

Happy hump day! Thanks so much for being here, at our second Kenai Peninsula Ratepayers Alliance newsletter! You received this email because you asked to be looped in with what we're doing - if you want to be removed from this email list for any reason, please let us know.

What's going on with Homer Electric Association (HEA):

HEA has signed a one-year contract with Enstar, starting April 1st (at the end of HEA's current gas contract with Hilcorp). The gas will be at Enstar's Gas Cost Adjustment (currently \$8.6517, compared the current contracted Hilcorp rate of \$7.69). The Regulatory Commission of Alaska has a public comment period currently open through **March 7th**.

In our last newsletter, we mentioned that two other Alaska electric cooperatives, Chugach Electric Association and Golden Valley Electric Association, recently passed resolutions in support of a Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) for Alaska. We think it's important to note that in December, HEA voted to rescind Board Policy 505 (a renewable portfolio goal) and replace it with Board Policy 506 ("Energy Security & Diversification"). This means the HEA Board currently has no long-term resolution, goal, or deadline set to address our impending energy crisis. Board Policy 506 has no language in it to suggest, support, or research diversifying electricity sources away from Cook Inlet natural gas.

Applications for the Board of Directors are currently open until **March 1st**. As members, one of the biggest tools we have in our toolbox is who we vote for to represent us on the Board of Directors. We also think it's pretty great that our electric utility's decisions are made by a democratically elected Board who are beholden to members and our community - you! If this is something that tickles your fancy, floats your boat, or might in some way be interesting to you, we encourage you to consider applying.

What's going on in Alaska:

In a House energy meeting on February 6th, Enstar's president John Sims said that Cook Inlet exploration, importing liquid natural gas, or a pipeline from the North Slope would result in an increase in our energy bills or significant subsidies from the State (see Representative Armstrong's questions at 11:18 AM). We think this is important to keep in mind because so often the conversation about electricity assumes a level playing field, where fossil fuels are always the most economically viable option, and renewables are a silly, expensive, and useless tool. It's refreshing to hear even the fossil fuel industry dispel this myth!

In a joint House and Senate Resources Committee meeting on February 7th, Enstar's president John Sims referenced a non-yet-released utility report that says imported natural gas will not be available until 2030. Even if HEA's new contract with Enstar is approved with the RCA, that is a **gap starting in 2025**. It's too risky and too late for Alaskan ratepayers to be depending on importing liquid natural gas to solve our energy crisis. Electric utilities like HEA should be aggressively pursuing other short-term solutions like wind and solar. (And since natural gas seems to be frighteningly variable, our electric utilities should be looking at other long-term solutions like hydroelectricity, or even possible solutions like tidal or geothermal.)

What we can do:

The Kenai Change: Sisterhood for Sustainable Futures book club has written an open letter to HEA's Board of Directors asking for more action on solutions for the Cook Inlet gas crisis. You

can express your concern by adding your name and (in the spirit of Valentine's Day) passing it along to a loved one. They are planning on sending this letter to the Board in mid-March.

In our last newsletter, we talked about State Senator Jesse Bjorkman's refusal to hear a Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) bill in the Labor & Commerce committee. On **February 24th**, Senator Bjorkman will be holding town halls in Nikiski and Soldotna which would be great opportunities to let our elected officials know that we support holding our utilities accountable to diversifying our fuel sources (also, the Nikiski town hall coincides with the North Pen Rec Center's Winterfest event!).

Thanks for reading! If you have any suggestions, we'd love to hear from you. We'd like to end with one of our favorite Valentines



For more memes, follow our journey on social media!