

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATOR MCGUIRE

Introduced: 2/2/11

Referred: State Affairs

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to collaboration with the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through the**
2 **Pacific NorthWest Economic Region and its Arctic Caucus to address common issues.**

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

4 **WHEREAS** the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region was formed in 1991 as a forum
5 for collaborative public and private sector planning among the states of Alaska, Montana,
6 Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, the Canadian provinces and territories of the Northwest
7 Territories, Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, and the national capitals of
8 Washington, D.C., and Ottawa, Canada; and

9 **WHEREAS** the Arctic Caucus of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region was
10 formed in November 2009 as an informal group of legislators, government officials, business
11 leaders, and leaders of nonprofit organizations committed to the responsible development of
12 North America's Arctic regions; and

13 **WHEREAS** the purpose of the Arctic Caucus is to provide a forum within the Pacific
14 NorthWest Economic Region for the Arctic jurisdictions of Alaska, the Yukon, and the
15 Northwest Territories to share information, discuss issues of mutual concern, and identify
16 areas for collaboration, including working with other jurisdictions and providing Arctic-

1 related input to the working groups of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region; and

2 **WHEREAS**, on December 1 - 3, 2010, the Arctic Caucus met in Barrow, Alaska, to
3 discuss the federal Arctic policies of the United States and Canada, the Arctic transportation
4 and communication infrastructure needs of the Arctic Caucus member regions, and the
5 priorities and action of the Arctic Caucus; and

6 **WHEREAS** the Alaska Northern Waters Task Force attended the 2010 meeting of the
7 Arctic Caucus in Barrow, and future cooperative action between the Alaska Northern Waters
8 Task Force and the Arctic Caucus was outlined; and

9 **WHEREAS** the 21st Annual Summit of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region will
10 be held July 19 - 22, 2011, in Portland, Oregon, and will provide a forum for continued Arctic
11 Caucus collaboration; and

12 **WHEREAS** Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories, the three northern
13 regions of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region, have problems in common, including a
14 need for better cold climate housing; a high rate of suicide; a high rate of domestic violence; a
15 high rate of substance abuse; an economic reliance on resource-extraction industries and a
16 corresponding need for economic diversification; remote and inaccessible communities that
17 face high costs for fuel and commodities; and an urgent need for investment in transportation
18 and communication infrastructure; and

19 **WHEREAS** there is much to be gained by Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest
20 Territories more closely sharing strategies to solve common problems and working together to
21 solve those problems; and

22 **WHEREAS** some of the issues that the Arctic Caucus might address include
23 increasing cooperation on scientific research and vessel tracking; exploring strategies to
24 address and mitigate tension between local users and industry; identifying economic
25 development opportunities through tourism, infrastructure development, and regional
26 partnerships; exploring increased cooperation in emergency and disaster preparedness; and
27 increasing coordination of search and rescue efforts;

28 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature will collaborate with the
29 legislative assemblies of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through the Pacific
30 NorthWest Economic Region and its Arctic Caucus to facilitate communication and
31 cooperation among the Arctic Caucus member regions and, as a result, to address more

1 effectively problems common to those regions; and be it

2 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature will work with the
3 legislative assemblies of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through the Pacific
4 NorthWest Economic Region and the Arctic Caucus to promote a synchronized message
5 detailing the common needs of the Arctic Caucus member regions to their respective federal
6 governments and emphasizing that coordinated United States and Canadian federal policies
7 are vital to the welfare of Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories; and be it

8 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature invites the governments of
9 the Yukon and the Northwest Territories to join Alaska in an enduring alliance to pursue the
10 common goals of their regions.

11 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Stephen Harper, Prime
12 Minister of Canada; the Honorable John Morris Duncan, Canadian Minister of Indian Affairs
13 and Northern Development; the Honorable Jim Kenyon, Member of the Legislative Assembly
14 of the Yukon; the Honorable Bob McLeod, Member of the Legislative Assembly of the
15 Northwest Territories; the Honorable Denis Stevens, Consul General of the Consulate General
16 of Canada in Seattle, Washington; the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United
17 States; the Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, United States Secretary of State; the
18 Honorable Robert M. Gates, United States Secretary of Defense; the Honorable Ken Salazar,
19 United States Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Sean Parnell, Governor of Alaska; the
20 Honorable Mead Treadwell, Lieutenant Governor of Alaska; and the Honorable Lisa
21 Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young,
22 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.