

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

April 27, 2021  
10:17 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Calvin Schrage, Chair  
Representative Chris Tuck  
Representative Matt Claman  
Representative Tiffany Zulkosky  
Representative Zack Fields  
Representative George Rauscher  
Representative James Kaufman

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE BILL NO. 154

"An Act exempting certain low voltage projects from contractor and electrical administrator requirements."

- HEARD & HELD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 154

SHORT TITLE: EXEMPTION: LOW VOLTAGE PROJECTS

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) CRONK

03/26/21	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/26/21	(H)	ENE, L&C
04/27/21	(H)	ENE AT 10:15 AM BARNES 124

**WITNESS REGISTER**

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE CRONK  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, presented HB 154.

CHAD JONES, Technical Leader  
Cisco Systems  
Doylestown, Ohio

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 154.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

[10:17:29 AM](#)

**CHAIR CALVIN SCHRAGE** called the House Special Committee on Energy meeting to order at 10:17 a.m. Representatives Rauscher, Claman, Fields, Zulkosky, and Schrage were present at the call to order. Representatives Tuck and Kaufman arrived as the meeting was in progress.

**HB 154-EXEMPTION: LOW VOLTAGE PROJECTS**

[10:17:59 AM](#)

CHAIR SCHRAGE announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 154, "An Act exempting certain low voltage projects from contractor and electrical administrator requirements."

[10:18:20 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE CRONK, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, presented HB 154. He began by stating that current regulations impede the construction of small Internet projects in rural Alaska. He spoke to how HB 154 will help construction proceed efficiently. He provided the sectional analysis for HB 154 [hard copy included in the committee packet].

[10:21:32 AM](#)

CHAD JONES, Technical Leader, Cisco Systems, began his testimony by talking about the 56 voltage restriction. He explained that it is an unusual specification and spoke to the efforts Cisco Systems went through to amend HB 154 to be more in line with national code. He summarized by defining "safe wattage."

[10:23:44 AM](#)

MR. JONES, in response to a question from Representative Tuck, clarified that he supports HB 154.

[10:24:09 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK, in response to a question from Representative Claman, explained that the focus of HB 154 is on satellite Internet installation in rural Alaska.

MR. JONES added that non-satellite installations are generally lower wattage for safety. He explained that remotely powered systems primarily use power over Ethernet, which has a wattage within the safety margin. In response to a question from Representative Claman, he highlighted that Ethernet power is common though people are unaware of all its uses.

[10:27:05 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK, in response to Representative Zulkosky, confirmed that the proposed legislation functions to exempt satellite installers from having to hold a contractor's license when the projects are under \$10,000. In response to a follow-up question, he said the bill would provide cost savings, and he expressed hope there could be the least amount of restrictions possible. He said the goal is to get people certified locally.

[10:30:07 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK, in response to a question from Representative Fields, noted that some people in smaller communities are doing installations unregulated, and [an electrician] from out of town would have to come check the work, which costs a lot. He added, "Because it's local, we're trying to take that restriction out of there."

[10:31:59 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK, in response to Representative Rauscher, confirmed the language being added to statute under HB 154. In response to a follow-up question, he confirmed that those doing the work would have to have the right insurance.

[10:32:59 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK responded to questions from Representative Tuck. He confirmed that a handyman could do this work and would need a license. He said fiberoptics could be added to the bill language. He said he wants to make the bill "as strong as possible" with "the least restrictions." He offered his understanding that [the bill] would be limited to residential work.

10:35:40 AM

REPRESENTATIVE KAUFMAN observed that "in the suggested amendments" was a revision of the definition of low voltage from class 2 or 3, and within that topic, optical fiber cable was listed.

10:36:10 AM

CHAIR SCHRAGE announced that HB 154 was held over.

10:36:13 AM

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Energy meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.