

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

April 10, 2025

1:05 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Ky Holland, Co-Chair
Representative Donna Mears, Co-Chair
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Chuck Kopp
Representative George Rauscher
Representative Mia Costello

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Cathy Tilton

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 153

"An Act relating to generation of electricity from renewable energy resources; relating to a renewable portfolio standard; relating to power cost equalization; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 153

SHORT TITLE: UTILITIES: RENEWABLE PORTFOLIO STANDARD

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) HOLLAND

03/24/25	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/24/25	(H)	ENE, RES
03/26/25	(H)	FIN REFERRAL ADDED AFTER RES
04/01/25	(H)	ENE AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
04/01/25	(H)	Heard & Held
04/01/25	(H)	MINUTE(ENE)
04/03/25	(H)	ENE AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120
04/03/25	(H)	Heard & Held
04/03/25	(H)	MINUTE(ENE)
04/10/25	(H)	ENE AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

WITNESS REGISTER

SHAINA KILCOYNE, Staff
Representative Ky Holland
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: On behalf of Representative Holland, prime sponsor, presented the summary of changes proposed under a committee substitute to HB 153.

CARROLL CAMPBELL, representing self
Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

WAYNE WOODS, representing self
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

GORDON BISSELL, representing self
Chickaloon, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

DOUG GLENN, representing self
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

PAUL SEATON, representing self
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

DAVID BRAILEY, Owner & Operator
RAM Valley LLC
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

KEN HUCKEBA, representing self
Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

MICHAEL CRAFT, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

CHRIS ROSE, Director
Renewable Energy Alaska Project
Sutton, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

AIDAN MACKINNON, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

CASSIE ANDREWS, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

SANTA CLAUS, representing self

North Pole, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

JULIA INGA, representing self

Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

MELISSA SWOPE, representing self

Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

MARCUS MOORE, representing self

No address provided

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

DOUG JOHNSON, Director of Development

Ocean Renewable Power Co.

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

MARK MASTELLER, representing self

Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

BEN MAY, CEO & Founder

Alaska Solar

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

AMANDA GARVEY, Sunstone Electric

Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

TODD LINDLEY, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

KEN GRIFFIN, representing self

Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

PENNY GAGE, Chief Policy & Partnership Officer
Launch Alaska
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

AURORA ROTH
representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: testified in support of HB 153

ED MARSHALL, representing self
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 153.

PATRICE LEE, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

BEN BOETTGER, Energy Specialist
Cook Inlet Keeper
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 153.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:05:19 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR DONNA MEARS called the House Special Committee on Energy meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Representatives Holland, Mears, Kopp, Rauscher, and Costello were present at the call to order. Representative Edgmon arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 153-UTILITIES: RENEWABLE PORTFOLIO STANDARD

[1:05:57 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR MEARS announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 153, "An Act relating to generation of electricity from renewable energy resources; relating to a renewable portfolio standard; relating to power cost equalization; and providing for an effective date."

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REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON moved to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 153, Version 34-LS0501\G, Walsh, 4/10/25, as a working document.

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CO-CHAIR MEARS objected for the purpose discussion.

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CO-CHAIR HOLLAND, as prime sponsor, said the changes in the proposed CS were due in part to cooperation with the utilities over some of their concerns over the renewable energy portfolio standards and would provide more structure. He deferred to his staff for a summary of changes.

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SHAINA KILCOYNE, Staff, Representative Ky Holland, Alaska State Legislature, to the current Committee Substitute for HB 153. { on behalf of Representative Holland, prime sponsor, presented the summary of changes in the proposed committee substitute to HB 153 [included in the committee file], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Sec. 5 AS 42.05.900(1) - Extends the 40% target date from 12/31/30 to 12/31/32.

Sec. 42.05.905(b) - Clarifies the process for calculating energy produced and used by a customer, which includes the multiplier of 2.

Sec. 42.05.905(d) - Replaces "energy efficiency investments" with "investments in energy efficiency technologies". Also allows energy investments through programs that are established or approved by the state.

Sec. 42.05.910 - Section clarifies renewable portfolio credit use within the load-serving entities that are subject to the electric reliability organization, or Railbelt utilities. This language change is also reflected in Sec.

42.05.905(c).

Sec. 42.05.915(g) - Allows for a utility to use any noncompliance fee,

whether they have reached the 40% threshold or not, to defray the costs of building future renewable electricity projects, integrating renewable electricity projects, including battery storage, into the load-serving entity's systems, or purchasing renewable electricity. Funds shall be spent by 2035 for the first target threshold and 2040 for the second target threshold. Any unspent funds shall be remitted into the account to the Alaska Energy Authority for deposit in the Alaska Renewable Energy Grant Fund.

Replaces "fine" with "remittance" to establish a difference from standard penalties levied by the Regulatory Commission of Alaska.

Sec. 42.05.925 - Definitions

(2) Adds a community energy facility as defined in AS 42.05.735 under the definition of "distributed energy system".

(7) Modifies the definition "renewable energy resource" to mean a resource, other than fossil fuel.

(7)(B)(ii) Removes the requirement that landfill gas be produced by municipal solid waste.

Removes all reference to power cost equalization (PCE) communities:

Removes the ability to purchase Renewable Electricity Credits from an electric utility that serves customers who receive PCE. Removes the exemption of revenue from the sale of recovered heat or revenue from the sale of renewable energy credits from the PCE calculation.

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REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER sought confirmation that the committee had been told that utilities in Alaska were in support of HB 153.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND clarified that his office had contacted utility companies to ask for their input on HB 153. He deferred to Ms. Kilcoyne to comment further.

