

Alaska State Legislature

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Senate Finance Committee

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Bill Would Fund ANWR Education

(JUNEAU) – The Senate Finance Committee introduced Senate Bill 95 on Friday that would grant Arctic Power \$1.5 million for educating Americans and lobbying for opening ANWR to responsible oil development.

“Unfortunately, many Americans do not understand the facts about opening ANWR,” said Senator Dave Donley (R-Anchorage), Co-Chair of the Senate Finance Committee. “We need to show people that the resources in ANWR can be safely extracted without destroying the ecosystem. It is crucial that people across the U.S. know about the technological advances that allow development to be done in a much less intrusive manner.”

The vast majority of Alaskans want ANWR open for development. With the election of President Bush, the political climate is the best it’s ever been. Now is the time to push to make this happen.

- The current energy situation in the lower 48 shows the necessity for the nation to have access to more resources. Currently more than 55% of the oil used in the U.S. comes from foreign countries.
- The state is looking for alternative revenue sources. The revenues from bids, leases, and royalties alone could bring hundreds of millions of dollars into the State’s general fund as well as the Permanent Fund.
- Alaskans need jobs. It is estimated that development on the coastal plain would result in an additional 250,000 to 735,000 jobs across the state.
- Less than 10% of the refuge is being considered for development; the vast majority would remain untouched.

Who better to provide this education than Alaskans who have joined together towards this common goal? Arctic Power is a non-profit citizen’s organization made up of individuals from all walks of life. Its membership includes miners, fishermen, loggers, tourism operators, transportation businesses, labor unions, teachers, attorneys, private businesses, Native corporations, non-profit organizations and elected officials. A statewide board consisting from representing all regions of the state, from Barrow to Ketchikan, oversees Arctic Power’s activities.

This organization is committed to securing congressional and presidential approval of opening ANWR. It has gained the endorsement of the Alaska congressional delegation, Governor Knowles and the Legislature and works closely with their offices.

“We need to get the message out, and get it out correctly, that opening ANWR is of great benefit to Alaskans and the entire country and that it can be done in an environmentally friendly manner,” said Donley.

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