



## Legislative Update From Representative Bryce Edgmon



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### Big Week in Unalaska and the Port of Dutch Harbor House Energy Committee Hearing Followed By Legislative Fly-In

The House Energy Committee held a hearing at the Grand Aleutian Hotel at Dutch Harbor on Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>. This turned out to be one of our more interesting meetings off the road system, as there was more time than usual afterwards for one-on-one conversa-

tions between community members and legislators.

One recurring theme brought up in Unalaska was the need for any state energy policy to include continuing commitments to fund upgrades of existing diesel-powered facilities.

While we are all eager to get as much reliable renewable energy on-line as soon as possible, it was a valuable reminder to our committee that many communities will not be able to rely on renewable power alone, and improvements to diesel generating facilities should not be left out of the picture.

It was a pleasure to accompany my fellow legislators to the #1 fishing port in the United States. The community did a great job in welcoming them, showing them the town and the port, and informing them of the needs unique to Unalaska as well as other Aleutian Chain locales.

#### THE BIENNIAL FLY-IN

Every other year, the City of Unalaska hosts a Fly-In for legislators, staffers, and Administration and other officials. This year, we purposely scheduled the Energy Committee meeting to convene

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**The Legislative Delegation at Unalaska's high school. L to R: Senate Majority Leader Johnny Ellis (D-Anc), House Majority Leader Kyle Johansen (R-Ketchikan), Rep. Edgmon, Rep. John Coghill (R-North Pole), Rep. Charisse Millett (R-Anc), Sen. Charlie Huggins (R-Wasilla), Sen. Lyman Hoffman (R-Bethel), and House Speaker Mike Chenault (R-Nikiski).**

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just beforehand. This allowed the opportunity for more offices to get the chance to experience a little of what Unalaska and the Port of Dutch Harbor have going on—and they have a lot happening.

In addition to getting close looks at the new powerhouse site and the recently completed cold storage facility (see stories below), legislators were able to see one of the biggest, most efficient seafood processing plants in the world in operation and go aboard a catcher-processor. We also enjoyed visits to Unalaska’s schools, its landmark Holy Ascension Russian Orthodox Church, the Iliuliuk Medical Clinic, and other institutions that help sustain the industrious residents of this hard-working community.

Unalaska has come a long way in the last couple of decades and continues to set the pace for growing industry in coastal Alaska. I’m always thrilled to get the chance to see the progress in person, and I always come away impressed with the excellent job city officials and members of the community are doing. That goes for their work in organizing this year’s fly-in, too. I can tell that the experience has made a lasting, very positive impression on my fellow visitors from the Legislature.

I’d like to give a big Thank You from both me and my staffer Adam Berg to Mayor Shirley Marquardt and the members of the city council, City Manager Chris Hladick, and all the other folks who helped put this trip together. They did a great job.

## **For 20 Years North America’s Top Fishing Port, Unalaska Continues Ambitious Development**



### **New Power Plant will Firm Up Unalaska’s Energy Supply**

Dramatically increasing the city’s electricity output has long been a priority for Unalaska/Dutch Harbor. Its economy has been one of the fastest growing in the state for decades, and the community has been determined not to let a shortage of reliable power hamper the development of industry and small businesses.

Construction began this year on a new powerhouse sited adjacent

**Construction crews have been hard at work this summer on a new 10.8 megawatt powerhouse.**

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to aging facilities that Unalaska/Dutch Harbor has depended on since World War II. Generators in the existing facility have been operating at maximum capacity for years, and for most of its backup the community has had to rely on a “non-firm” supply from UniSea, a local processor.

The new building will house a pair of Wartsila diesel generators that will boost the community’s electricity supply by more than 10.5 Megawatts. When both phases of the project are complete, it will double Unalaska/Dutch Harbor’s consistently reliable power supply. Plus, the new Finnish generators are more than 20 percent more fuel efficient than the engines now operating at the old facility. The plant should be up and running by August of 2010.

### **New State-of-the-Art Port Facilities Add Value and Quality to Alaska Seafood.**

The marine terminal and large-scale cold storage facility at the foot of Ballyhoo Mountain marks another recent milestone for development in the community. DH Ports, builders of the 1000-foot deep-draft bulkhead dock that recently replaced a dilapidated World War II era wharf, have partnered with cold-storage experts Kloosterboer, of Holland, who this summer completed the first phase of a state-of-the-art facility.

The highly energy-efficient operation can store up to 25,000 tons of Bering Sea and North Pacific bounty in its 35,000 square foot refrigerated warehouse. The Legislative Delegation was honored to attend its official grand opening during our visit. In limited operation since mid-July, Kloosterboer was already storing 18,000 tons of premium seafood. A fully automated, sheltered system for handling seafood at the site will keep products and packaging in top-notch condition, preserving its quality and increasing its value.

Even on such an impressive scale, this may be just the beginning. Plans are in the works to possibly double the facility’s square footage in the coming years.



The partnership between DH Ports and Kloosterboer pairs a brand new deep-water 1000’ dock with 35,000 square feet of state-of-the-art cold storage



UniSea, one of Unalaska's largest processors, renders hundreds of thousands of gallons of oil every year from fish byproducts. Many Alaskan seafood processors have used fish oil to heat boilers and run dryers in fish meal production. But in recent years UniSea has gone one better, mixing the fish oil with diesel fuel to feed six electric generators. Burning a 70 percent fish oil/30 percent diesel mixture, UniSea saves about \$1.50 for every gallon of fish oil used. Having gone through nearly 500,000 gallons since January, the plant is already looking at \$750,000 in savings for 2009. This is yet another use for the "co-products" UniSea derives from its Surimi operation—in which virtually 100 percent of the fish is utilized in some way.



The House Energy Committee hears testimony from an Akutan Mayor Joe Bereskin during a hearing at the Grand Aleutian Hotel. Left to Right: Rep. Kyle Johansen (R-Ketchikan), Co-Chair Charisse Millett (R-Anc), Co-Chair Edgmon, Rep. Chris Tuck (D-Anc), and House Speaker Mike Chenault (R-Nikiski).



Unalaska City Manager Chris Hladick, right, chats with House Speaker Mike Chenault outside the high school.



**Bryce with Unalaska Assistant City Manager John Fulton and his son Gabe, about to tour the American Seafoods Company catcher/processor Northern Hawk**



**Legislators, facility investors, and Unalaska Mayor Shirley Marquardt (with flowers) at the opening of the new cold-storage facility.**



**At the Kloosterboer grand opening Bryce speaks with Ports Director Alvin Osterback and his wife Peggy.**

### *Keep in Contact*

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