A RESOLUTION BY SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE IN SUPPORT OF SECURING ALASKA’S FISCAL FUTURE

WHEREAS, Southeast Conference represents Alaskan companies, organizations and individuals across the southeast region by continually seeking to improve the business climate and ensure a healthy economy for future generations; and

WHEREAS, our advocacy for the interests in Southeast Alaska is based upon the core values of economic health, opportunities, free market and responsible business development; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska is spending more money each year than it is taking in; and

WHEREAS, uncertainty of the State’s financial future harms Alaska families and businesses; and

WHEREAS, businesses will not invest in an undisciplined state that continually returns to taxation as an answer to unsustainable spending; and

WHEREAS, a stable financial future for Alaskans requires the State to reduce spending to a level Alaskans can afford; and

WHEREAS, in a statewide January 2015 poll, 57% of Alaskans said the state should live within its means. In a poll of business leaders, 70% supported deep cuts to the existing state budget as the first step in reaching a sustainable budget; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal challenges facing the State are not new and the tools available to address the problem are well defined; and

WHEREAS, the State has more than $60 billion in financial assets which currently generate more income than what the State receives from oil production; and

WHEREAS, Governor Jay Hammond’s vision for the Permanent Fund at its inception included the eventual use of the Permanent Fund’s earnings to help pay for essential government services; and

WHEREAS, working Alaskans will be unwilling to accept individual taxation without confidence that the State is only funding appropriate, efficient services

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Southeast Conference supports the State achieving fiscal and economic stability by reducing State spending to a level it can afford on a sustainable basis.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Southeast Conference believes the first step to securing Alaska’s fiscal future is to reduce the State operating budget to a sustainable level by prioritizing government services as defined by the constitution; reviewing all formula-driven programs for cost effectiveness; eliminating services that are not a function of government; and vigorously pursuing efficiencies to ensure essential service can continue to be delivered which may include privatization or other methods to deliver services.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Southeast Conference believes the next step in getting Alaska’s fiscal house in order requires creation of a framework to use Permanent Fund earnings to support essential services, which may include a cap on the individual dividend; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Southeast Conference believes that exploration of new
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broad based taxes should be pursued in juncture with all other options.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be distributed to:
Governor Bill Walker, State of Alaska
All Alaska State Legislators

ADOPTED BY THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2015 AND IS DUE TO SUNSET ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2016.

Witness By:    Attest:

Garry White, President    Shelly Wright, Executive Director