



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Representative Bryce Edgmon

Alaska State Capitol

120 4th St State Capitol

Juneau, AK 99801

(907) 465-4451

Sponsor Statement

House Bill 358: Renewable Energy Grant Fund

HB 358 extends the authorization of the Renewable Energy Grant Fund and Recommendation Program setting a new sunset date of June 30, 2033. The program was originally established in 2008 through the passage of House Bill 152 by unanimous vote of the legislature and later received a ten-year extension in 2012. Since its inception the Renewable Energy Fund (REF) has distributed over \$275 million dollars in grant funds for renewable energy projects across the state. These REF grants have been supplemented by both federal and local funding in the hundreds of millions of dollars. These combined funds are helping to stabilize and reduce energy costs by supporting renewable energy projects for both urban and rural communities across Alaska.

As technology has improved and available renewable energy sources have expanded so too has the number of proposed projects, with thirty-nine applications from around the state being submitted in the last round of requests. As energy prices climb it is important that new sources of energy and heat be explored, especially in our most vulnerable communities. The Renewable Energy Grant Fund is an important tool in supporting Alaska's communities with their energy needs.

With this bill I look forward to extending the Renewable Energy Fund, which has helped establish energy independence in so many of Alaska's communities, for another 10 years.