorable Bud Shuster, Chair, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Rodney E. Slater, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation; 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.