MS. KILCOYNE confirmed that she and other members of the sponsor's staff have been in contact with utility companies and that some of the changes in the proposed CS were in response to their input. However, because some of the conversations with these utility companies were still ongoing, the changes were not complete.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER observed that after the five-year period referenced in Sec. 42.05.915(g), funds not spent on a renewable energy project would be paid into the renewable energy fund (REF) within respective districts. If so, he asked whether those funds could be used anywhere within Alaska and, if that were the case, whether that would reduce fees for ratepayers.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND replied that Representative Rauscher's understanding was correct, but the provisions within the proposed CS provide more options for spending, including battery storage projects, infrastructure construction, other renewable projects, and purchasing renewable power. So, because there are plenty of places to use them, Representative Holland said, those funds were "money intended to help the utility move towards the benefit of the renewables but giving them some time and flexibility to aggregate this money if they don't meet it in time." Therefore, if funds were to completely lapse, those funds would go into the REF and thus would be kept within the purview of renewable energy projects and "keep the state moving ahead in a direction of trying to reduce its energy costs overall." However, more directly to Representative Rauscher's point, Representative Holland said, "at the end of the day, if we got all the way down to that eventual waterfall, it would be going to the benefit of the state's reduced cost of energy and not directly to that one utility." Representative Holland stated that the intent of the proposed legislation was to construct a transition to renewable energy in a way that helps that utility to manage and reduce the cost of the energy generated.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER clarified that he wanted to know whether the lapsed funds could be pointed toward the "offending district," as it was his understanding of the intent of the original bill version. He then asked about the changes outlined in Sec. 42.05.905(d), which would replace "energy efficiency investments" with "investments in energy efficiency

technologies" and if such changes also would allow energy investments through programs that are established or approved by the state. He pointed to Idaho's policy of energy investment and the technologies being deployed in response to it, and he cautioned that if investing in similar technologies count toward renewable energy credits as outlined in HB 153, it may lead to a wealth transfer out of Alaska.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND asked Ms. Kilcoyne for a technical clarification for the terms used in Representative Rauscher's question, saying, "I don't think the intent is the money is going out anyplace, but I think it is expanding and clarifying how the money could be used by the utility for the utility to enhance their renewable conformance through the renewable targets in there." He then yielded to Ms. Kilcoyne for the clarification of terms.

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MS. KILCOYNE confirmed the change in terms but said that she did not think that utilities would be able to use out-of-state funds for renewable energy development, and that the intent of the terminology change was only so that funds could be used by utilities for their own power-grid systems. Should this terminology need to be clarified further, she stated that she and the staff of Representative Holland would be happy to work on that.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER then stated that he was concerned about the cost to the consumer of the provisions in HB 153. According to Representative Rauscher, if targets for energy transition thresholds are met, the consumer is paying more for said energy to do so and therefore asked if that should be considered a policy success or is that a problem the legislature should consider. Representative Raucher said that although the targets for energy transition have been modified, and the rate of transition depends on the year, the risk for higher energy costs is still present.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND stated that the challenge that HB 153 is trying to address has two facets: that 90 percent of new energy projects across the country are renewable because renewable energy is cheaper to operate when compared to fossil fuels; and the volatility in the price of fossil fuels themselves. To support his statement, Representative Holland pointed to the Fire Island Wind Energy project and global data suggesting that renewable energy, though some projects may have higher initial

costs, is much cheaper and more predictable in pricing. Therefore, Representative Holland stated that the intent of the proposed legislation is to move toward controlling, perhaps decreasing, and stabilizing the price of energy.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER then asked about the change of the term "fines" to "remittance" as outlined in Sec. 42.05.915(g), wishing to ascertain the technical desire to do so.

MS. KILCOYNE stated that this is to clarify that fines issued by the Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) to utilities typically are paid to the RCA, and the use of said terminology in HB 153 is so such fees either would stay with the utility to help them transition towards a renewable energy grid or be paid to the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA).

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER asked if there was a way to enforce utility companies who have misused the remittance money on something that is not qualified for renewable energy credits. He expressed concern about the money a ratepayer may pay and ensuring the money is spent as intended should the proposed legislation be enacted.

MS. KILCOYNE stated that Representative Rauscher asked a good question. She further elaborated, saying that such remittance money typically just goes through the RCA. The utility would presumably be reported to the RCA, according to Ms. Kilcoyne, though this may have to be clarified in policy, or may be implemented in regulation.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER asked how the designated funds would work once the first five-year transition period passed.

MS. KILCOYNE answered that typically the funds are allocated to the REF by the legislature. Therefore, designated funds would go directly to REF but would have to be appropriated by the legislature.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND clarified that the legal basis for the REF is on line 7, page 9, where Sec. 42.05.915(g) states, "A load-serving entity may, within one year after the commission imposes a noncompliance fine, satisfy the fine by paying a customer all or a portion of the customer's costs of installing a distributed energy system or electricity efficiency technologies". He said the account such funds would be held in would be one approved by the commission, and thus the commission would have purview over it.

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REPRESENTATIVE COSTELLO asked about the removal of the portion of the bill allowing purchase of renewable electricity credits from customers that have power cost equalization (PCE) communities as it pertains to the amount of utilities that receive PCE.

MS. KILCOYNE said that she did not know the exact number of utility companies affected by such classifications off the top of her head but said that she believed it was over one hundred.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON, in response to Representative Costello's question and Ms. Kilcoyne's answer, proffered that the number of utility companies affected by such classifications was in the mid-80s, and the number of PCE communities was well over one hundred.

REPRESENTATIVE COSTELLO noted that the proposed committee substitute would not allow utilities that serve PEC customers to sell their Renewable Energy Credits (RECs). In response to this change in the provisions, she questioned whether there may be a problem in creating one group of utilities that can sell their RECs versus another group from which you cannot purchase credits. She asked whether any consideration had been given to allowing utilities that serve PCE customers to purchase credits from each other.

MS. KILCOYNE explained that the changes made under the proposed CS are intended to create a closed market for Railbelt utilities. She further stated that such changes do not disallow a community that receives PCE from selling credits either to Railbelt communities or amongst themselves, as the proposed legislation says nothing about such action. Rather, because the term "renewable energy credit" has been replaced by the term "renewable portfolio credit", the latter can be traded only within the Railbelt, the removal of the earlier provision was only due to the new standard created within the bill.

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CO-CHAIR MEARS removed her objection to the motion to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 153, Version 34-LS0501\G, Walsh, 4/10/25, as a working document. There being no objection, Version G was before the committee.

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The committee took an at-ease from 1:27:07 PM to 1:27:37 PM.

[1:27:37 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR MEARS confirmed that the committee had adopted Version G to HB 153.

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REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND responded to Representative Costello's question on changes in Version G to the trading of PCEs. He said that Version G removes making any changes to the "PCE world." He further elaborated saying that in earlier versions of the bill, PCE communities could be a source of RECs that Railbelt communities might have purchased, but clarified for the benefit of PCE utilities that selling those credits would not affect their qualifications for PCE funds. Thus, these provisions were to give PCEs a new source of revenue, for which they would not be harmed. By deleting any mention of PCEs in Version G, the proposed legislation now has nothing within it that has anything to do with PCEs and shifts the focus of the bill to RECs that can be generated within the Railbelt of Alaska.

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CO-CHAIR MEARS said that she thought that there were more opportunities to have a robust and comprehensive discussion on communities that receive PCE status rather than "just dealing it in pieces of another piece of legislation."

