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S. RES. 167

Recognizing the importance of the Arctic Council and reaffirming the
commitment of the United States to the Arctic Council.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 9, 2025

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted the following
resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the importance of the Arctic Council and re-
affirming the commitment of the United States to the
Arctic Council.

Whereas the United States became an Arctic nation upon the
purchase of Alaska in 1867;

Whereas the Arctic Council was established on September 19,
1996, through the Ottawa Declaration, to enhance co-
operation, coordination, and interaction among the Arctic
states with the active involvement of Arctic Indigenous
peoples and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic
issues;

Whereas the United States is a founding member of the Arc-
tic Council and has twice served as Chair, from 1998 to
2000, and again from 2015 to 2017;

Whereas the Ottawa Declaration defines 8 states, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and the United States, as Arctic states and members of the Arctic Council as they have sovereignty over territory in the Arctic region;

Whereas the Arctic region is undergoing unprecedented environmental, economic, and social changes due to the impacts of climate change and increased human activity;

Whereas the Arctic Council has an advanced understanding of Arctic challenges through scientific assessments, policy recommendations, and collaborative initiatives;

Whereas the engagement of Indigenous communities and respect for traditional knowledge are integral to the Arctic Council's success;

Whereas the Arctic Council is the leading intergovernmental initiative involving all Arctic states, raising global awareness of the Arctic's significance and influencing international climate policies;

Whereas the Arctic Council has addressed key issues such as persistent organic pollutants, oil spill prevention, search and rescue, and scientific collaboration;

Whereas the Arctic Council emphasizes sustainable development, environmental protection, and peace in the Arctic amidst growing competition over resources and shipping routes;

Whereas the Arctic Council has played a vital role in maintaining the Arctic as a region of low tension and its continued work is essential to ensuring a safe, secure, and stable Arctic for all;

Whereas the Arctic Council has made significant contributions to understanding Arctic biodiversity, ocean health,

and sustainable resource management, while also addressing emerging threats such as microplastics and shipping pollution;

Whereas the United States has demonstrated leadership in Arctic affairs, notably through initiatives such as the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, which provided a groundbreaking understanding of climate change impacts, and the International Circumpolar Surveillance system, a region-wide disease surveillance system led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

Whereas the United States has supported collaborative Arctic Council initiatives such as the Circumpolar Wildland Fire Initiative, developed under Norway's Chairship, in partnership with Gwich'in Council International;

Whereas the Russian Federation's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine has significantly impacted the operations of the Arctic Council, raising concerns over the Russian Federation's military modernization in the Arctic and reinforcing cooperative security ties among the 7 other Arctic states (commonly known as the "A7");

Whereas, in response to the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, the A7 states temporarily paused participation in all Arctic Council meetings;

Whereas the European Union suspended cooperation with the Russian Federation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, leading to the withdrawal of the Russian Federation in 2023;

Whereas, despite the suspension of cooperation with the Russian Federation, the Arctic Council and its working groups resumed activities in mid-2023;

Whereas, in February 2024, the Russian Federation suspended annual payments to the Arctic Council until its participation was reinstated;

Whereas, in February 2024, the 8 Arctic states, in consultation with Indigenous permanent participant organizations, reached consensus to gradually resume official working group meetings;

Whereas Finland and Sweden's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has heightened the Arctic's strategic importance for the alliance;

Whereas, in recent years, the United States has expanded its diplomatic presence in the Arctic region and strengthened economic and people to people ties with the region;

Whereas the Russian Federation's diplomatic isolation from the A7 states has led to the Kremlin's increased cooperation with non-A7 countries, particularly the People's Republic of China, which poses a threat to United States and European national security; and

Whereas a national intelligence estimate by the National Intelligence Council indicates that both Arctic and non-Arctic states will likely increase their competitive activities and military presence in the region as warming temperatures make the Arctic more accessible and states seek to protect their investments: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the key role the Arctic Council
3 has played as a critical forum for fostering inter-
4 national cooperation, sustainable development, and
5 environmental protection in the Arctic region;

1 (2) commends the Arctic Council for its
2 achievements in promoting scientific research, policy
3 coordination, and Indigenous participation to ad-
4 dress regional challenges;

5 (3) affirms the United States commitment to
6 active participation and leadership within the Arctic
7 Council to advance shared goals and uphold the val-
8 ues of cooperation and respect among Arctic nations
9 and Indigenous peoples;

10 (4) acknowledges the Arctic Council’s 8 member
11 states—Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Nor-
12 way, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and the
13 United States—as key participants in the Arctic
14 Council due to their sovereignty over territories in
15 the Arctic Region, which enables them to engage in
16 collaborative efforts to address Arctic issues;

17 (5) encourages increased collaboration among
18 Arctic Council member states, permanent partici-
19 pants, and observers to address emerging challenges
20 and opportunities in the Arctic, including the im-
21 pacts of climate change and sustainable economic
22 development;

23 (6) supports robust funding and resources for
24 United States agencies and organizations engaged in

1 Arctic Council activities to ensure the United States
2 fulfills its responsibilities as an Arctic nation;

3 (7) calls upon the Arctic Council to continue
4 prioritizing peace, security, and environmental stew-
5 ardsip in the Arctic to safeguard the region for fu-
6 ture generations;

7 (8) urges the executive branch to uphold and
8 promote the principles and objectives of the Arctic
9 Council in its Arctic policy and diplomacy efforts;

10 (9) emphasizes the importance of increased
11 United States attention and resources in the Arctic
12 as geopolitical competition and human activities in
13 the region intensify; and

14 (10) emphasizes the importance of the position
15 of United States Arctic Ambassador-at-Large to pro-
16 vide strong and consistent United States leadership
17 in Arctic diplomacy and engagement and urges the
18 executive branch to take all necessary steps to pre-
19 vent prolonged vacancies in this critical role.

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