



**CORDOVA  
ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVE, INC**

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March 12, 2015

Senate Finance Committee  
Senate Legislature Finance Subcommittee  
District Senator Stevens and Representative Stutes

RE: Support for Legislative Information Offices

Dear Senate Finance Co-Chairs Kelly and MacKinnon,

As you contemplate necessary budget cuts, I encourage you to consider alternatives to the elimination of rural Legislative Information Offices. Please consider renegotiation of leases, reduction of off-session staffing and operations, or other internal suggestions from the LIO itself.

One of the ways Cordova Electric Cooperative has reduced our operating costs while maintaining communications with the Legislature is working through the LIO rather than continuously employing a lobbyist or travelling to Juneau frequently. Many Alaskans could not afford that level of access even if they desired to. I encourage you to fund the LIO's operation at least during the legislative session or those costs will shift back to those who seek to assist in shaping prudent policy for our state.

The Cordova LIO also provides high value by tracking bills and the status of hearings and policies and providing timely and accurate feedback and updates. This greatly reduces that burden on utility staff and other community interests including fisheries and tourism - critical industries that help us diversify our economy (non-oil, note). Other services include permanent fund and citizenship assistance, particularly for the new residents, English language challenged, and elderly residents of the state.

Thank you for your consideration and your work on behalf of our state during this challenging economic cycle.

Sincerely,

Clay Koplin, CEO