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REPRESENTATIVE KOPP stated that it was his understanding that Version G "does away with the problem of penalizing ratepayers for not meeting renewable targets" through the means of a fund that helps utilities transition to renewable energy sources rather than simply passing those costs onto rate payers. He then asked Representative Holland if this understanding was correct.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND confirmed that's correct, but added that the changes in Version G would expand the ways money from the fund could be used and that if the money that goes into the fund for the benefit of the concerned utility was partially unused,

it would roll into the renewable energy fund rather than the unrestricted general fund (UGF), which held a greater risk of such penalties onto ratepayers. The intent of this action was that funds could still be used for the benefit of renewable energy projects, thus transferring remittances for failure to meet energy transition goals to a state-wide fund was the path taken by the legislature. Representative Holland continued:

The intent here is that there wouldn't be a balance. We're not trying to create a source of money; ... we're just trying to hold it so that the utility can use it for the benefit of the ratepayers and for the benefit of projects that would advance renewable energy, meeting those targets.

REPRESENTATIVE KOPP then asked a follow-up question as to the risk to the state if net zero and decarbonization efforts are no longer funded by the Federal Government, which would include impacts on the Alaska natural gas pipeline. He further elaborated by asking, "Are we now at a time when all the incentives to support utilities going in this direction are simply not available now, where maybe they were?"

CO-CHAIR MEARS commented that she would love to see a future with a plethora of energy generation sources, and that the state had opportunities to transition to such a future.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND in response to Representative Kopp's question, referred to the proposed deadline of 2032 and indicated that time is needed to "see how these things unfreeze themselves." Globally, many countries are still putting renewable energy projects forward, even in countries without net zero emission goals. He further illustrated his point by saying that although there were changes to U.S. climate and energy goals, the price in solar energy production and battery storage has dropped so dramatically that the energy transition the legislature would like to aid with the passage of HB 153 may likely occur as it has in other energy markets.

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REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER said that he wanted a better understanding as to how money would get appropriated to the renewable energy fund, and if such funds could be misappropriated if awarded to the UGF.

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CO-CHAIR MEARS opened public testimony on HB 153.

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CARROLL CAMPBELL, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. The first reason that he mentioned for his opposition was that according to a University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Geological Institute study, coal alone could power Alaska for 15,000 years, thus the state has the resources to meet its energy needs, specifically in reference to earlier testimony about the cost of imported gas. Secondly, he stated that government exists not to "force things on to us," but to "secure our rights, as stated in the Declaration of Independence." Stating his third reason, he asked if the legislature could investigate incentivizing means by which energy could be introduced into the power grid on a microscale since, he opined, larger solar and wind farms are ecological disasters. He stated that the equipment for renewable energy production is "not completely recyclable," often relies on fossil fuel technology for support, and the bird kill rate for large wind farms is half a million. He continued by stressing the impact on Alaska's tourism industry that the projects HB 153 would incentivize by asking, then answering: "Do they come to Alaska on their once-in-lifetime vacation to see giant windfarms? Do they come to see giant solar farms? No, they don't."

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WAYNE WOODS, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. He related he is a resident since statehood, a professional hunter by trade, and has operated a tourism-related business since 1986. He opined that while HB 153 is intended to reduce and stabilize energy costs for Alaskans through the renewable portfolio standard (RPS) provision, such measures would have the opposite effect. This would be because the legislation, according to Mr. Woods, mandates technology that is neither cost-effective nor reliable. He said the standards and goals of HB 153 can only be achieved through the extortion of government mandates to producers, with increased costs to consumers and increased public and grant expenditure, "and selling that to us as investment." He said this is a great deal for the green energy business, but is "an idea that has passed its sell-by date." He stated that the directives of the Trump Administration were "clear, resource development directives to lower costs to the consumer and increase our living standards." He concluded his testimony by saying that Alaska is a "resource

super power" and that its residents should not be hindered by "short-sighted local mandates that benefit the few at the cost of clear violation of the public trust."

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GORDON BISSELL, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. He said that he personally has used solar and wind and has encountered numerous problems with both technologies. All of those components, according to Mr. Bissell, would have to be addressed on a much larger scale, both for maintenance and disposal in case of damage. Pointing to regions of the U.S. that have sustained high winds or major fluctuating temperatures, he said that maintaining windmills would be a major endeavor to simply keep renewable energy facilities operational. Mr. Bissel stated that such factors would be exasperated due to the state's frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. To concerns raised about imported natural gas during committee proceedings, Mr. Bissel said, "I believe that is a 100 percent fallacy." He offered his understanding that there is ample exportable North Slope natural gas.

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DOUG GLENN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. He stated he had a particular dislike for industrial windmills, as they are high maintenance and have a high kill rate for migratory water fowl. Mr. Glenn said, "If we wanted to go to renewable, we would have built the Watana Dam" He said he would rather have a dam than industrial windmills or solar panel farms." Referencing a web article on the subject, he said that Germany is undergoing a transition to renewable energy, and it is estimated to have an increase of 67 percent in energy costs.

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PAUL SEATON, representing self, testified in support of HB 153. However, he did have a question in the current Committee Substitution, specifically as pertains to Sec.05.915(g), which read as follows:

Sec. 42.05.915 (g) A load-serving entity may, within one year after the commission imposes a noncompliance fine, satisfy the fine by paying a customer all or a portion of the customer's costs of installing a

distributed energy system or electricity efficiency technologies

MR. SEATON noted that it outlines that funds from HB 153 shall be spent by the end of the five-year deadline, and he recommended that the funds should be spent on projects that are ongoing, because the term "spent" could go to the Alaska Energy Authority rather than to renewable energy projects. He said that he appreciates the provisions in HB 153 and "anything we can do to push this along is great." He also stated that the Homer Electric Association voted in favor to acquire and complete the Puppy Dog Lake solar farm in Nikiski, and it is estimated to produce electricity at a cheaper rate than the current diesel generated electricity.

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DAVID BRAILEY, Owner & Operator, RAM Valley LLC, testified in support of HB 153. He stated that his firm operated the Juniper Creek Hydroelectric system in Eagle River, which meets the power requirements for about 200 homes in the upper Eagle River Valley. He then responded to a comment by Representative Costello to the committee on April 1, during which Representative Costello said that instead of state mandates that would include fines for not meeting renewable energy targets, the situation should be addressed by having conversations between ratepayers and utilities at the local level. According to Mr. Brailey, such conversations have been going on for a long time. To support his claims, he cited a 2018 Matanuska Electric Association (MEA) member survey that stated that 70 percent of its members would support renewable energy production. He noted that the survey was taken before Hilcorp announced that it would not renew MEA's gas contract, which would lead to a 50 percent energy cost increase. Since the survey results have been published, MEA has not created new renewable energy projects on its own, the exception being the Gravity Lake Hydroelectric project and some undertakings by independent power producers in the region.

