

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ENERGY**

March 10, 2026

1:02 p.m.

DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Ky Holland, Co-Chair
Representative Donna Mears, Co-Chair
Representative Chuck Kopp
Representative DeLena Johnson
Representative Justin Ruffridge
Representative Mia Costello

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Bryce Edgmon

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

PRESENTATION(S) : ALASKA ENERGY AUTHORITY

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

CURTIS THAYER, Executive Director
Alaska Energy Authority
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave a presentation, titled "Alaska Energy Authority."

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:03:00 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR KY HOLLAND called the House Special Committee on Energy meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Representatives Kopp, Costello, Mears, and Holland were present at the call to order. Representatives Johnson and Ruffridge arrived as the meeting was in progress.

PRESENTATION(S) : ALASKA ENERGY AUTHORITY

1:04:08 PM

CO-CHAIR HOLLAND announced that the only order of business would be the Alaska Energy Authority presentation.

1:04:51 PM

CURTIS THAYER, Executive Director, Alaska Energy Authority (AEA), gave a presentation titled "Alaska Energy Authority," via PowerPoint [hard copy included in the committee packet]. He began the presentation on slide 2, which gave a broad overview of the services and programs offered by the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA).

1:08:33 PM

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON asked Mr. Thayer to describe the role of the AEA in power cost equalization (PCE) and further questioned how the PCE endowment worked.

MR. THAYER answered that the Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) would work to establish a going rate for Kilowatt Hours (kWh) for the AEA to "dispense" to communities. He explained that the PCE endowment fund cost the AEA roughly \$46 million annually.

1:11:28 PM

REPRESENTATIVE COSTELLO asked Mr. Thayer to further detail the Circuit Rider program within the AEA.

MR. THAYER replied that there were four individuals working within the AEA to ensure the success of the Circuit Rider program and detailed the difficult working conditions of the employees in that program.

1:13:51 PM

MR. THAYER resumed the presentation on slide 3, which delivered a funding status overview of the money needed to fund both the Cook Inlet PowerLink (CIPLink) and the Bradley Lake expansion project.

1:15:55 PM

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON asked Mr. Thayer to highlight "valuable opportunities" for the Alaska State Legislature (ASL) to focus on.

[1:17:15 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KOPP asked what the "pre-construction costs" were for the projects before the AEA.

MR. THAYER explained that the process to begin the Bradley Lake Expansion Project began in 2022, and he detailed the various agencies and logistics required of a project before a project may begin construction.

[1:19:57 PM](#)

MR. THAYER picked up the presentation on slide 4, which greatly detailed the status of the funding, permitting, and construction of the Bradley Lake Expansion Project. He moved to slide 5, which displayed a bar graph that outlined the construction cost timeline of the Bradley Lake Expansion Project.

[1:22:56 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON asked about the bar graph displayed on slide 5.

MR. THAYER answered that he would follow-up later with information from a study on the economic impacts of the Bradley Lake Expansion Project completed by Northern Economics.

[1:25:11 PM](#)

MR. THAYER resumed the presentation on slide 6, which greatly detailed the status of the funding, permitting, and construction of the CIPLink. He moved to slide 7, which displayed a bar graph that outlined the construction cost timeline of the CIPLink and continued to slide 8, which highlighted the four logistical, financing, and legal partners that the AEA was working with in the furtherance of the two projects mentioned in the presentation before the committee. He moved to slide 9, which detailed the five potential financial partners that the AEA was looking to move forward with in the furtherance of the CIPLink and Bradley Lake Expansion Project.

[1:34:36 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HOLLAND asked if there were any additional funding opportunities for the AEA coming from the ASL and asked what the delivered cost of power might be for the projects being discussed before the committee.

MR. THAYER answered that there was not currently any ask of the ASL from the AEA and said that he would follow-up later with regard to Co-Chair Holland's second question.

[1:37:22 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON suggested that the projects being proposed by the AEA might be "impossible" to complete with the existing infrastructure in Alaska.

MR. THAYER explained that it would not currently be economically feasible to construct a new generator at Bradley Lake to make up for infrastructure needs and said that the AEA was instead working to maximize the efficiency of existing power plants.

[1:40:07 PM](#)

MR. THAYER resumed the presentation on slide 10, which gave a broad overview of the investment tax credits that the AEA was working to utilize in the furtherance of its proposed projects.

