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February 9, 2024

The Honorable George Rauscher
Chairman, House Energy Committee
Alaska State Representative
State Capitol Room 426
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Rauscher

Thank you for holding a House Energy Committee hearing on the Renewable Energy Fund (REF) Round 16 recommended projects list. Alaska Power Association (APA) supports full funding of the entire REF Round 16 projects list so these important renewable energy projects can advance toward completion across the state.

APA is the statewide trade association for electric utilities in Alaska. Our members provide power to a half-million Alaskans from Utqiagvik to Unalaska, through the Interior and Southcentral, and down the Inside Passage. APA's electric utility members share a goal of generation diversification and of integrating renewable energy where technically and economically feasible.

Fully funding the REF projects list is a crucial way the state can support new and diversified electric generation in Alaska while lowering the financial impacts on ratepayers. The REF program has been a success, and numerous electric utilities of all sizes have benefited from its funding. This means electric consumers in Alaska have benefited as well.

APA is fully aware of the pressures on the state budget, but funding the REF Round 16 projects is an investment in Alaska's energy future that will pay long-term dividends through lower or stabilized electric rates, decreased carbon emissions, added resiliency, and strengthened energy independence through generation diversification.

The future of our state relies on an electric system that can fully employ the technological advancements of tomorrow, but the time to move us in that direction is now. The economy is dependent on electric power, and to truly have an Alaska that is equitable in opportunity with the Lower 48, the state must invest in strategic and necessary upgrades to every electric system statewide.

Thank you again for the highlighting the REF Round 16 recommended projects and for focusing attention on this very important program.

Sincerely,

Michael Rovito

Michael Rovito
Deputy Director