MR. BRAILEY stated that the reason that independent power producers do not have great market reach within the Railbelt Region of Alaska is because of unfavorable terms in purchase agreements and contracts with MEA. These include clauses that require MEA to receive 50 percent of all RECs generated by a particular project, but requires independent power producers to cover 100 percent of the costs of connecting and distribution for the same projects. This contrasts with the continental

U.S., in which independent power producers get paid for both generation and capacity, which translates to a more reliable energy distribution system than Alaska. Such contracts and stipulations result in a situation in Alaska where, according to Mr. Brailey, "firm renewable power has no value in the Alaska Railbelt, which is encouraging us to develop unreliable power sources that will always require fossil fuel back up." He also stated that in Alaska, no independent power producer has ever been paid for reactive power, the electricity required to maintain acceptable voltage levels. In summary, Mr. Brailey stated that the system was slanted towards utilities, which is a key reason why Alaska has a renewable market penetration of 2 percent, and if Representative Costello was voting in favor of conversations between ratepayers and utilities, the situation he has described will continue.

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KEN HUCKEBA, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. His reasons for opposition were that the RPS provisions and the transition deadlines had no cost of risk considered and continued stating that similar policies have caused so much damage in other countries choosing to adopt renewable energy. Another reason for his opposition was that Alaska's geography would make renewables such as wind and solar unreliable and expensive. Additionally, he stated that utilities will face compliance costs which they will pass on to rate payers. He said HB 153 also ignores more conventional energy sources, risking blackouts "... in a region where power isn't optional, it's survival." Mr. Huckleba opined that the timelines for transition in HB 153 were unrealistic, as upgrading the rural energy grid would require utilities to undertake massive unfunded upgrades to meet said deadlines.

MR. HUCKEBA continued, looking into the bill's origins, particularly as it relates to the bill sponsor, Representative Holland. A non-governmental organization that Representative Holland founded, Alaska Version 3, "... pushes economic reinvention through venture funds, often through very trendy projects, like renewables over proven industries," according to Mr. Huckleba. This involvement as well as Representative Holland's history with Alyeska Venture Management and the Alaska Accelerator Fund, leads Mr. Huckleba to believe that HB 153 would ultimately benefit "a clique of wealthy green energy entrepreneurs rather than everyday Alaskans." Mr. Huckleba then said, "Mr. Holland pitches this as progress, but it feels like a pet project leveraging his NGO network to force a one-size-fits-

all policy on a state that thrives on flexibility." Referencing earlier testimony, Mr. Huckleba opined that Representative Holland tended to misrepresent the cost and effect related to various projects around the globe, as according to Mr. Huckleba, Europe and particularly Germany are struggling to adjust to using renewable energy sources. Such struggles, Mr. Huckleba argued, would be replicated in Alaska should HB 153 be enacted. He also called for Representative Holland to be removed from the committee or continue to serve in a reduced capacity or perhaps be forced not to vote on the bill entirely. As to the motion on stakeholders, Mr. Huckleba saw such concerns as irrelevant, as the term "stakeholder" appears nowhere in either the U.S. or Alaska Constitutions, and asked for the cessation of stakeholder consultation from all legislative procedures.

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MICHAEL CRAFT, representing self, testified in support of HB 153. He noted that he is the owner and operator of the Delta Windfarm and the individual who "put the first [windfarm] on the Railbelt grid." In reference to Mr. Brailey's earlier testimony, Mr. Craft said that negotiating projects with utility companies is "a nightmare." To illustrate his reasoning for supporting HB 153, he said, "I'll tell you what the public here in Fairbanks is hearing: generation capacity shortages, fuel shortages, we're dealing with bad air quality, we're dealing with ash piles all over our community, and we're paying some of the highest costs for those privileges." Referencing a 2010 goal of having 50 percent of the state's power be generated by renewable energy sources by 2025, which had "no teeth to it," Mr. Craft remarked that "if we had done it, we would have 50 percent of our power coming from renewables right now." Addressing concerns on the kill rate of birds in windfarms and reliability, he said he has never found a dead bird in his windfarm. Further, he noted that the turbines have operated all the way down to -50 Fahrenheit consistently for over a decade with an annual output of four million kilowatt hours from one year to the next, which is very stable.

MR. CRAFT, addressing concerns about energy security, indicated he has witnessed gas shortages and oil shortages but claimed that that would never happen with a renewable energy project, because "those sources are available 24/7/365, although intermittent, granted." He offered his understanding that windmills give visitors "warm and fuzzy" feelings because "they know that the power they're using is clean and ... reliable." For these and other reasons, he said that these were the only

options for curtailing energy shortages. He concluded by proffering, "Anything that you can think of on a form of hydrocarbons, whether it's a pipeline or a new coal plant, is a decade or more out, and wind and solar is within twenty-four months."

[1:56:28 PM](#)

CHRIS ROSE, Director, Renewable Energy Alaska Project, testified in support of HB 153. He said that he does not see any other piece of legislation being proposed that deals with renewable energy policy in Alaska. In Southcentral Alaska where Mr. Rose lives, the region's approximately half a million inhabitants get at least 85 percent of their electricity from natural gas. He said the dependence on natural gas "has barely budged," despite the rise in price of almost 800 percent in the last 35 years. This is in large part because energy providers failed to diversify their means of energy production, according to Mr. Rose because, in part, "there are so many local decision-makers on a tiny grid." He stated that although local utilities have had plenty of warning and opportunities about this situation, "here we are" about to import liquified natural gas (LNG). He cited a 2009 Department of Natural Resources study that concluded the supply of Cook Inlet Natural Gas could be outstripped by demand as early as 2027. Despite several follow-up studies coming to similar conclusions, the utilities have not taken significant action on their dependence on similar resources. Mr. Rose then said that in 2010, Governor Sarah Palin signed into law a renewable energy generational target of 50 percent that was to be met in 2025, but because the legislation had "no teeth and set only aspirational goals, nothing happened." He brought this up not to lay blame on a politician or party, but to demonstrate that voluntary commitments to diversifying energy production in Alaska needed action. Citing local utility companies proposed negotiations to import liquified natural gas from Canada, he argued that Alaska was on the verge of becoming dependent on energy from another country rather than energy independent. He said that this gas would both initially be between 50 percent and 100 percent more expensive than currently used Cook Inlet natural gas and would be indexed to volatile international energy markets. This would not only impact gas and energy prices for Alaska, but would "not make this state a very attractive place to live, work, or invest."

