

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



SENATOR JOE THOMAS

Sponsor Statement

Senate Bill 36

“An Act relating to an opt-out charitable giving program offered by an electric or telephone cooperative”

Senate Bill 36 gives statutory authority for electric and telephone cooperatives to offer an opt-out charitable giving program to their members, when the program has been approved by a majority of the membership. More than 250 electric cooperatives across the U.S. have implemented similar successful programs.

Senate Bill 36 allows the cooperative's members the opportunity to participate in a charitable giving program that will round their monthly bill to the next whole dollar amount, not to exceed 99 cents a month.

Under SB 36, the participating cooperative would clearly have to identify on each monthly billing statement the amount voluntarily added to a member's bill, after rounding to the next whole dollar, and provide instruction on how to opt out of the program, should a member so choose.

The monies collected under SB 36 may only be used for charitable donations and members are given the opportunity to claim a full refund of all amounts they paid under the program for at least the three preceding years.

Based on the collective generosity of cooperative members, charitable donations will add up quickly. Funds will then be disbursed back into the community to benefit qualified organizations and help neighbors in need.

I urge you to join me in supporting this important charitable giving program.