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February 10, 2020

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

Dear Representative Talerico,

Alaska Power Association (APA) supports House Bill 166, which would modify statutes governing electric and telephone cooperatives to accommodate technological advances in communications. It is important that the House Labor and Commerce Committee move this bill so it can be voted on by the full House and considered by the Senate before the end of session.

APA is the statewide trade association for electric utilities in Alaska. Our members provide power to more than a half-million Alaskans from Utqiagvik to Unalaska, through the Interior and Southcentral, and down the Inside Passage.

HB 166 would amend multiple statutes, including AS 10.25, which governs electric and telephone cooperatives, by adding the term "telecommunications" or "telecom" to reflect changes to many cooperatives' operations. The bill also makes a series of changes relating to co-op annual meetings and board meetings. These changes recognize new methods of keeping co-op members informed of important activities at their cooperative.

The bill also adds two circumstances under which a cooperative board may discuss items under executive session, bringing the total executive session subjects to five. These new subjects are personnel matters and matters that would have an adverse effect on the ability of the cooperative to compete in the market served by the cooperative.

If you need any additional information or a perspective on HB 166 from the electric utility industry, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Crystal Enkvist
Executive Director