MR. ROSE said that his organization believes in cooperation between the various utility companies on the Railbelt so they

can deliver better renewable energy projects. He said that the RPS provisions within HB 153 will help push utilities along the Railbelt of Alaska toward operating the grid together. To support his claim, Mr. Rose cited a commission study solicited by the Railbelt utility companies themselves which concluded that having multiple operators along the Railbelt power grid is costing consumers at least \$47 million a year. According to Mr. Rose, the RPS provisions in HB 153 are "not unique" and are "very doable" and would require the generation of "stably priced, locally sourced renewable energy." Thus, the RPS provisions in HB 153 would bring investment to the Railbelt region and signal that Alaska is open for business and attract more renewable energy projects according to Mr. Rose, "because today in the Railbelt, there is no market and there is no competition, and electricity prices are 50 percent higher than the rest of the country." Mr. Rose said that his organization doesn't believe Alaska can wait any longer to implement ambitious energy goals. He warned that without the legislation, "we are headed toward a truly uncertain future."

[1:59:59 PM](#)

AIDAN MACKINNON, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153, saying that the bill's provisions would force "unreliable energy onto our grid," raise costs, and threaten power stability for Alaskans. He also pointed to support from "outside groups" as a reason for his opposition. He said in response to these concerns, "... We need affordable, reliable energy, not mandates that punish rate payers." He concluded his testimony by urging the committee members to vote no on HB 153.

[2:00:40 PM](#)

CASSIE ANDREWS, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. She said the proposed legislation would force Alaska's energy co-ops to generate electricity from unreliable sources, such as wind and solar, "and the state should not be mandating that liability." She warned that HB 153 would hand co-op boards "an easy excuse," explaining that when the rates rise or blackouts happen, they'll just blame it on the state's mandate. She remarked that ratepayers are not seeking higher rates or more unreliability, but opined that is exactly what the proposed policy would deliver. Further reasons for Ms. Andrews' opposition came from Texas' implementation of RPS standards and centralized control with the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT). After the Texas Winter Storm Power Outage of 2021, according to Ms. Andrews, over 70 people died, billions of

dollars in energy production were lost, ERCOT faced class action lawsuits, and "the fallout continues." She said she believes that the State of Alaska "should be learning from disasters of centralized planning and mandates, not rushing to repeat them." She also stated that two days prior to this hearing, President Donald Trump issued executive orders curtailing provisions like those contained in HB 153. She stated, "If wind and solar were truly viable, the co-op boards could adopt them today, but they know the risks, so they want the state to give them cover." She concluded her testimony by urging the committee not to move HB 153 forward.

[2:02:56 PM](#)

SANTA CLAUS, representing self, testified in support of HB 153. He said he agreed with researchers who stated that RPS were a policy that encouraged investment certainty that may attract experienced independent power producers to compete. Because of this, according to Mr. Claus, this would provide utilities along the Railbelt with regulatory certainty and catalyze more cooperation between them to meet the standards within the provisions of HB 153. He said the RPS provisions within HB 153 would give a modicum of negotiating leverage that they currently lack, as it provided "sideboards to current LNG negotiations." He further stated that the Railbelt Region has great potential for renewable energy, and that the cost of such technology continues to decline. Mr. Claus also pointed to currently proposed renewable energy projects that if implemented could raise the rate of renewable energy production to 40 percent, as required by 2032 in the RPS standard. In turn, stimulating such energy resources could lead to the development of new industries and could stimulate new jobs, Mr. Claus argued. Further, he stated that localized energy production could keep Alaska's energy dollars within Alaska rather than having them flow to out-of-state or out-of-country providers. He concluded his testimony by encouraging the legislature to enact HB 153.

[2:04:36 PM](#)

JULIA INGA, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. She said that Alaskans "need power that works," not "fairy tales about wind and solar forced down our throats by clueless mandates." She also referenced a Presidential executive order, which she said would push against "state overreach" and "those who will step in to choke out reliable, affordable energy." She opined that the sources promoted by HB 153 are unreliable, unproven, too expensive, and would kill "the environment it

pretends to save" and leave us "in the dirt." Instead, Ms. Inga argued, Alaska should utilize its abundant natural resources, including oil, gas, and coal. She concluded her testimony by saying, "I expect you to ditch the hype and fight for what works. Alaska's counting on it. Prove that you are Alaskans first, not Alaskans last."

[2:06:07 PM](#)

MELISSA SWOPE, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. She argued that the RPS provisions within HB 153 would be wrong for the state. She advised that wind towers and solar panels were very site-specific energy sources, and would thus not be scalable for much of Alaska, with winters and erratic winds being cited as a key reason. For these and other reasons, Ms. Swope argued that renewable energy sources were unreliable. Instead, she argued in favor of small nuclear reactors, gas, and exploiting Alaska's coal sources, which "provide reliable power with less environmental harm." She also raised concerns about the costs of remote construction and battery storage, which she said would raise rates. Ms. Swope also said that the "convoluted credit system" would raise rates for ratepayers, as it forces utilities to buy credits that ultimately benefit out-of-state firms. Citing high kill rates for birds and other migratory species, she argued that implementing renewable energy would be an ecological disaster. She summarized her reasons for opposition by saying HB 153 "... pushes unproven technologies and bureaucratic non-sense over better options, stripping Alaskans of choice for outsider agendas." She concluded her testimony by urging the committee members to vote no on HB 153.

[2:08:40 PM](#)

MARCUS MOORE, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. He argued that HB 153 would be forcing unreliable wind and solar energy onto Alaska's energy grid, raising costs, and risking energy stability for Alaskans in the process. He pointed to the goals for transition to renewable energy listed in the bill, wherein 40 percent of all energy generated in Alaska would come from renewable sources by 2035 and 55 percent by 2040, but argued they were impractical, as currently 15 percent of energy generated in Alaska comes from renewable energy sources. Mr. Moore said that the same group supporting HB 153 were also the main organizers for a campaign to remove the Eklutna Dam, which contributed towards the 14 percent of renewable energy generated within Alaska by hydroelectricity. He questioned in response to this, "If hydro is considered a

renewable energy source, why aren't we focusing more on that? It's already 14 out of the 15 percent of our renewable energy currently." Mr. Moore said that the provisions under HB 153 would force energy co-ops to adopt renewable energy sources, which he sees as unreliable. To illustrate his point, he argued that wind was an intermittent power source and cited an energy shortage that occurred during the January 2024 cold snap when the Fire Island wind farm's energy output "fell to zero." As such resources are implemented, Mr. Moore argued, such intermittency issues would increase, as "... we're already seeing rolling blackouts across Anchorage, Eagle River, and Mat-Su."

