

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2025

Source
HJR 5 am S

**Legislative
Resolve No.**
8



Urging the United States Congress and the President of the United States to reinstate the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 and make the funding mechanism in the Act permanent.

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

WHEREAS the program established under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 has been vital to supporting rural counties and communities near national forests by providing funding for schools, roads, public safety, and other essential services; and

WHEREAS the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 was enacted to offset the significant decline in revenue from timber harvesting on federal lands that resulted from changes in federal land management policies; and

WHEREAS rural communities in the state, particularly those in Southeast Alaska, have historically depended on payments made under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 to sustain critical public services and infrastructure in areas heavily impacted by federal land ownership and limited economic

opportunities; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 2023, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 provided \$12,600,000 to the state, benefiting municipalities, boroughs, and regional educational attendance areas, including Ketchikan, Wrangell, Juneau, Sitka, Anchorage, and Kenai; and

WHEREAS the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 has lapsed as of January 2025 because the United States House of Representatives failed to approve reauthorizing legislation, leaving rural communities in the state and across the nation facing significant budget shortfalls; and

WHEREAS the expiration of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 places a substantial burden on local governments, jeopardizing funding for schools, road maintenance, law enforcement, emergency services, and other critical needs in rural areas; and

WHEREAS retroactive reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 is essential to ensure that rural communities have the resources needed to maintain services and infrastructure while providing stability and predictability for local budgets;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature strongly urges the United States Congress to reinstate the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 retroactively to provide funding to affected communities for fiscal year 2025 and subsequent years; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States Congress and the President of the United States to consider making the funding mechanism authorized under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 permanent to provide long-term support and stability for rural communities that receive critical revenue from the program; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the United States Congress and the President of the United States to explore opportunities to make additional federal timber resources in the state available for responsible harvest in a manner that supports rural economic revitalization, conserves habitat, and promotes forest health.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President

of the United States; the Honorable JD Vance, Vice President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Chuck Grassley, President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable John Thune, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Nicholas Begich, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the 119th United States Congress.