

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4696

To provide for the continuation of higher education through the conveyance to the University of Alaska of certain public land in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To provide for the continuation of higher education through the conveyance to the University of Alaska of certain public land in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “University of Alaska
5 Fiscal Foundation Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purpose of this Act is to establish a program
8 within the Department of the Interior to fulfill the com-

1 mitment of Congress to establish the University of Alaska
2 as a land grant university with holdings sufficient to facili-
3 tate operation and maintenance of a university system for
4 the State of Alaska.

5 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

6 In this Act:

7 (1) AVAILABLE STATE SELECTED LAND.—The
8 term “available State selected land” means Federal
9 land in the State that has been selected by the
10 State, including top-filed land, but not conveyed or
11 patented to the State, pursuant to Public Law 85–
12 508 (commonly known as the “Alaska Statehood
13 Act”) (48 U.S.C. note prec. 21).

14 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
15 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
16 rector of the Bureau of Land Management.

17 (3) STATE.—The term “State” means the State
18 of Alaska.

19 (4) UNIVERSITY.—The term “University”
20 means the University of Alaska.

21 **SEC. 4. UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA LAND GRANT.**

22 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish
23 a program within the Bureau of Land Management to
24 identify and convey available State selected land to the
25 University for a land grant to support higher education.

1 (b) IDENTIFICATION OF AVAILABLE STATE SE-
2 LECTED LAND.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after
4 the date of enactment of this Act, the State and the
5 University may jointly identify not more than
6 500,000 acres of available State selected land for in-
7 clusion in the program established under subsection
8 (a) for conveyance and patent to the University.

9 (2) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Upon the re-
10 quest of the State and the University, the Secretary
11 shall provide technical assistance in the identifica-
12 tion of available State selected land for inclusion in
13 the program.

14 (3) SURVEY.—Upon notification that the State
15 and the University have identified available State se-
16 lected land for conveyance under paragraph (1), the
17 Secretary shall expeditiously survey the available
18 State selected land.

19 (4) MAPS.—As soon as practicable after the
20 date on which the available State selected land is
21 identified for conveyance under paragraph (1), the
22 Secretary shall submit to Congress one or more
23 maps depicting the available State selected land
24 identified for conveyance under that paragraph.

1 (c) STATE AND UNIVERSITY CONCURRENCE; CON-
 2 VEYANCES.—Subject to subsection (e), if the State and
 3 the University submit to the Secretary one or more joint
 4 letters stating that the State and the University concur
 5 with the conveyance of all or a portion of the available
 6 State selected land identified for conveyance under sub-
 7 section (b)(1), the Secretary shall convey to the Board of
 8 Regents of the University, subject to valid existing rights,
 9 the applicable identified available State selected land, to
 10 be held in trust for the exclusive use and benefit of the
 11 University.

12 (d) ADMINISTRATION OF CONVEYED LAND.—All
 13 available State selected land conveyed to the University
 14 under this Act, together with the income therefrom and
 15 the proceeds from any dispositions thereof, shall be admin-
 16 istered by the University in trust to meet the necessary
 17 expenses of higher education programs, similar to prior
 18 Federal land grants to the University.

19 (e) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

20 (1) MAXIMUM ACREAGE.—The Secretary shall
 21 convey not more than a total of 360,000 acres of
 22 available State selected land to the University under
 23 this Act.

24 (2) LETTERS OF CONCURRENCE.—For purposes
 25 of subsection (c) and subject to the maximum acre-

1 age limitation under paragraph (1), the State and
2 the University may submit to the Secretary one or
3 more joint letters of concurrence identifying parcels
4 of available State selected land for conveyance as a
5 subset of the total acres to be conveyed under this
6 Act.

7 (3) ACREAGE CHARGED AGAINST ALASKA
8 STATEHOOD ACT ENTITLEMENT.—The total acreage
9 of all parcels of available State selected land con-
10 veyed to the University under this Act shall be
11 charged against the remaining entitlement of the
12 State under Public Law 85–508 (commonly known
13 as the “Alaska Statehood Act”) (48 U.S.C. note
14 prec. 21).

15 (4) SURVEY COSTS.—In accordance with Public
16 Law 85–508 (commonly known as the “Alaska
17 Statehood Act”) (48 U.S.C. note prec. 21), the Sec-
18 retary shall be responsible for the costs of the survey
19 under subsection (b)(3).

20 (f) INTENT OF CONGRESS.—It is the intent of Con-
21 gress that any conveyance requested through a joint letter
22 of concurrence under subsection (c) be finalized not later
23 than 1 year after the date on which the letter is received
24 by the Secretary.

1 (g) STATE AND UNIVERSITY PARTICIPATION.—Noth-
2 ing in this Act requires the State or the University—

3 (1) to participate in the program established
4 under subsection (a); or

5 (2) to submit joint letters of concurrence under
6 subsection (c) or (e)(2).

7 **SEC. 5. CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.**

8 On conveyance and patent to the University of the
9 available State selected land under this Act, the Secretary
10 shall notify the Committee on Energy and Natural Re-
11 sources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Re-
12 sources of the House of Representatives of the conveyance.

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