MR. MOORE stated that the financial burden to ratepayers is undeniable. He said that a co-op study on the effects of the provisions of HB 153 found that if providers missed the deadlines for transition within HB 153, the result would be a \$45 per megawatt hour shortfall. He pointed to previous testimony of Representative Holland and members of his staff that such expenses would ultimately fall to ratepayers. To illustrate the point, he stated, "For Hospitals using 10,000 megawatt hours annually, a 20 percent shortfall means hundreds of thousand dollar fines every year. For residential homes, that's hundreds of dollars more." He further argued that HB 153 and its provisions were not driven by Alaskan's, but by out-of-state climate activists, non-governmental organizations, and groups like the Alaska Venture Fund and the Bezos Earth Fund. Mr. Moore said, "It seems like you're prioritizing their agenda over our needs, repackaging this renewable portfolio standard ... as a solution to the gas crisis. It's just insanity trying to do the same thing over and over again expecting different results." He argued for more reliable, stable, and affordable energy sources, "not mandates that push rate payers and force utilities to destabilize our grid." He concluded his testimony by urging the committee members to reject HB 153 and instead focus on hydroelectric projects and clean coal.

[2:11:26 PM](#)

DOUG JOHNSON, Director of Development, Ocean Renewable Power Co., testified in support of HB 153 because he believes that renewable energy is really part of Alaska's energy future. He added that it is not a question of "if" [the state] is moving to renewables, it's "when and how." He indicated that the source for hydrocarbons is not limitless; while there are plenty of oil and gas reserves that could and should still be developed, "over time, it is going to be more and more important for ... new

technologies to find our way forward." He noted that in his current position as development director, he plays a critical role in the Cook Inlet Tidal Energy Project. He said that a bill like HB 153 was imperative to ensuring that renewable energy developers have a "clarity of clear line of sight to the future for investors to step up and invest in projects like ours." He said the RPS provisions under HB 153 would set up "a clear playing field for investment" and the proposed legislation could serve as a framework for "a bright energy future for Alaska."

[2:13:38 PM](#)

MARK MASTELLER, representing self, testified in support of HB 153. Though he currently sits on the board of the Matanuska Electric Association and does some work for the Alaska Center for Energy and Power, he wanted to be clear that he was speaking only for himself during his testimony. He also stated that he spent 25 years working in the building science and energy efficiency fields, which included 10 years in the University of Alaska Sustainable Energy Program. Drawing from this experience, he said the proposed legislation would help conserve Cook Inlet gas resources for when renewable energy is not available and provide regulation for variable power from wind and solar. With the establishment of the Railbelt Reliability Resource Council, HB 153 would also assist in integrative resource planning. He also argued that the provisions under HB 153 would help stabilize the rates for electricity by encouraging the development of projects that don't have recurring fuel costs. These would likely include, according to Mr. Masteller, projects that would utilize hydroelectric, geothermal, and tidal power sources. Mr. Masteller also argued that the provisions of HB 153 would encourage utilities along the Railbelt Region to continue cooperating regarding the development of said resources. This would have a positive effect on rate payers and PCE rates within the state of Alaska, according to Mr. Masteller. He also said that when one looks at similar legislation in other jurisdictions, those with RSP provisions enacted into law not only meet their renewable energy production goals early but continue to increase their renewable energy generation capacity after said goals are met. In conclusion, he expressed his hope that the members of the committee will continue to support HB 153.

[2:15:37 PM](#)

BEN MAY, CEO & Founder, Alaska Solar, testified in support of HB 153. He primarily focused on the double energy credit provision for residential and commercial generation within HB 153. He cited this provision as what made HB 153 "a jobs bill," as the bill's provisions would ensure the construction of renewable energy infrastructure "built by Alaskans for Alaskans," which would ensure that more Alaskans stay within the state the money involved stays in the state. He also said that HB 153 has great synergy with a separate annual metering bill that was making its way through the legislature at the time, as the annual profit from the metering would make power generation much more profitable to the customer and thus conserve more natural gas and address the ongoing gas crisis and associated rate raise. He clarified that currently, power along the Railbelt of Alaska from his company is generated at a rate of 12 to 14 cents per kWh, whereas most other utilities charge for fossil fuel generated electricity at 20 to 25 cents per kWh. Mr. May argued that solar energy is less expensive and reliable. He drew on his experience founding and operating a solar company in Alaska by saying, "With over 10 years of history and over 700 customers, all of our systems are operational; all of them. It takes very little maintenance; it is very little trouble; solar panels are very simple; it's a lab made glass; they just keep working; there's no moving parts." In conclusion, he stated that Alaska needed a diversified, "shotgun" solution to meet its energy needs and to lower costs for Alaskans. He encouraged the members of the committee to support HB 153.

[2:18:08 PM](#)

AMANDA GARVEY, Sunstone Electric, testified in support of HB 153. Ms. Garvey stated that she has a background in mechanical engineering and wastewater management and is an energy auditor. She stated that her company is a small, Alaska Native-owned, electrical contracting firm, with work in over two hundred communities throughout Alaska in residential, commercial, and industrial work. While her firm has done conventional "hard generation," they have been recently expanding into contracting work for renewable energy production and battery storage. Ms. Garvey said she didn't know if people quite understood the flexibility within the proposed legislation's provisions. She explained that HB 153 would not specifically mandate that utilities invest in renewable energy sources, but would allow flexibility in how goals or standards are met, whether through energy efficient projects, net metering programs, purchasing from an independent power producer (IPP), or purchasing credits. Further, the bill offers flexibility in terms of how utilities

will meet the standards they outline for renewable energy, and there also would be standards for affordability.

