

Create Alaska's Energy Savings Center

*One of Three Priorities for Enhancing Alaska's Quality of Life and
Protecting a Healthy Environment*

The Need

Despite the recent drop in oil prices, most Alaska residents still view the cost of energy as a major issue, especially given how volatile energy costs can be. High energy costs can negatively impact Alaskan homeowners, renters, businesses and industry. The 2008 *Energy Efficiency Program and Policy Recommendations* report, published by the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), highlights the fact that “[c]onservation and efficiency increases are by far the most effective means of reducing cost, reducing emissions and reducing fuel usage. The beauty of increasing efficiency is we can start today.” Unfortunately, as of 2006 Alaska ranked only 41st on the State Energy Efficiency Scorecard put out by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy. By failing to address the demand side of the energy equation, Alaska is failing to take advantage of the cheapest, cleanest and often simplest way to meet Alaska's energy needs.

The AEA/AHFC report made a number of recommendations, including education, marketing, outreach, workshops and events for residential, commercial and industrial users, residential and commercial electrical audits, “Pay as You Save” or other financing programs, a Smart Meter program and commercial energy efficient equipment rebates. Many of the recommendations have already been implemented, like the \$300 million for AHFC's weatherization and energy efficiency program passed by the legislature last year. Alaska's existing energy efficiency policies and programs are located in a variety of state agencies including AHFC, AEA, DEC, DOT/PF, OMB, UA and many others. There needs to be a central location where Alaskan residents, businesses and industries can easily find relevant efficiency programs. A ‘one-stop-shopping-center,’ like the proposed Alaska Energy Savings Center, is the necessary tool with which to focus and coordinate the statewide effort for energy efficiency.

The Proposal

ACA proposes the creation of the Alaska Energy Savings Center to deliver a comprehensive array of renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation programs and services to Alaska's residential, commercial and industrial sectors. The Energy Savings Center would be responsible for public education and outreach, distribution of rebate and incentive programs, facilitating electrical energy audits, developing financing mechanisms and other effective best practices. A helpful model is the Energy Trust of Oregon, www.energytrust.org. Another important role for the Energy Savings Center would be to integrate new programs into existing programs, such as adding electrical energy audits to the AHFC weatherization audits.

The Benefits

- Distribution of renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation programs and services for Alaska's residential, commercial and industrial sectors.
- Providing a resource for energy efficiency outreach, programs, services, and research in Alaska.
- Helps Alaska reach the goals set out in the AEA/AHFC Alaska Energy Efficiency Program and Policy Recommendations report.
- Acts as a bridge between the 2008 energy rebate and longer-term stably priced renewable energy.

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2009 ACA Priority
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