

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senator Gary Stevens

SPONSOR STATEMENT

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 8

University of Alaska Land Grant Fulfillment

Senate Joint Resolution 8 respectfully requests that Alaska's Congressional Delegation, the United States Department of the Interior and the Governor work collaboratively to complete the federal land grant endowment to the University of Alaska (UA).

Under the Morrill Land-Grant College Act of 1862, UA did not receive any of the federal land granted to states for higher education, and only received a fraction of reserved land allocated under the 1915 Wickersham land grant. As a result, UA currently has one of the smallest holdings of all land grant institutions in the United States. Of these holdings, 12,000 acres are designated for education or research. The remaining land available for sale or development is mostly remote, inaccessible parcels with a value that may not be realized for many years.

Since 1987, UA's Land Management office has generated \$211 million from real estate sales. This income has funded the highly successful UA Scholars Program and has also supported teaching and research in many areas. Completion of the federal land transfer will greatly aid UA in these and future endeavors.

Passage of SJR 8 will demonstrate the Alaska Legislature's strong support for a remedy to UA's longstanding land grant deficit.

Thank you for your consideration of this important piece of legislation.