MS. GARVEY, in response to comments made during previous testimony about renewable energy projects elsewhere in the U.S. and abroad, advised that Texas is now the leading adopter of solar and wind energy production and battery storage production since its enactment of RPS legislation in 1999 and has exceeded its goals for renewable energy transition quickly. Further she referenced a statement from the Dallas Federal Reserve, which stated the adoption of battery technology has greatly stabilized the state's grid and that such technology would help enhance capacity when it came to mining cryptocurrency and the construction and operation of data centers. To some of the concerns raised about Germany's transition to renewable energy, Ms. Garvey said that as a member of the Cross Arctic Exchange Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, she has access to information surrounding renewable energy production infrastructure projects. Speaking to some of the information she has received on said projects, Ms. Garvey said:

I think we missed a lot of the successful projects, like this one geothermal project, which is now solvent, and they can now take on large capital expenditure projects without requiring nonrepayable public funding, and they have a forty-mile-long district heating system. The low and stable cost of energy there, and heating, has spurred the development of several international industries, including aluminum smelting and other industrial manufacturing, and they have a population about half of Alaska's.

MS. GARVEY said the impact of such renewable energy projects in Alaska would be that places like Unalaska can attract larger industrial customers and provide a lower cost of energy from sources like geothermal fuel. She further stated that Homer Electric Association currently produces hydroelectric power at a rate of four cents per kWh, but the community's reliance on natural gas make residential rates higher. She concluded her testimony by stating that well-designed, renewable energy projects in Alaska have been shown to be extremely reliable.

[2:22:12 PM](#)

TODD LINDLEY, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. He said that the committee members spoke of the provisions within HB 153 as if utility boards were committed to a future

reliant on renewable energy. Mr. Lindley said he did not believe this is representative of energy co-op membership. He said it was "quite a coincidence that every utility board adopted decarbonization goals and supports an RPS to be less reliable and more expensive against their fiduciary duty." Mr. Lindley argued that HB 153 would "legalize environmental racketeering off the backs of every Railbelt ratepayer." He further stated that claims of renewable energy being cheaper to produce than conventional sources is "incompetence and negligence with the intent to defraud the public and extort the utilities." In conclusion, he asked that HB 153 be "removed from the ledger" because he warned it "would do more harm and impose additional economic hardship throughout the state" if enacted.

[2:23:23 PM](#)

KEN GRIFFIN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. He started his testimony by stating that he was a small business owner, volunteered in the community, donated money, and was a taxpayer. He then stated that the government has "no sovereign right, no constitutional powers to mandate how a private business makes its power, nor where the consumer buys it from." Stating that the provisions under HB 153 were not about climate change and have never been, he said that the kinds of energy sources promoted under HB 153 were "completely unreliable." Mr. Griffin continued:

It's ridiculous to think that the state feels like it has the power to tell citizens to take a substandard way of life, or choice of power, at a higher cost simply because they're the government and they can do so. They call that "raison-d'etat"; the idea that the state has the might, so the state has the right. Well, you don't, you don't have that right.

MR. GRIFFIN further opined that the notion that the state had the right to be involved in energy markets was "ridiculous" and "offensive." Mr. Griffin questioned how ratepayers were supposed to defend their rights. He talked about two rules of economics: capital flowing toward economics or capital flowing toward government mandates. He likened HB 153 to socialism. He cautioned about the cost of replacing and disposal of such resources and infrastructure as a reason for his opposition, and he referred to "thousands of white papers" he said people testifying were ignoring. He said the state should be focused on producing "cheap and affordable" power, and he mentioned

blackouts and life-threatening loss of power during severe weather.

[2:26:58 PM](#)

PENNY GAGE, Chief Policy & Partnership Officer, Launch Alaska, testified in support of HB 153. Though the organization did prepare a written statement, Ms. Gage chose to give her own oral testimony. She stated that she started her career in the oil and gas industry and what drew her to the sector was how important it was to the lives of everyday citizens. She said that her organization thinks that HB 153 "represents a smart, forward-looking policy that can drive job creation, attract private investment, and help lower long-term energy costs for Alaskans." Ms. Gage said that her organization represents 41 companies, that have generated over 77 new jobs across 90 projects since its founding. Since 2020, Ms. Gage said that her organization has supported climate technology ("tech") related projects with \$754 million in investments. Her organization works with rural and urban communities, utilities, start-ups, and other industry partners, which are "ready to deploy clean energy technology" and simply need market certainty. The RPS provisions under HB 153, Ms. Gage argued, would give utilities, entrepreneurs, and investors the confidence to invest, plan, and innovate. She also cited the lowering of costs for renewable energy and battery storage and the rising cost of natural gas as another reason for her organization's support. Further, she said the bill presents "a chance for Alaska to lead in energy independence and innovation, not just react to economic pressure, but to shape our own energy future." Thus, HB 153, according to Ms. Gage, aligns with her organization's mission to "strengthen our energy, transportation, and industrial sectors through innovation." In conclusion, she urged members of the legislature to pass HB 153 and "unlock economic opportunities that benefit all of Alaska."

[2:29:08 PM](#)

AURORA ROTH, representing self, testified in support of HB 153. She said that because Railbelt utilities are often dependent on Natural Gas, energy prices within the region are subject to global price fluctuations, even when Natural Gas is sourced from Cook Inlet. Because of this, energy prices along the Railbelt have increased 800% over her lifetime (she was 42 years old at the time of her testimony). Renewable Energy sources can, according to Ms. Roth, be locally owned and sourced with stable pricing as they do not have any associated fuel costs. Though

she did concede that initial capital investment in renewables is quite high, she argued that once operations commence, prices for power generated from renewable energy sources are often lower and are more stable than those based on coal or natural gas. The result is, according to Ms. Roth, that utilities are not dependent on coal and natural gas, " ... any way we siphon it." She stated that her reasons for support were indicated by the fact that utilities have been looking for the best ways to integrate renewable energy sources into their grids in recent years, as this was speaking to renewables being sources of " ... reliable and affordable energy." The RPS provisions within HB 153 would provide the structure and incentive for investing in renewable energy projects, and because they would also apply to independent power producers, this would increase competition along the grids in the Railbelt and be of benefit for the consumer, Ms. Roth argued. Without such provisions, Ms. Roth argued that the energy situation in the Railbelt region would likely continue to be one dominated by rising gas and energy costs and a lack of innovation to utilize new technologies. She noted that these technologies " ... work all across the globe, including in other cold climates." Thus, she stressed the importance of utilizing renewable energy technology for the benefit of all Alaskans. In response to arguments about government involvement in the energy system, Ms. Roth said that the US Federal Government already subsidizes the oil and gas industry through tax credits and other means which renewable energy markets have had to fight against. Thus, such support for renewable energy production is not unique to the energy industry, according to Ms. Roth. She concluded her testimony by urging the members of the committee to support HB 153 and thanking the committee members for their time and hard work.

