

SENATE BILL NO.

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATOR MCGUIRE

Introduced:
Referred:

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act declaring the Arctic policy of the state."**

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

3 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
4 to read:

5 LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT. (a) The legislature finds that

6 (1) the state is what makes the United States an Arctic nation;

7 (2) residents of the state have been living in, working in, developing, and
8 protecting the Arctic region for decades and, as a result, have become some of the most
9 knowledgeable experts on the region, developing extensive knowledge of the environmental,
10 climate, political, cultural, transportation, scientific, business, energy, and other issues of the
11 Arctic;

12 (3) a majority of the continuous inhabitants of the Arctic are and have been
13 indigenous people and that the cultural and traditional ways of living of the indigenous people
14 are an integral part of the Arctic region;

15 (4) residents of the state are at the forefront of the exploration and

1 development of Arctic resources and are striving for further cooperation in the circumpolar
2 region;

3 (5) the development of the state's natural resources in an environmentally and
4 socially responsible manner is essential to the development of the state's economy and to the
5 well-being of the residents of the state;

6 (6) the United States and other nations are rapidly developing Arctic strategies
7 and policies;

8 (7) it is essential that the federal government consult with the state when
9 developing national Arctic strategies and policies;

10 (8) it is essential that both the state and the federal government share relevant
11 information about the emerging Arctic, understand and communicate the critical issues that
12 affect the Arctic, and secure the safety and prosperity of the Arctic;

13 (9) the politics of the Arctic is now framed by increasing activity, change,
14 opportunity, globalization, and resource development, a sensitive environment, and rich and
15 diverse cultures;

16 (10) the continuation of the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission is paramount
17 for the state best to capitalize on new opportunities in and mitigate risks associated with a
18 changing Arctic.

19 (b) It is the intent of the legislature that this declaration of Arctic policy

20 (1) be implemented through statutes and regulations;

21 (2) not conflict with, subjugate, or duplicate other existing state policy;

22 (3) provide a framework for future legislation derived from the policy
23 implementation strategy developed by the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission;

24 (4) inform domestic, national, and international Arctic policies in order to
25 serve the best interests of the residents of the state;

26 (5) set out a vision and direction for future Arctic policy; and

27 (6) be a mechanism to achieve the state's goals in the Arctic, including

28 (A) promoting economic and resource development;

29 (B) addressing the Arctic's infrastructure gap;

30 (C) supporting healthy communities; and

31 (D) strengthening an Alaska Arctic science and research agenda.

1 * **Sec. 2.** AS 44.99 is amended by adding a new section to read:

2 **Sec. 44.99.105. Declaration of state Arctic policy.** (a) It is the policy of the
3 state, as it relates to the Arctic, to

4 (1) continue to uphold the state's commitment to economically vibrant
5 communities sustained by development activities that recognize the state's
6 responsibility for a healthy environment;

7 (2) continue to collaborate with all levels of government, industry,
8 nongovernmental organizations, and tribes to achieve transparent and inclusive Arctic
9 decision-making resulting in more informed, sustainable, and beneficial outcomes;

10 (3) enhance the security of the state through a safe and secure Arctic
11 for individuals and communities by coordinating with the federal government
12 regarding national defense obligations;

13 (4) value and strengthen the resilience of communities and respect and
14 integrate the culture and knowledge of Arctic peoples.

15 (b) It is important to the state, as it relates to the Arctic, to

16 (1) recognize Arctic indigenous peoples' cultures and unique
17 relationship to the environment, including traditional reliance on a subsistence way of
18 life for food security, which provides a spiritual connection to the land and the sea;

19 (2) sustain current, and develop new, approaches for responding to a
20 changing climate;

21 (3) manage the Arctic fish and wildlife for abundance and sustained
22 yields;

23 (4) build capacity to conduct science and research and advance
24 innovation and technology;

25 (5) ensure that local communities receive direct and indirect benefits
26 from nearby economic and resource development activities;

27 (6) strengthen disaster prevention and emergency response capability;

28 (7) improve the efficiency and predictability of permitting and
29 regulatory processes;

30 (8) strengthen cross-border relationships and international cooperation;

31 (9) pursue opportunities to participate meaningfully as a partner in

- 1 development of federal and international Arctic policies and incorporate state and
- 2 local government knowledge and expertise;
- 3 (10) employ integrated, strategic planning that considers scientific,
- 4 local, and traditional knowledge;
- 5 (11) attract Arctic investment by establishing a competitive business
- 6 environment;
- 7 (12) provide a safe and secure Alaska Arctic;
- 8 (13) sustain current, and develop new, community, response, and
- 9 resource-related infrastructure.