

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 12

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES MILLETT, Lynn, Peggy Wilson, Saddler, Chenault, Tuck

Introduced: 1/21/11

Referred: Resources

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to pass legislation to open the coastal plain of the**
2 **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas exploration, development, and**
3 **production.**

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

5 **WHEREAS**, in 16 U.S.C. 3142 (sec. 1002 of the Alaska National Interest Lands
6 Conservation Act (ANILCA)), the United States Congress reserved the right to permit further
7 oil and gas exploration, development, and production within the coastal plain of the Arctic
8 National Wildlife Refuge; and

9 **WHEREAS** the oil industry, the state, and the United States Department of the
10 Interior consider the coastal plain to have the highest potential for discovery of very large oil
11 and gas accumulations on the continent of North America, estimated to be as much as
12 10,400,000,000 barrels of recoverable oil; and

13 **WHEREAS** the "1002 study area" is part of the coastal plain located within the North
14 Slope Borough, and many of the residents of the North Slope Borough, who are
15 predominantly Inupiat Eskimo, are supportive of development in the "1002 study area"; and

1 **WHEREAS** oil and gas exploration and development of the coastal plain of the refuge
2 and adjacent land could result in major discoveries that would reduce our nation's future need
3 for imported oil, help balance the nation's trade deficit, and significantly increase the nation's
4 security; and

5 **WHEREAS** the state's future energy independence would be enhanced with
6 additional natural gas production from the North Slope of Alaska, including what are
7 expected to be significant gas reserves in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and the
8 development of those reserves would enhance the economic viability of the proposed Alaska
9 Natural Gas Pipeline; and

10 **WHEREAS** domestic demand for oil continues to rise while domestic crude
11 production continues to fall, with the result that the United States imports additional oil from
12 foreign sources; and

13 **WHEREAS** development of oil at Prudhoe Bay, Kuparuk, Endicott, Lisburne,
14 Ooguruk, Alpine, and Milne Point has resulted in thousands of jobs throughout the United
15 States, and projected job creation as a result of coastal plain oil development will have a
16 positive effect in all 50 states; and

17 **WHEREAS** Prudhoe Bay production is declining, and the Trans Alaska Pipeline
18 System is operating at only one-third of its 1988 peak throughput; and

19 **WHEREAS** the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, a transportation facility that is a
20 national asset and that would cost billions of dollars to replace, would have its useful physical
21 life extended for a substantial period if the additional reserves of recoverable oil from the
22 coastal plain were produced; and

23 **WHEREAS**, while new oil field developments on the North Slope of Alaska, such as
24 Alpine, Northstar, Lisburne, Ooguruk, and West Sak, may temporarily slow the decline in
25 production, only giant coastal plain fields have the theoretical capability of increasing the
26 production volume of Alaska oil to a significant degree; and

27 **WHEREAS** opening the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge now
28 allows sufficient time for planning environmental safeguards, development, and national
29 security review; and

30 **WHEREAS** the 1,500,000-acre coastal plain of the refuge makes up only eight
31 percent of the 19,000,000-acre refuge, and the development of the oil and gas reserves in the

1 refuge's coastal plain would affect an area of 2,000 acres or less, which is less than one-half of
2 one percent of the area of the coastal plain; and

3 **WHEREAS** 8,900,000 of the 19,000,000 acres of the refuge have already been set
4 aside as wilderness; and

5 **WHEREAS** the oil industry has shown at Prudhoe Bay, as well as at other locations
6 along the Arctic coastal plain, that it is capable of conducting oil and gas activity without
7 adversely affecting the environment or wildlife populations; and

8 **WHEREAS** the Central Arctic Caribou herd has increased from 5,000 animals in
9 1975 to over 66,000 animals in recent years, despite oil exploration, development, and
10 production at Prudhoe Bay and Kuparuk; and

11 **WHEREAS** the state will strive to ensure the continued health and productivity of the
12 Porcupine Caribou herd and the Central Arctic Caribou herd, and the protection of land,
13 water, and other wildlife resources during the exploration and development of the coastal
14 plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

15 **WHEREAS** the oil and gas industry is developing directional drilling technology that
16 will allow horizontal drilling in a responsible manner thereby minimizing the development
17 footprint within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and this directional drilling technology
18 may be capable of drilling from outside of the boundaries of the 1002 study area; and

19 **WHEREAS** the oil industry is using innovative technology and environmental
20 practices in the new field developments at Alpine and Northstar, and those techniques are
21 directly applicable to operating on the coastal plain and would enhance environmental
22 protection beyond traditionally high standards; and

23 **WHEREAS** the continued competitiveness and stability of the state and its economy
24 require that the Alaska State Legislature consider national trends toward renewable energy
25 development; and

26 **WHEREAS** the Alaska State Legislature encourages the use of revenue from any
27 development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for the development of renewable energy
28 resources in the state;

29 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the United States Congress
30 is urged to pass legislation to open the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to
31 oil and gas exploration, development, and production, and that the Alaska State Legislature is

1 adamantly opposed to further wilderness or other restrictive designation in the area of the
2 coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and be it

3 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that that activity be conducted in a manner that protects the
4 environment and the naturally occurring population levels of the Porcupine Caribou herd and
5 the Central Arctic Caribou herd on which the Gwich'in and other local residents depend, that
6 uses directional drilling and other advances in technology to minimize the development
7 footprint in the 1002 study area, and that uses the state's workforce to the maximum extent
8 possible; and be it

9 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States
10 Congress to pass legislation opening the 1002 study area for oil and gas development while
11 continuing to work on measures for increasing the development and use of renewable energy
12 technologies; and be it

13 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature opposes any unilateral
14 reduction in royalty revenue from exploration and development of the coastal plain of the
15 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and any attempt to coerce the State of Alaska into accepting
16 less than the 90 percent of the oil, gas, and mineral royalties from the federal land in Alaska
17 that was promised to the state at statehood.

18 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
19 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and
20 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Ken Salazar, United States Secretary of the
21 Interior; the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the
22 Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the
23 Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mitch McConnell,
24 Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chair of the Energy and
25 Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the
26 Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative,
27 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the 112th United
28 States Congress.