

Sponsor Statement for SB 392 Regulatory Commission of Alaska

Last year's [Executive Order 111](#) transferred the responsibility for advocacy on behalf of the public in utility matters before the Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) from the RCA to the attorney general, and established the public advocacy function within the Department of Law (DOL). [AS 42.23.020](#)(e). As a result, RCA personnel historically responsible for public advocacy now act under the authority and direction of the DOL. This bill completes the prior transfer of authority by expressly providing for various aspects of its execution.

[SB 392](#) clarifies that regulatory cost charge receipts (not general fund) will continue to pay for the general costs of public advocacy now administered by the DOL, just as those receipts historically paid for public advocacy costs when the function was performed by RCA personnel.

The bill also adjusts the regulatory cost charge ceiling and creates two, distinct percentages of total regulatory cost charge receipts to separately fund the RCA and the DOL public advocacy function in order to provide each entity with budgetary independence from the other.

SB 392 also provides the DOL with qualified access to utility or pipeline carrier records similar to that afforded the RCA's former public advocacy staff in order to maintain efficient and economical access to information where the RCA has determined that comprehensive review and hearing is appropriate.

Finally, the bill clarifies that state agencies are exempt from paying the allocated costs of RCA proceedings to which the state agency is a party because there is no net fiscal benefit to the state in doing so.