



**NEWS RELEASE: August 25, 2011**

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**Alaska electric utility industry honors Speaker Chenault  
for history of support for local and statewide energy solutions**

Alaska Power Association honored the work of Alaska State House of Representatives Speaker Mike Chenault (R-Nikiski) with its David P. Hutchens Public Service Award in recognition of his leadership on electric energy issues. The trade association announced the award at its 60th annual membership meeting in Wasilla, Alaska on August 10.

The David P. Hutchens Public Service Award is presented to individuals outside the utility industry who have provided exceptional public service in the interests of electric consumers in Alaska.

The award was announced by Brad Reeve, APA Board President, at the association's awards banquet. Reeve said, "The future of the State of Alaska is tied to energy and Speaker Mike Chenault is a proven leader in that area. From his commitment to getting an in-state gas line built, to encouraging oil and gas exploration in Cook Inlet, to supporting electric utility infrastructure improvements, Speaker Chenault is at the forefront of the effort to ensure a viable energy future for Alaska."

"Since first being elected in 2000 to represent District 34," Reeve continued, "Speaker Chenault has been a steadfast supporter of Homer Electric and the Alaska electric utility industry. He understands our business and appreciates the need for the state and electric utilities to work together to accomplish shared goals."

At the regional level, an example of Chenault's commitment is his effort to secure funding for the removal of trees killed by the spruce bark beetle. The beetle infestation killed thousands of acres of trees throughout the Kenai Peninsula and presented a serious fire hazard. Appropriations secured through the Speaker have been used to remove many of these danger trees along power line rights-of-way and the potential fire danger on the Kenai Peninsula has been significantly reduced.

From a statewide perspective, he has spent many hours meeting with representatives from Alaska utilities and talking about issues facing the electric industry. Chenault has been a regular speaker for many years at Alaska Power Association's Legislative Conference and Managers Forum Fly-Ins, sharing with the

audience his perception on what needs to be done to improve the state's energy future.

Chenault is a strong advocate of State support for electric utility infrastructure. A recent capital budget appropriation to upgrade transmission lines in the Railbelt area received support from the Speaker and that support was instrumental in the funding ultimately being included in the final capital budget approved by the Governor.

Chenault was nominated for the award by Homer Electric Association, his local electric cooperative. Since he was not able to attend the Alaska Power Association Annual Meeting to accept the award, the association will present it to him at its annual legislative conference in February.

Alaska Power Association, formerly known as the Alaska Rural Electric Cooperative Association, is the 60-year old statewide trade association for urban and rural electric utilities. It provides advocacy and program services to member utilities. APA members supply power to more than a half-million Alaskans in communities from Barrow to Unalaska and down the Inside Passage.

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