



Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor's Office

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February 6, 2013

Representative Tammie Wilson
State Capitol, Room 412
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Wilson,

On behalf of the Fairbanks North Star Borough I would like to thank you for efforts to address the high cost of heating homes and businesses in Interior Alaska with HB35. As you well know, The Council for Community and Economic Research in its report last summer listed Fairbanks having the highest utility costs among urban areas nationwide, 112 percent more than the typical urban resident in 2011. The second most-expensive city was Juneau, where residents paid 64 percent more than the average.

Many areas of the U.S. and Southcentral Alaska are benefiting from low prices in natural gas, which is the most common energy source in most areas - but not yet in Fairbanks. The Borough through its Interior Natural Gas Utility in conjunction with other entities both public and private, is working to expand and build the natural gas distribution system in the borough.

House Bill 35, will allow many of our residents to utilize a low interest loan program to convert their home heating systems to a more efficient unit. Specifically, this legislation will be very important when natural gas becomes readily available to our residents. For this reason, I support passage of HB 35.

Sincerely,

Luke Hopkins, Mayor