

BRISTOL BAY NATIVE ASSOCIATION

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Friday, March 02, 2012

The Honorable Steve Thompson
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol Room 428
Juneau Alaska, 99801

Tribal Councils
Served by BBNA:

Aleknagik

Chignik Bay

Chignik Lagoon

Chignik Lake

Clarks Point

Curyung

Egegik

Ekuk

Ekwok

Igiugig

Iliamna

Ivanof Bay

Kanatak

King Salmon

Kokhanok

Koliganek

Levelock

Manokotak

Naknek

New Stuyahok

Newhalen

Nondalton

Pedro Bay

Perryville

Pilot Point

Port Heiden

Portage Creek

South Naknek

Togiak

Twin Hills

Ugashik

RE: Letter of Support for House Bill 336, "Energy Voucher & Analysis of Energy Assistance Program"

Dear Mr. Thompson,

The Bristol Bay Native Association is writing to express support of House Bill 336, the creation of an energy voucher program, and analysis of energy assistance program.

The high and volatile price of energy is a serious issue for families and businesses in the Bristol Bay region, and immediate relief is severely needed. The average price of heating fuel is around \$5.85 per gallon; and the average price of electricity, based on PCE reports, is around .5967 per kWh.

In general, we recognize the need for an energy assistance program with a focus on heating fuel: energy assistance is the only practical short-term solution to any energy plan set forth. We also recognize the importance of pursuing energy efficiency, conservation and alternative energy policies, programs and projects that help offset the need for fossil fuels.

We recognize House Bill 336 requests the executive branch to evaluate program options for energy assistance beyond the temporary voucher program. To that point, we respectfully recommend that rural entities such as regional non-profits be included in those discussions, analyses and recommendations to the fullest extent possible. We are very familiar with the immediate relief assistance provides to low-income families as the administrator of LIHEAP & AKHAP programs for the region. We would bring a extensive scope of knowledge, ideas and solutions to the table.

The Bristol Bay Native Association appreciates your concern with the high cost of energy, and supports your efforts in finding solutions for relief, until a transition to a more affordable energy supply is realized for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,



Ralph Andersen
President and Chief Executive Officer

CC: Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Alan Austerman