

Sponsor Statement for HJR 12

"A Resolution proposing amendments to the Constitution relating to Hunting, trapping, and fishing."

Updated: February 27, 2001

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For the nearly 250 years of recorded history and for 8-11,000 years of known human habitation, Alaskans have hunted, fished, and trapped for their food, clothing, and material needs.

For Alaska's Native peoples, hunting, fishing, and trapping and gathering is a precious tie to a rich cultural heritage and to an intimate relationship with the land.

For Alaska's non-Native residents, hunting, fishing and trapping are major attractions and are among the primary reasons they came to Alaska. Non-native Alaskans often also rely on fish and game for sources of food and clothing. For many hunting, fishing, and trapping are long-held family traditions.

Hunting and fishing provide millions of pounds of food for Alaskans each year. This valuable renewable resource should not be under-rated. It is arguably healthier, depends almost solely on solar energy, does not require a large marketing and shipping overhead, reduces our dependency on the lower 48, and does not require tilled land, insecticides, and fertilizer. We are truly fortunate to be Alaskans.

Our State Constitution is a significant way for Alaskans to come to consensus and clearly state their collective values and priorities. The passage of this amendment will allow Alaskans to protect these valuable and historic activities for future generations.

This constitutional amendment is similar to one passed in North Dakota, Virginia, and Minnesota. The right of Alaskans to hunt, trap, and fish does not preclude all other uses of these natural resources.