



# Alaska State Legislature

Representative Les Gara

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE · April 23, 2007**

## ***HOUSE DECLINES CHANCE TO MANDATE REDUCTION IN GREENHOUSE GASSES***

JUNEAU – The Alaska House of Representatives today passed bonding legislation intended to finance increased coal power production, but missed an opportunity to address global warming and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The bill will allow the Alaska Railroad to issue bonds that would fund a coal gasification project in Kenai.

Talk is getting louder in Alaska on how to respond to global warming and reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that cause it. But today the Alaska House of Representatives took a potential step backwards on the issue, defeating a Democratic amendment to a coal plant construction bond that would have mandated lower carbon dioxide emissions.

"We owe the quality of life we lead to the next generation," said Rep. Les Gara (D-Anchorage). "This isn't the time in history when we should be taking steps backwards in the fight on global warming." Gara sponsored the amendment.

Most scientists agree that carbon dioxide emissions are the major cause of global warming, and the most prevalent greenhouse gas. Coal production, on average produces twice the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as natural gas, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Sponsors of the project have stated they would like to consider minimizing carbon emissions from this proposed plant, but have made no commitments. Currently greenhouse effect-causing carbon emissions are not regulated by state or federal law. The project is being considered as a way to replace lost natural gas supplies to the Agrium fertilizer plant on the Kenai Peninsula, though company officials are also looking for ways to obtain new gas supplies at the same time. Currently roughly 40% of Cook Inlet's gas is being exported to Asia as local demand increases.

For more information on the subject please contact Rep. Gara at 465-2647.

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