

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2025

Source

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**Legislative
Resolve No.**

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Urging the Governor, the Department of Natural Resources, division of forestry and fire protection, the Department of Public Safety, municipalities of the state and relevant wildfire planning and response agencies, and the Alaska delegation in Congress to prepare for the 2025 wildfire season.

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

WHEREAS the frequency and severity of wildfires in the state is increasing because of the effects of lower precipitation and rising temperatures, leading to prolonged fire seasons; and

WHEREAS the 2025 wildfire season presents an increased risk to communities in wildland-urban interface areas, including Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai, Soldotna, Southeast Alaska, and other high-risk zones across the state, some of which have never experienced wildfires and which contain dangerous fuel loads; and

WHEREAS limited water sources, difficult terrain, and constrained or single-access routes to large residential areas in many communities pose significant challenges to ground-based firefighting and evacuation efforts; and

WHEREAS the costs of fighting a widespread fire increase significantly when crews must be brought in from out of state, and providing quick, effective, locally sourced fire suppression reduces costs for firefighting and reduces economic losses caused by a fire; and

WHEREAS there is community concern about sufficient aerial firefighting resources, sufficient water reservoirs for bucket operations, and adoption of enhanced early detection of wildfires and warning systems to support rapid response; and

WHEREAS community safety and preparedness can be improved with early and broad public outreach by engaging the public to learn about wildfires and take action through programs like the Ready, Set, Go! Program, the Firewise USA program, and other local and neighborhood programs and to conduct evacuation planning and drills with local fire stations and other response agencies; and

WHEREAS the role of local and state public information officers, in collaboration with state and federal agencies, is to actively coordinate public education campaigns, enhance emergency notifications, and facilitate communication between fire response agencies and the public; and

WHEREAS past legislative efforts have underscored the importance of wildfire mitigation funding, including appropriations granted for wildfire fuel reduction programs, defensible space and fuel break initiatives, and support for local fire departments in high-risk areas;

BE IT RESOLVED that, in preparation for the 2025 wildfire season, the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor, the Department of Natural Resources, division of forestry and fire protection, and relevant municipal and local agencies to enhance wildfire preparedness and response coordination by reviewing and developing comprehensive interagency wildfire response plans specific to high-risk wildland-urban interface communities, with special attention to single-access routes to isolated residential populations, by minimizing hazard trees and reducing sources of fuel for wildfires, including evaluating and removing fuel in rights-of-way and removing intersection obstructions, and by repairing roads that are in poor condition to enable use of the roadways to support wildfire response and safe evacuations; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that, in preparation for the 2025 wildfire season, the Alaska State Legislature urges local and state public information officers, in collaboration with state

and federal agencies, to assist and encourage all residents to learn about the potential for wildfires and changing exposure in their community, including areas designated as wildland-urban interface areas, and to urge residents to learn about and take action to protect their homes and property through home defense programs, including the Firewise USA program, to be prepared for evacuation using the Ready, Set, Go! Program, and to learn about and enroll in local notification and emergency news sources; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that, in preparation for the 2025 wildfire season, the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor, the Department of Natural Resources, division of forestry and fire protection, and relevant municipal and local agencies to conduct emergency response and evacuation drills and to model evacuation scenarios, including planning for the possibility of single-access road closures, emergency vehicle congestion, and multiple fires resulting from ember transport downwind; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that, in preparation for the 2025 wildfire season, the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor, the Department of Natural Resources, division of forestry and fire protection, and relevant municipal and local agencies to bolster fire suppression resources by stationing ground and aerial firefighting assets close to high-risk areas during peak fire seasons and enhancing access to water sources for bucket and hose operations in areas with limited local water supplies; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that, in preparation for the 2025 wildfire season, the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor, the Department of Natural Resources, division of forestry and fire protection, and relevant municipal and local agencies to improve fire detection and early warning systems by implementing advanced fire detection technology to improve response times and situational awareness and conducting community-wide tests of emergency notification systems to ensure reliability in crisis situations; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges federal representatives, including the Alaska delegation in Congress, to advocate for increased federal funding and support for the state's wildfire prevention and mitigation efforts.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Mike Dunleavy, Governor of the State of Alaska; the Honorable John Boyle, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources; the Honorable James Cockrell, Commissioner, Department of Public Safety; the Honorable Suzanne LaFrance, Mayor of the Municipality of Anchorage; the Honorable Alvin

D. Osterback, Mayor of the Aleutians East Borough; the Honorable David R. Lax, Mayor of the Bristol Bay Borough; the Honorable Chris Noel, Mayor of the Denali Borough; the Honorable Grier Hopkins, Mayor of the Fairbanks North Star Borough; the Honorable Tom Morphet, Mayor of the Haines Borough; the Honorable Beth Weldon, Mayor of the City and Borough of Juneau; the Honorable Peter Micciche, Mayor of the Kenai Peninsula Borough; the Honorable Rodney Dial, Mayor of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough; the Honorable Scott Arndt, Mayor of the Kodiak Island Borough; the Honorable Glen Alsworth, Sr., Mayor of the Lake and Peninsula Borough; the Honorable Edna DeVries, Mayor of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough; the Honorable Josiah Patkotak, Mayor of the North Slope Borough; the Honorable Dickie Moto, Sr., Mayor of the Northwest Arctic Borough; the Honorable Mark Jensen, Mayor of the Petersburg Borough; the Honorable Steven Eisenbeisz, Mayor of the City and Borough of Sitka; the Honorable Sam Bass, Mayor of the Municipality of Skagway; the Honorable Patricia Gilbert, Mayor of the City and Borough of Wrangell; the Honorable Cindy L. Bremner, Mayor of the City and Borough of Yakutat; the Honorable Glenda D. Ledford, Mayor of the City of Wasilla; the Honorable Steve Carrington, Mayor of the City of Palmer; the Honorable David Pruhs, Mayor of the City of Fairbanks; the Honorable Igor Zarembo, Mayor of the City of Delta Junction; the Honorable Brian Gabriel, Mayor of the City of Kenai; the Honorable Paul Whitney, Mayor of the City of Soldotna; Doug Schrage, Fire Chief, Anchorage Fire Department; Chad VanOrmer, Regional Forester, Alaska Region, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; and 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.