



February 7, 2020

The Honorable Dave Talerico
Alaska Representative
Alaska State Capitol, Room 104
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Talerico,

Matanuska Telephone Association, Inc. (MTA), a telephone cooperative organized in 1953, supports House Bill 166 (HB 166). This bill provides necessary updates that will allow cooperative members throughout Alaska to more fully engage their electric and telecommunication cooperatives.

HB 166 benefits members of telephone and electric cooperatives. MTA supports allowing cooperatives to utilize technology to keep members informed of when the cooperative is conducting meetings. Currently, cooperatives are limited to archaic means, personal invitation or mail, for providing notice to members about scheduled meetings. In addition to personal invitation and mail, HB 166 will allow members to receive notice of cooperative meetings by way of electronic mail or text message.

MTA supports ensuring all members are afforded the ability to be meaningful participants of the cooperatives' annual meetings. HB 166 affords members the ability to attend annual meetings by teleconference and when participating by teleconference, to be counted as part of the quorum.

In addition to improving member involvement, the bill provides a number of necessary housekeeping updates. For example, statutes require that cooperatives have "cooperative" in their business name. Many cooperatives throughout Alaska were named prior to this statutory requirement and have "association" in their name instead of "cooperative". HB 166 allows cooperatives to have "association" or "cooperative" as part of their name, thus alleviating any confusion as to why a cooperative may appear to deviate from statutory requirements.

MTA supports HB 166 and swift action by the House Labor and Commerce Committee in order for this bill to move from committee onto the House floor and into the Senate.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael C. Burke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "M" and "B".

Michael C. Burke, CEO