

**CITY OF GUSTAVUS, ALASKA
RESOLUTION CY17-07**

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING H.R. 232 (A BILL AUTHORIZING STATES TO SELECT AND ACQUIRE CERTAIN NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LANDS TO BE MANAGED AND OPERATED BY THE STATE FOR TIMBER PRODUCTION AND OTHER PURPOSES UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE)

WHEREAS, H.R. 232, seeks to transfer up to two million acres of Tongass National Forest to the State of Alaska, including surface lands, subsurface lands, and real property (including all roads, public-use cabins, and campgrounds currently owned and operated by the U.S. Forest Service); and

WHEREAS, the Tongass National Forest was created by Presidential Proclamation on September 10, 1907, and is managed by the U.S. Forest Service under the multiple-use concept to provide a variety of products and recreational and subsistence opportunities with the long-term goal of protecting the land and its productivity for future generations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Gustavus recognizes the need for a local value-added forest products industry that has a reliable and truly sustainable supply of timber accessible from the Tongass National Forest's existing road system and that does not jeopardize the integrity of the old-growth forest or inhibit other uses of the forest; and

WHEREAS, the Tongass National Forest lands east of Excursion Inlet, on the flightpath/ferry route between Gustavus and Juneau, will be transferred to the State under H.R. 232; and

WHEREAS, these lands were heavily logged during the 1980s and have shown very poor regrowth; and

WHEREAS, the intent of H.R. 232, as stated in the bill's language, is "primarily for timber production pursuant to the State forest practices law" and additional logging will further degrade an already degraded landscape; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska currently faces a budget crisis of over three billion dollars, which has resulted in a hiring freeze; and

WHEREAS, while Alaska's state forest timber program in 2014 lost nine dollars for every dollar spent; and

WHEREAS, acquiring more lands for timber production will likely increase the State's financial losses; and

WHEREAS, under federal law, the U.S. Forest Service must manage the Tongass National Forest for multiple use, including outdoor recreation, hunting, and fishing; and

WHEREAS, the timber-first approach to state forest management under the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act lacks any limits on the size of clearcuts, provides only minimal salmon habitat protection, and lacks any protections for wildlife habitat; and

WHEREAS, if logging under the auspices of the State of Alaska does occur, the State's policy

of allowing unrestricted export of unprocessed logs will do nothing to enhance the wood processing industry in our region and will minimize employment of Alaskans; and

WHEREAS, the two-million-acre reduction of federal ownership on the Tongass National Forest proposed by H.R. 232 will likely reduce Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools (SRS) receipts for southeast Alaska and will probably reduce payments to the City for roads and schools; and

WHEREAS, the Tongass National Forest lands proximate to Gustavus are important to many local businesses and to residents' lifestyles; and

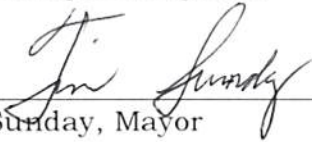
WHEREAS, transferring ownership of major portions of the Tongass National Forest to the State of Alaska will create uncertainty and risk for business owners; and

WHEREAS, this carte blanche transfer of ownership of major portions of the Tongass National Forest to the State of Alaska gives the State the right to sell or dispose in some way highly productive lands that are in the national interest to maintain as national forest.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Gustavus favors maintaining the Tongass National Forest in its entirety together and intact under the stewardship of the U. S. Forest Service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Gustavus opposes H.R. 232.

PASSED and **APPROVED** by the Gustavus City Council, this 8th day of May, 2017, and effective upon adoption.



Tim Sunday, Mayor



Attest: Lori Ewing, CMC
City Clerk/Treasurer