

### **Sponsor Statement**

“An act creating a state Arctic policy”

Alaskans are on the forefront of new exploration and use of Arctic resources, and of new circumpolar cooperation. Providing relevant information about the reality of the emerging Arctic, understanding and communicating the critical issues that affect this frontier, and instilling confidence in the promise of safety and prosperity is essential as Alaska and America move forward to ensure both.

Alaska’s Arctic policy will guide the state’s initiatives and inform U.S. domestic and international Arctic policy in order to best serve the interests of Alaskans and the nation. Four fundamental principles are at the heart of the proposed Alaska Arctic Policy, and can be considered a vision statement. The state of Alaska, as it relates to the Arctic:

- Values Community Sustainability and Thriving Cultures
- Advances Economic Development and a Healthy Environment
- Ensures Public Safety and Security
- Incorporates Transparency and Inclusion into Decision Making

If passed, Alaska will join eight nations in setting a clear path for decision-making today and a prosperous Arctic tomorrow.

Companion document – Implementation Plan: Recommendations are aligned with the vision and policy statements, and should be considered in these contexts as steps toward achieving Alaska’s Arctic goals. “Strategic recommendations” are listed as important for priority consideration given their potential scale of impact – responding to significant gaps and/or opportunities – and the degree to which their implementation is complex or difficult. Additional recommendations are grouped for short, medium and long planning; and take into account scale of impact and complexity of implementation.

Note: For additional consideration, see the “State of Alaska’s Arctic,” which is designed to be a stand-alone document that reviews and evaluates gaps in knowledge, potential opportunities, challenges facing the Arctic region, and strategic assets at the community, regional and state level.

*A BILL**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**“An Act declaring a state Arctic policy.”*

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

Section 1. Legislative Intent. It is the intent of the legislature that

1. Insert goal here
2. Insert goal here
3. Insert goal here
4. Insert goal here
5. Insert goal here

Section 2. Declaration of state Arctic policy. The State of Alaska recognizes the need for a higher level of attention to and deeper understanding of the “emerging Arctic.” Increasing activity, change and opportunity, globalization and resource development, a sensitive environment and rich and diverse cultures are now framing the Arctic. Therefore, it is the policy of the state, as it relates to the Arctic, to:

1. value and strengthen the sustainability of communities and respect and integrate Arctic peoples’ cultures and knowledge by
  - a. recognizing and respecting the values and perspectives of the region’s indigenous peoples, their cultures, and traditional ways of living.
  - b. sustaining current and develop new approaches for responding to a changing climate that increase community resilience, adaptability and sustainability, as well as promoting health and social well-being.
  - c. managing Arctic fisheries and wildlife for abundance and sustained yield using a science-based, ecosystem approach that integrates local and traditional knowledge.
2. continue its commitment to economically vibrant communities sustained by development activities that recognize the need and our responsibility for a healthy environment by
  - a. ensuring that impacted communities receive direct and indirect benefits from economic development activities, including employment and training opportunities that might come with new and different careers.
  - b. collaborating with industry, local government, and federal agencies, and consult with Arctic residents, to improve the efficiency of permitting and regulatory processes, as well as to foster a positive investment climate.

- c. attracting Arctic investment with a competitive business environment supported by strategic investment in Arctic communications, energy, maritime, and aviation infrastructure.
3. provide a safe and secure Arctic for individuals and communities, and coordinate with federal agencies on national defense obligations to enhance Alaska security by
  - a. strengthening disaster prevention and emergency response capability by coordinating the necessary levels of public and private investment for infrastructure and equipment.
  - b. strengthening cross-border relationships with Canada and Russia and support international Arctic cooperation.
  - c. establishing, supporting and maintaining national, state, community and personal security and safety.
4. collaborate with other levels of government, industry, non-governmental organizations, and tribes to achieve transparent and inclusive Arctic decision making that results in more informed, sustainable and beneficial outcomes by
  - a. building capacity to conduct science and research and advance innovation and technology, consistent with emerging risk and opportunity in the Arctic, as part of a state-led collaborative effort.
  - b. pursuing opportunities to meaningfully participate as a partner in development of federal and international Arctic policies and incorporate state and local government knowledge and expertise.
  - c. employing integrated, strategic planning and consult with Arctic residents for scientific, local and traditional knowledge to meaningfully enhance Arctic decision making.