Electric Utility Issues: Perspectives from the Industry that Powers Alaska



Presented to the House Special Committee on Energy by: Meera Kohler, Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, Jodi Mitchell, Inside Passage Electric Cooperative, and Crystal Enkvist, Alaska Power Association

What Will Be Covered



Alaska Power Association background Power Cost Equalization program Renewable Energy Grant Fund Emerging Energy Technology Fund Questions

Alaska Power Association

Trade association for electric utility industry
Electric cooperatives, municipals, joint action agencies and investor-owned utilities
Diverse electric utility membership comes together to speak with one voice



Alaska Power Association members provide power to a majority of Alaskans





Power Cost Equalization



Photos provided by AVEC

Power Cost Equalization

- Residential electric rates in rural Alaska range from \$.36/kWh to \$1.80/kWh
- High energy costs continue to cripple economic development in rural Alaska
- Without Power Cost Equalization, thousands of Alaskans would not be able to afford electricity



Power Cost Equalization history

- Established FY1985 to equalize high electric costs in rural Alaska with lower costs in urban areas
- State funds appropriated each year by legislature
- Approx. \$40M in annual assistance to 81,000 Alaskans in the 190 communities
- Utilities give eligible customers PCE credit at time of billing
- PCE funds are reimbursed to utilities from Alaska Energy Authority



Power Cost Equalization Endowment



- Partially capitalized in 2000 with Constitutional Budget Reserve money and sale proceeds from Four Dam Pool projects; two infusions since then
 Established as separate fund of AEA
- Long-term, stable financing source for PCE program
- Until a long-term solution is implemented, PCE keeps electric power costs somewhat stable



- Created by the Legislature in 2008
- Supports renewable energy projects, particularly in areas with highest energy costs
- Administered by Alaska Energy Authority
- Grants awarded for reconnaissance, feasibility, design and construction
- Successful program has provided a large rate of return for the State's investment



- REF appropriations totaling \$247.5M have been issued since 2008.
- Funding matched with more than \$152M from other sources.
- In 2014, REF projects displaced close to 15 million diesel equivalent gallons.
- Since 2009, an estimated 347,575 metric tons of CO2 (GHG emissions) have been reduced.
- REF projects create local employment opportunities and local energy independence.



Provide appropriation sufficient to cover the projects and funding levels recommended by AEA Projects recommended for funding help advance Alaska's goal of producing 50 percent of the state's power with renewable energy by 2025 \$15 million in Governor's FY16 capital budget

Emerging Energy Technology Fund

- Alternative Energy Sources
 - Research
 - Development
 - Application
- Nearly \$11 million provided to 20 projects
- Continue funding the EETF
 \$1M in Governor's FY16 capital budget











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