[1:41:43 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HOLLAND asked for further clarification on how each different type of tax credit would impact the ratepayer.

MR. THAYER answered that the U.S. Department of Energy would prefer to lend money to a project and said that the AEA was "trying to figure out where that [funding] stack is."

[1:42:44 PM](#)

MR. THAYER picked up the presentation on slide 11, which detailed the Railbelt transmission overview (RTO) and its role in energy distribution to Railbelt communities. He moved to slide 12, which spoke to the renewable energy fund (REF) and its fiscal impact on projects in Alaska and continued through slides 13-14 which greatly detailed the recommended projects that the REF put its assistance towards.

[1:48:13 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS shared that she would like for the committee to have a discussion about the funding recommendations for the AEA that it would have to make to the ASL.

MR. THAYER offered to speak to the funding issue with the Southeast Alaska Power Agency (SEAPA) and explained that the AEA gave a lower-than-normal funding recommendation for the organization because the project that funding was sought for was a hydropower project.

1:53:13 PM

CO-CHAIR HOLLAND asked if there was any federal match funding at risk if REF monies were to be utilized in the furtherance of an AEA project and asked if there was a way for the ASL to more efficiently finance projects proposed by the AEA.

MR. THAYER answered that the REF would not jeopardize any federal funding and instead posed an opportunity to leverage funding need to the federal government. He explained that the REF was causing for 13 million gallons of diesel to be saved annually and said that it was up to the ASL to make a policy call to help the AEA further its proposed projects.

1:56:50 PM

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE asked how many units of energy were being created by each of the projects constructed and proposed by the AEA. He asked if there were any communities in Alaska that had discontinued their use of diesel as a result of the REF and asked what the best prospective option for renewable energy in rural Alaska was.

MR. THAYER said that he would follow-up later with an answer from a study done by Northern Economics and said that any community that had moved off of diesel completely had primarily shifted toward hydropower. He said that micro nuclear energy was the best renewable energy solution for rural communities in Alaska.

2:01:34 PM

CO-CHAIR HOLLAND added his understanding that it might be effective to judge a prospective project by its impact on natural gas use.

MR. THAYER said that the AEA was tracking the "displacement" of natural gas by renewable energy projects.

[2:02:46 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COSTELLO asked if projects were evaluated by their "displacement" on natural gas use in any given area of the state.

MR. THAYER confirmed that the AEA did make that judgement before a project was approved.

[2:04:12 PM](#)

MR. THAYER resumed the presentation on slide 15, which gave a broad overview of existing and proposed rural energy infrastructure in Alaska.

[2:05:00 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HOLLAND asked if the AEA was involved in the creation of definitions and standards for the "man camps" needed in the construction of the proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) pipeline.

MR. THAYER said that the AEA was not involved in the creation of definitions and standards for the man camps needed for the construction of the proposed LNG pipeline.

[2:07:24 PM](#)

MR. THAYER picked up the presentation on slide 16, which detailed federal funding for bulk fuel infrastructure being utilized in Rural Alaska.

[2:10:47 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON asked about the process and construction of bulk fuel sites in rural Alaska.

MR. THAYER answered that bulk fuel sites are usually built elsewhere and shipped into a community.

[2:12:06 PM](#)

MR. THAYER continued the presentation on slide 17, which listed the current and pending federal funding award applications and

concluded the presentation on slide 18, which spoke to the AEA Circuit Rider program.

[2:15:11 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON asked about the Circuit Rider's work in Port Haiden and thanked Mr. Thayer for his presentation and the work of the AEA.

MR. THAYER shared that there were various reasons a community might have differing equipment needs and told a personal story that impacted the energy infrastructure in a community in Alaska.

[2:16:59 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE asked why "renewable diesel" wasn't being utilized more in diesel-heavy rural communities and asked what projects were eligible for REF monies.

MR. THAYER said that most communities in Alaska do not have the buy-in to upgrade their infrastructure and get away from diesel energy. He said that any project that was not fossil-fuel based was eligible for the utilization of REF monies.

[2:20:05 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE COSTELLO asked if the REF eligibility list included nuclear energy.

MR. THAYER answered that he would follow up with more information later.

[2:20:56 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR HOLLAND thanked the invited testifier and delivered committee announcements.

[2:21:52 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Energy meeting was adjourned at 2:21 p.m.