



# Alaska State Legislature

**Senate Majority** Web: [www.akrepublicans.org](http://www.akrepublicans.org)

**Sponsor:** Senator Gene Therriault

**Current Version:** HCS SJR 5 (O&G)

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## Fact Sheet for: Senate Joint Resolution 5

**Short Title:** REAUTHORIZE METHANE HYDRATE RESEARCH ACT

### Summary:

- Requests the U.S. Congress to reauthorize the Methane Hydrate Research and Development Act to fund research and field testing under that Act.
- Requests reauthorization for five years, with appropriations of at least \$70 million over that time frame.

### Benefits:

- Funds research, mapping and computer simulation to determine the actual volume of gas hydrates that could be produced, and eventually lead to commercialization of Alaska's natural gas hydrates—40 to 100 trillion cubic feet of which are in place in the central portion of the North Slope in close proximity or underlying existing producing fields.
- Furthers research currently under way in the MacKenzie River delta and on Alaska's North Slope.
- Could help meet the burgeoning national demand for natural gas, predicted to increase from 59 billion cubic feet per day to 84 billion cubic feet per day by 2025.
- Could help extend the life of the proposed Alaska natural gas line, remove potential reserve risk, and provide an important supply of gas for the Lower 48.
- Could help attract project financing and potentially lower the tariff, which could in turn increase exploration and early expansion of the proposed natural gas pipeline.

### Background:

- Gas hydrate is a substance composed of methane molecules trapped in cages of water molecules. Hydrates are abundant in low temperature and high pressure environments, most notably in the permafrost zones of Alaska and deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Gas hydrates in Alaska could total 32,000 trillions of cubic feet, and when freed, yield 164 to 180 times their volume in free gas. As of yet, however, it is not known how to harvest their energy.