

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senator Pete Kelly

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Senate Concurrent Resolution 16 – Requesting the Governor to Investigate Coal Resources Sponsor Statement

Senate Concurrent Resolution 16 requests the Governor investigate the development of a large coal power plant and associated electric grid and to evaluate the costs and benefits of coal-generated energy with respect to other energy sources.

Today, it is unfashionable to talk about our most abundant energy source, Coal. Alaska has enough coal to provide for peoples' needs for hundreds of years. It is a plentiful and inexpensive source of energy. Coal power plants are more efficient than ever. Some proposed and experimental plants even remove carbon dioxide. Coal is far more abundant globally than either oil or natural gas.

Fashions change, but if we fail to have this conversation today, we will have failed to keep this option open for future generations of Alaskans. This is that day, and we need to advance the conversation on coal today so it remains in our vernacular for tomorrow.

Yes, coal requires mining, and there are individuals and corporate entities that attack any effort to disturb the earth so as to provide for mankind. They are part of the conversation, but often shout too loudly about issues of possible relevance outside, that do not apply to Alaska's coal.

Coal can be used to heat homes, it can power communities. Alaska has 40 percent more coal than the Lower 48 and Alaskan coal is lower in sulfur (0.3 percent average) than most coal found in the rest of the United States. It falls within or below the minimum sulfur value mandated by the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments.

Coal is not just our past, but is also part of our future. We have the ability to secure Alaska's energy independence with a resource that is abundant in our soil. SCR 16 will help keep coal in our consciousness as a solution to our energy needs.

Please join me in supporting SCR 16

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