Offered: 4/15/85
Referred: Rules

Original sponsors: Clocksin, Collins, Davis, et al

1 IN THE HOUSE BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 162 (Finance)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to public utility consumer represen-

7 tation; and providing for an effective date."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 * Section 1. AS 44.23 is amended by adding a new section to read:

10 Sec. 44.23.070. PUBLIC UTILITY CONSUMER REPRESENTATION. (a) A

11 public utility consumer representation section is established in the

12 Department of Law.

13 (b) The attorney general shall appoint one or more attorneys to

14 operate the section. An appointee shall be familiar with public

15 utility regulation and practice before public utility regulatory

16 commissions. An appointment is for a three-year renewable term. An

17 appointee may not be removed from service, nor may an appointee's

18 salary be reduced, during a term except for good cause shown.

19 (c) The budget of the section shall be set out as an independent

20 sub-program or element of the Department of Law budget submitted by

21 the governor under the Executive Budget Act (AS 37.07). The section's

22 proposed budget shall provide for expert witness fees and other costs

23 of participating in regulatory proceedings in an amount adequate to

24 allow the section to effectively represent residential public utility

25 consumers.

26 (d) The section may

27 (1) initiate, intervene as a party in, or otherwise partic-

28 ipate in a hearing or other proceeding involving a public utility for

29 the purpose of representing the interests of residential public

1 utility consumers in the proceeding if the section determines that the
2 result of the proceeding may substantially affect the interests of
3 those consumers;
4 (2) maintain an action for judicial review of decisions of
5 a public utility regulatory agency and intervene or otherwise partici-
6 pate in civil proceedings involving review or enforcement of a public
7 utility regulatory agency action that the section determines may
8 substantially affect the interests of residential consumers;
9 (3) select and contract for the services of consultants and
10 experts to assist the section in the preparation and presentation of
11 matters before agencies, commissions, offices or courts;
12 (4) initiate public education and public reports in the
13 news media to protect and represent public utility consumer interests;
14 (5) have access, during normal business hours, to the
15 records of state agencies that are not classified by law as confiden-
16 tial;
17 (6) conduct discovery necessary to perform the duties set
18 out in this section; and
19 (7) organize community advisory groups in areas affected by
20 public utility regulatory actions.
21 (e) The section shall submit an annual report to the governor
22 and the legislature at the beginning of each regular session of the
23 legislature summarizing the activities of the section in the previous
24 fiscal year.
25 (f) In this section
26 (1) "public utility" has the meaning given in AS 42.05.720;
27 (2) "public utility consumer" means a residential customer
28 of a public utility;
29 (3) "section" means the public utility consumer

1 representation section in the Department of Law.

2 * Sec. 2. This Act takes effect July 1, 1985.