

MAR 03 2011

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING CONGRESS TO EXEMPT HAWAII, ALASKA, GUAM, AND PUERTO RICO FROM THE JONES ACT FOR THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY OF THEIR RESIDENTS.

WHEREAS, historically the United States has sought to protect its shipping industry through carbotage laws, such as the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, commonly known as the Jones Act; and

WHEREAS, the Jones Act strictly limits the shipping of merchandise between the United States and its territories to American-built and registered ships crewed by United States citizens; and

WHEREAS, eighty per cent of the goods consumed in Hawaii are imported from the mainland or foreign countries, and ninety-eight per cent of these goods come by ship; and

WHEREAS, while transpacific shipping costs are some of the lowest in the world, especially from the United States to Asia, the freight rates between the mainland and Hawaii are some of the highest; and

WHEREAS, much of the high cost of living in Hawaii can be attributed to unnecessarily high shipping costs caused by the Jones Act; and

WHEREAS, such excess costs present an immense and unfair burden on the people of Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, Congress has already recognized the unique aspects of the Pacific region and the excessive burdens placed on it by the Jones Act when it exempted the Northern Marianas and American Samoa from the applicability of the Jones Act; and

WHEREAS, Alaska, Guam, and Puerto Rico are also heavily dependent on the shipping industry and endure similar hardships as a result of the restrictions of the Jones Act; and



WHEREAS, the almost total dependence on sea freight services makes the economies of Hawaii, Alaska, Guam, and Puerto Rico extremely sensitive to even minor restrictions or disruptions in transportation; and

WHEREAS, any disruption in the delivery of oil, food, or other vital goods would severely threaten the health, safety, and security of residents in Hawaii, Alaska, Guam, and Puerto Rico, as well as visitors to these destinations; and

WHEREAS, an exemption from the Jones Act would protect the collective health, safety, and security of the people of Hawaii, Alaska, Guam, and Puerto Rico; and

WHEREAS, there are no ocean-going livestock carriers in the Jones Act fleet, and the approximately one-hundred and sixty livestock carriers comprising the world fleet are registered in other nations; and

WHEREAS, the currently available waterborne transportation aboard container ships are not inherently well-suited for large-scale movement of livestock, thereby restricting the development of the Hawaii beef cattle industry; and

WHEREAS, allowing foreign shippers to participate in the United States mainland trade to Hawaii, Alaska, Guam, and Puerto Rico would protect the health, safety, and security of the State and territorial residents therein, and would also foster shipping competition which will result in economic benefit to consumers; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2011, that this body respectfully requests the Congress of the United States to pass legislation granting an exemption from the Jones Act to Hawaii, Alaska, Guam, and Puerto Rico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii State Senate respectfully requests the President of the United States and his administration to support the congressional legislation requested herein; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Hawaii's congressional delegation is urged to request Congress to exempt Hawaii, Alaska, Guam, and Puerto Rico from the Jones Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation, and to members of Hawaii's congressional delegation.

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OFFERED BY:

