

Sponsor Statement

House Bill 32

A grant to Arctic Power to promote opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) for Oil and Gas Development.

House Bill 32 appropriates \$1,200,000 from the General Fund to Arctic Power for use in promoting the opening of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) by Congress for oil and gas development. The legislation includes a General Fund appropriation of \$100,000 to the native village of Kaktovik for their community outreach effort to gain support for the opening of the refuge.

With declining oil revenues, it is imperative Alaska develops new fields. ANWR is the best prospect for future oil and gas development in the state and nation, and the U.S. Interior Department considers the Coastal Plain within ANWR to have the highest potential for discovery of significant oil and gas accumulations in North America, with an estimated 10,000,000,000 barrels of recoverable oil.

This appropriation will assist in reaching that goal of opening the region. In addition, oil and gas exploration and development of the Coastal Plain and adjacent land could result in major unforeseen discoveries that would help reduce our country's future need for imported oil, help balance the nation's trade deficit, and improve our national security.

Arctic Power will use this funding to advocate to Congress the importance of oil and gas production from Alaska's North Slope, demonstrate our state's history of environmentally responsible resource development, and convey the overwhelming support that exists among Alaskans and many Americans for opening ANWR.

Arctic Power is a non-profit private group that has been in existence for 12 years. They have received previous state funding for their efforts, including raising private funds to supplement their budget needs. The existing window of opportunity to open ANWR is considered the best in years, given the current make up of Congress in both the House and Senate, as well as the President's support of development in the refuge.