

CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 29(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 3/29/18

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES RAUSCHER, Neuman, Kreiss-Tomkins, Ortiz, Kopp, Wilson, Gara, Tilton

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and**
2 **Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.**

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

4 **WHEREAS**, in 1908, the United States Congress enacted 16 U.S.C. 500 (National
5 Forest Receipts Program), which required 25 percent of annual income earned from activities
6 on national forest land to be shared with states for distribution to cities and boroughs in which
7 the land is located for the benefit of education and roads; and

8 **WHEREAS**, in 1986, changes in the approach to managing our national forests
9 seriously curtailed the ability of forest communities to harvest forest products and resulted in
10 steep declines in forest revenue paid to affected communities; and

11 **WHEREAS**, in the early 1990s, the United States Congress recognized that the
12 decision to secure and retain land in federal ownership would deprive the communities in
13 which the land is located of revenue otherwise received if the land were in private ownership;
14 and

15 **WHEREAS** the enactment of P.L. 106-393, 16 U.S.C. 500 (Secure Rural Schools and
16 Community Self-Determination Act of 2000), temporarily stabilized national forest revenue

1 payments to forest communities and replaced much needed financial support for education
2 and roads; and

3 **WHEREAS** the National Forest Service controls approximately 22,000,000 acres of
4 land in the state; and

5 **WHEREAS** many of the state's rural communities are nestled in the Tongass National
6 Forest and the Chugach National Forest; and

7 **WHEREAS** there continues to be little privately owned land in those forest
8 communities on which to pursue economic development activities, and the communities
9 therefore remain largely dependent on revenue generated from national forests; and

10 **WHEREAS** the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of
11 2000 expired on September 3, 2015, and has not been permanently reauthorized; and

12 **WHEREAS** the United States Congress temporarily extended the Secure Rural
13 Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 for federal fiscal years 2017 and
14 2018; and

15 **WHEREAS** education is one of the critical services supported by the Secure Rural
16 Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000; and

17 **WHEREAS** failure to permanently reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and
18 Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 will have a devastating effect on many forest
19 communities across America, especially communities in this state, and will severely affect the
20 public education of students living in those forest communities;

21 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that the
22 United States Congress pass and the President sign into law a long-term reauthorization of the
23 Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000; and be it

24 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the United
25 States Congress to pass H.R. 2340 or S. 1027 to extend, or legislation to permanently
26 reauthorize, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

27 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President
28 of the United States; the Honorable Sonny Perdue, United States Secretary of Agriculture; the
29 Honorable Betsy DeVos, United States Secretary of Education; the Honorable Lisa
30 Murkowski, Chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. Senate; the
31 Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senator, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative,

- 1 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the 115th United
- 2 States Congress.