

Alaska State Legislature

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REPRESENTATIVE MIKE CHENAULT SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE SPONSOR STATEMENT

HOUSE BILL 369: *"An Act relating to an in-state natural gas pipeline, the office of in-state gasline project manager, the Joint In-State Gasline Development Team, and the In-State Gasline Steering Committee; and providing for an effective date."*

House Bill 369 was introduced as an effort to expedite the process for an in-state natural gas pipeline. The in-state gasline has been a topic of discussion in the Legislature and the Administration for a number of years. Currently, there are two separate state entities, the Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority and the in-state gasline coordinator, working on a project. House Bill 369 combines these two entities along with the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Alaska Railroad Corporation to create a Joint In-state Gasline Development Team within the Office of the Governor. The Development Team is to ensure the in-state gasline is construction ready by July 1, 2011 with gas flowing by 2015. It is my hope the Development Team will be able to focus the state's efforts in putting a construction plan together and leverage the best ideas and data to get a gasline built.

The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Alaska Railroad Corporation were included as members of the team due primarily to their having existing rights of way which could speed up any permitting process that may need to be undertaken. The Alaska Railroad Corporation also has bonding ability which could be an answer in financing a gasline.

The Development Team will cover all aspects of the line's development and are to select the most economically sound route that will deliver gas to Alaskans, plan permitting and construction by using existing rights of way and take any action necessary to get the project underway as soon as possible.

House bill 369 also creates an In-state Gasline Steering Committee to provide advice and recommendations to the development team. Their duties are spelled out within the legislation. Proposed members of the Steering Committee come from the private sector, municipalities, state agencies and the two presiding officers of the Legislature.

The bill provides for an expedited review and action process and the sharing of information that may already have been accumulated or completed. The bill also requires that state agencies or entities cooperate with and give priority to requests for information from the Development Team.