[2:31:23 PM](#)

ED MARSHALL, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 153. As a proponent of "free choice and free markets" and a republic that governs "as close to our houses as we can," he said that utilities are governed by the votes of the ratepayers. In reference to efforts for utilities to adopt methods of renewable energy generation, he shared that he is "all for lobbyists who want to go to utilities and convince them that this is the path forward." He then argued that if renewable energy production were "as good as advertised," it would not take long for utilities to adopt such methods. Mr. Marshall said that the legislature's efforts to enact the provisions under HB 153 lead him to believe that the bill allowed the legislature to say that "it's not a tax; it's a fine," basically

covering for the utility "so they later go buy renewables from the lobbyists that have called in today, advertising how great this is and that they want the state to advertise for them."

MR. MARSHALL recommended the state focus on developing its oil and gas industry in order to lower energy prices. He expressed doubt over the provisions within HB 153, saying, in reference to Representative Holland's earlier comments on the decline in the cost for renewable energy production, that "if that's the case, let the utilities, who are voted for by their users, make that decision." He also stated that there would be potential for litigation on constitutional grounds over the provisions of HB 153, stating that due to the state's current budgetary difficulties, it would not be within its interests to enact HB 153. He further recommended that Representative Holland and others who testified in support of HB 153 put a ballot initiative for local energy co-op boards. However, until that opportunity arrives, Mr. Marshall argued that it was not the state's business to incentivize renewable energy production within the state of Alaska.

[2:34:58 PM](#)

PATRICE LEE, representing self, testified in support of HB 153. She said in Fairbanks, Alaska, the majority of power generation comes from facilities that are old, dirty, at the end of their operational lives, and unreliable. While she was the coordinator of the group Citizens for Clean Air, she wanted to associate with other testifiers in support of HB 153 from the Interior Region of Alaska. She stated that many of those who testified against HB 153 were confused between the ability of renewable energy sources to offset energy and to provide baseload power. To clarify what she thought was the source of this confusion, Ms. Lee said, "Nobody is saying that solar and wind are going to become ... the baseload power. What they are saying is that ... renewable sources are available to offset our subsistence generation." Further elaborating on her points, Ms. Lee said that Hawai'i was "paying attention" to Alaska's debate on renewable energy transition goals in 2010, and as a result set a goal for 50 percent of its energy needs to be generated from renewable energy sources by 2025. She said that not only has Hawai'i met that goal, "they are doing beautifully, wonderfully." Ms. Lee said Alaska has wind in the winter and solar in the summer, and harnessing such resources is "proven everywhere."

MS. LEE said that she found it disconcerting that people discount renewable sources, saying that Fairbanks experiences rolling brown-outs and black-outs and does not have enough power generation to have a reliable source, thus needs "something to offset that." She also argued that the RPS provisions under HB 153 would provide businesses with a reliable standard so that they can set their own goals for renewable energy transition. Further, many of the ideas contained within the bill have been entertained "for fifteen to twenty years." Ms. Lee further elaborated on her reasons for supporting HB 153 by saying that Fairbanks, which experiences temperatures of -40 and -50 degrees Fahrenheit, will be "in a world of hurt" if it do doesn't "do something different." She also cited the health effects of fossil fuel energy generation and that cost analyses of such generation have yet to take such expenses into account. Ms. Lee then asked, "Clean coal, what is that? We have coal ash all over this town." She concluded her testimony by asking, "If we're not going to ... move forwards and take advantage of offsetting our power generation with renewables, then what is it we're going to do?"

[2:38:20 PM](#)

BEN BOETTGER, Energy Specialist, Cook Inlet Keeper, testified in support of HB 153. He stated that no one should be surprised that natural gas and the energy generated by it have become more expensive and less reliable. In reference to Mr. Rose's earlier testimony, he said that utilities on their own have not made "timely or proactive steps to diversify power," and it is the legislature's responsibility to incentivize that transition to renewable energy. Mr. Boettger further elaborated that even if utilities were to move toward renewables for gas conservation without a legislative standard, the RPS standard still encourages better outcomes by requiring the utilities to coordinate their renewable investment plans through the community resource plan and provide incentives for shared wind resources. To elaborate on his point, he referenced a statement by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory saying that wind energy was an important part of an economically profitable power grid. Stating that renewable energy is capital intensive and has a great variability in economy of scale, he said that the provisions under HB 153 would be great for utilities, investors, and ratepayers by providing clear and definite milestones for energy transition. Mr. Boettger remarked that there was a "well-documented history of cost to consumers whenever a Railbelt utility fails to meet their investment," which he stated the RPS would help with, by helping utilities to switch

to renewables and thus stabilize rates. He further argued that even if market forces would move utilities to adopt renewable energy sources, the provisions within HB 153 would still be beneficial, as it would help utilities with planning, coordination, and cost to consumers. In conclusion, he urged committee members to support the bill.

[2:40:15 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR MEARS, after ascertaining there was no one else who wished to testify, closed testimony on HB 153.

[2:40:33 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER asked if the committee would hear from utilities on the provisions of HB 153 before the bill would move out of committee.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND noted that utilities were still deliberating on the provisions of HB 153. He deferred to his staff to offer further comment.

MS. KILCOYNE said that Representative Holland's staff were working closely with utilities throughout the process.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND suggested the utilities may be ready to make comment by the time the bill is heard in the next committee of referral. In response to a follow-up question from Representative Rauscher, he said that the underlying work for RPS has been done within the legislature and across the country for many years; the framework was "pretty solid" in regards to constitutionality. He proffered another factor to consider is that the first threshold for compliance is set to be reported in 2032; therefore, in terms of questions of constitutionality, should court proceedings take years to complete, the legislature could have time to explore the potential for conflict between HB 153 and the Alaska Constitution.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER then commented that Alaska is one of few states that have co-ops [in terms of utilities].

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND then commented that members of the legislature had been receiving lengthy legal memorandums ("memos") on HB 153, and there might be more information regarding Representative Rauscher's questions within them.

CO-CHAIR MEARS described the legislative legal checks and balances for bills the committee addresses.

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLAND then asked Ms. Kilcoyne if there were any memos that his staff had received that that indicated constitution issues with HB 153 or the current Committee Substitution.

MS. KILCOYNE, in response to Representative Holland, confirmed that the sponsor's office has not received any legal memos stating concern about the constitutionality of HB 153.

[2:45:48 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR MEARS then stated that the committee was planning for additional testimony on HB 153, with the next meeting scheduled for Tuesday April 15th at 1:00pm. She encouraged members of the public to submit testimony via email.

[2:46:33 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR MEARS announced HB 153 was held over.

[2:46:51 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Energy meeting was adjourned at 2:46 p.m.