

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5 am S

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES BYNUM, Saddler, Rauscher, Schrage, Schwanke, Fields, Himschoot, Underwood, Ruffridge, Elam, Mina, Eischeid, Costello, Moore, Holland, Tomaszewski, Stapp, Story, Burke, Johnson, Nelson, Hall, Coulombe, Kopp, Mears, Stutes, Hannan, Josephson, Jimmie

SENATORS Kiehl, Tobin, Dunbar, Claman, Gray-Jackson, Giessel, Olson, Stevens, Stedman, Cronk, Yundt, Shower

Amended: 5/9/25

Introduced: 1/22/25

A RESOLUTION

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

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

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

9 **WHEREAS** the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of
10 2000 was enacted to offset the significant decline in revenue from timber harvesting on
11 federal lands that resulted from changes in federal land management policies; and

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

1 opportunities; and

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

6 **WHEREAS** the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of
7 2000 has lapsed as of January 2025, because the United States House of Representatives
8 failed to approve reauthorizing legislation, leaving rural communities in the state and across
9 the nation facing significant budget shortfalls; and

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

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

18 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature strongly urges the United States
19 Congress to reinstate the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of
20 2000 retroactively to provide funding to affected communities for fiscal year 2025 and
21 subsequent years; and be it

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

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

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

1 of the United States; the Honorable J. D. Vance, Vice President of the United States and
2 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the U.S. House of
3 Representatives; the Honorable Chuck Grassley, President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate; the
4 Honorable John Thune, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski
5 and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Nick Begich, U.S.
6 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the
7 119th United States Congress.