

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22

INTRODUCED BY D. MCGEE

BY REQUEST OF THE SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA SHOWING SUPPORT FOR DRILLING FOR OIL AND GAS IN THE COASTAL PLAIN OF THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE; AND EXPRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF TURNING TO ALTERNATIVE FUELS, ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES, TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS, AND IMPROVEMENTS IN EFFICIENCY AS MEANS OF ENSURING AMERICA'S LONG-TERM ENERGY INDEPENDENCE.

WHEREAS, stable, affordable energy is vital to the economy and security of the people of the State of Montana and the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the United States has become increasingly dependent on foreign supplies of crude oil to meet our energy needs and is now importing more than 55% of the nation's crude oil needs; and

WHEREAS, dependence on imports is rising and could exceed 65% by the year 2020 due to growth in demand and falling production; and

WHEREAS, the recent strike in Venezuela has taken millions of barrels of crude oil out of the global market and the threat of war in the Middle East has caused uncertainty in the commodities markets about the future supply of oil; and

WHEREAS, these among other factors have resulted in an increase in the price of crude oil to over \$33 per barrel and, with crude oil costs being the largest component of the retail price of petroleum products, has resulted in an increase in the national average price of gasoline to \$1.60 per gallon and has similarly increased the price of other petroleum products vital to the economy of the United States and the lives of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) contains between 5.7 and 16 billion barrels of recoverable oil; and

WHEREAS, production from the Coastal Plain of ANWR could produce up to 1.5 million barrels of oil per day for at least 25 years, which is comparable to the volumes the United States is expected to import from Iraq for the next 25 years and which represents nearly 25% of current daily U.S. production, and could save \$14 billion dollars per year in oil imports; and

WHEREAS, ANWR consists of 19 million acres, of which 8 million are classified as wilderness, 9.5 million

are designated as national refuge lands, and 8% or 1.5 million acres comprise the Coastal Plain for which the potential for oil and gas production was acknowledged by Congress in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980; and

WHEREAS, oil and natural gas development and wildlife are successfully coexisting and advanced technology has greatly reduced the "footprint" of Arctic oil development; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska State AFL-CIO and the Alaska Federation of Natives support responsible oil and gas development on the Coastal Plain of ANWR; and

WHEREAS, exploration, development, and production of oil on the Coastal Plain of ANWR will provide incomes to federal and state governments and generate jobs and business opportunities for residents in all 50 states; and

WHEREAS, the people of Montana, while in general and qualified support of continued development of fossil fuels, recognize that further development of fossil fuels addresses the short-term needs of our nation's energy independence; and

WHEREAS, the people of Montana agree with the comments of President Bush during the 2003 State of the Union Address that the development of alternative energy sources, which would make America truly independent, is the preferred path for our country; and

WHEREAS, the people of Montana recognize that development of alternative energy sources, including solar, hydrogen, wind, fuel cell, ethanol, and biodiesel fuels, constitutes a preferred alternative to long-term energy development; and

WHEREAS, the people of Montana understand that development of certain alternative energy sources, such as ethanol and biodiesel fuel, would enhance the economic and agricultural base of our great state; and

WHEREAS, the people of Montana further acknowledge that the efficient use of our existing energy resources is a critical and strategic priority in order to ensure our energy independence; and

WHEREAS, America has demonstrated the ability to dramatically reduce the energy consumption in past times of national crisis through fuel efficiency standards for automobiles, installation of industrial efficiency measures, and a conservation ethic among consumers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

(1) That the Congress of the United States be urged to take action to stabilize domestic crude oil supplies through facilitating additional production, to decrease our nation's need for foreign oil from undependable sources,

to increase federal and state revenue from oil and gas leasing, and to support the economy through addition of good paying jobs by opening the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas leasing and environmentally responsible exploration, development, and production of the petroleum reserves.

(2) That the Congress of the United States be urged to:

(a) increase support for development of new sources of renewable energy, such as biofuels, wind, and solar;

(b) pursue development of new technologies such as fuel cells and other potential applications of emerging hydrogen technology; and

(c) develop programs and standards to encourage efficient use of existing resources in transportation, industrial and commercial processes, and consumer end uses.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the Governor, the Montana Congressional Delegation, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President of the U.S. Senate, and the U. S. Secretary of the Interior.

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