

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

**Session:**

**State Capitol Building  
Room 428  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-2186  
Phone (907) 465-3004  
Fax: (907) 465-2070  
Toll Free: (877) 465-3004**

**Interim:**

**1292 Sadler Way, Ste. 308  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
Phone: (907) 452-1088  
Fax: (907) 452-1146  
Toll Free: (877) 465-3004**

## **REPRESENTATIVE STEVE THOMPSON DISTRICT 10**

### **House Bill 336 - Sectional Analysis**

*"An Act establishing an energy assistance program in the Department of Revenue to issue an energy voucher to Alaska permanent fund dividend recipients; and relating to the analysis and recommendation of an energy assistance program by the governor."*

**Section 1:** The state will send a voucher to every adult PFD recipient in the fall of 2012. This can be redeemed at a fuel distributor or utility of your choice for the value of 250 gallons of heating oil, 350 CCF of natural gas, or for 1,500 KWH of electricity.

- The recipient decides whether to use the voucher for heating oil or natural gas or electricity, then gives the voucher to the distributor of their choice. If the recipient does not already have an account with the distributor, they open an account.
- Distributors send the vouchers to the state and submit claims for payment that list the voucher number, name of voucher owner, the delivery address and other information.
- Upon receipt of a claim from a distributor, the state sends payment to the distributor to be credited to the voucher recipient's account.
- The amount of the state payment will be calculated by multiplying the quantity of fuel provided by the voucher, by the distributor's retail price for that type of energy on a specific date in 2012.
- The credit may be used only for energy at the recipient's primary residence in Alaska, and may not be transferred to another account or paid in cash to the account holder.
- The credit may be used to pay a recipient's debt with the distributor.
- Each voucher may only be used at one distributor.
- Distributors can decide whether to deliver fuel immediately after they receive a voucher, or to wait until they receive payment from the state.
- The credit remains in the account until it is spent on energy delivered to the recipient's home.
- If the account is closed before all the credit is used, then the distributor sends the balance back to the state.

- Vouchers state the recipient's name, may not be sold or transferred, and require signature by both the recipient and the distributor.
- Recipients who certify that they do not pay directly for heating oil, natural gas or electricity at their primary residence may return their vouchers to the state and receive either: a replacement voucher in the name of their landlord, or a check for \$250. Individuals may also qualify for \$250 if they do not have a qualified distributor in their community.
- Participation by distributors is voluntary, and interested businesses can apply to be added to the list of qualified distributors.
- The program will be administered by the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC).

**Section 2:** The Governor must evaluate options and make a recommendation for the best energy relief program that can be instituted in 2013 and beyond.

This recommendation is due October 1, 2012. This analysis must include an evaluation of a "fuel price reduction" program, an "individual account" program, and alternate options.

**Section 3:** AHFC may adopt regulations necessary to implement the program.

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**Section 4:** This legislation takes effect immediately.