

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



SENATOR PETER MICCICHE
SENATE DISTRICT O

Sponsor Statement **SB 110: Electric Liability Utility** **version A**

“An Act relating to liability of an electric utility for contact between vegetation and the utility's facilities; and relating to vegetation management plans.”

Senate Bill 110 will protect Alaska’s electric utility ratepayers from increased rates by clarifying in statute when electric utilities are and are not legally liable for damages caused by contact between vegetation and electric infrastructure.

Under the provisions in SB 110, a utility would not be liable for damages caused by vegetation outside its easement contacting electric facilities. For vegetation inside an easement, a utility would be liable for damages if the utility did not adhere to its vegetation management plan.

SB 110 does not eliminate all liability from electric utilities. Liability would still apply if a utility was found to have failed to follow its own vegetation management plan or if a utility causes vegetation outside the easement to contact electric facilities. The legislation better defines in statute when damages are applicable, setting clear expectations that utilities will implement and follow vegetation management plans or face liability.

SB 110 protects electric utilities from being held liable for the cost of damages caused by vegetation that they either cannot control or were not permitted to maintain. This also protects Alaska’s electric ratepayers from having to bear the brunt of those costs through their rates, in a State where electric utility service costs are already high.