

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 35

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES CRONK, Thompson, LeBon, Prax, McCarty

Introduced: 2/22/22

Referred: House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs, Transportation

A RESOLUTION

1 **Supporting the completion of the Northern Rail Extension; supporting the increase in**
2 **defensive capabilities at Fort Greely, Alaska; and encouraging the development of**
3 **critical Arctic infrastructure.**

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

5 **WHEREAS** Alaska is the only state in the United States that borders the Arctic
6 Ocean; and

7 **WHEREAS** the United States Department of Defense has expanded the anti-ballistic
8 missile facility at Fort Greely, Alaska; and

9 **WHEREAS** the United States Army has developed new training range areas to
10 support the Stryker Brigade; and

11 **WHEREAS** Fort Greely is the only military base that is not currently connected to the
12 railroad system in the state; and

13 **WHEREAS** a railroad is well suited to provide the transportation support required to
14 sustain military operations; and

15 **WHEREAS** a cost-efficient transportation system would benefit the world-class

1 mining operations located near Delta Junction and projected mining operations near Tetlin;
2 and

3 **WHEREAS** a cost-efficient transportation system would benefit the agricultural
4 industry in the Delta Junction area, allowing the agricultural industry to become more cost-
5 efficient and competitive and increasing its ability to expand; and

6 **WHEREAS** a railroad would provide a cost-efficient method of transporting goods
7 and services for both mining and agricultural activities in the Delta Junction region; and

8 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Railroad system has the capacity to provide efficient
9 transportation services for heavy cargo and large quantities of supplies to the Delta Junction
10 region from the ports of Seward, Whittier, and Anchorage and to economically deliver mining
11 and agricultural products from the region to market; and

12 **WHEREAS** the extension of the Alaska Railroad to Delta Junction and Fort Greely is
13 consistent with the long-term goals of the Alaska Railroad Corporation and the State of
14 Alaska to extend rail service to the contiguous United States; and

15 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Railroad has already completed phase 1 of the Northern Rail
16 Extension project by crossing the Tanana River, which brings the rail line within 70 miles of
17 Delta Junction and Fort Greely;

18 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the completion of the
19 Northern Rail Extension; and be it

20 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the urgency of
21 developing key infrastructure and defense capabilities, considering the investments other
22 nations have committed to the region as well as the increased amount of time needed for those
23 types of projects because of the extreme weather of the region; and be it

24 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Alaska
25 delegation in Congress to pursue the completion of the Northern Rail Extension for the
26 purpose of securing the critical infrastructure that is necessary to improve defense capabilities
27 in the region.

28 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President
29 of the United States; the Honorable Kamala D. Harris, Vice President of the United States and
30 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of
31 Representatives; the Honorable Patrick Leahy, President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate; the

1 Honorable Lloyd Austin, United States Secretary of Defense; the Honorable Deb Haaland,
2 United States Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Pete Buttigieg, United States Secretary
3 of Transportation; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S.
4 Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska
5 delegation in Congress.