



Press Release

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Global Warming Got You Down? Alaska Teens Promote Solutions and Action

Alaska The recent release of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report painted a dreary picture of a future awash in climate chaos. Reports of global drought, melting permafrost, and a climate change-intensified hurricane season have left many suffering from “global warming depression.” If global warming has gotten you down, Alaskan youth may have the remedy for your ills.

In 2006, teens with Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) drafted and circulated a youth petition on global warming, garnering more than 5,000 teen signatures from 130 Alaskan villages and cities demanding state and national leaders to take action. Verner Wilson, a Yupik Eskimo from Dillingham, Alaska and author of the petition said, “I started this petition to ask our leaders to help protect this place that Alaska youth have inherited, and to protect our lifestyles and cultures.”

On April 20th, approximately one year after teens presented their signatures to Senator Murkowski and other members of Congress, AYEA will receive the Environmental Protection Agency President’s Environmental Youth Award (PEYA) for their unprecedented global warming campaign. Ironically, however, neither the federal government, nor the Alaska state government has taken any meaningful steps to curb global warming pollution or stimulate alternatives. AYEA teens, frustrated with both federal and state government inaction, devised a simple, yet effective way to help stop global warming and save money called “3-2-1”.

The 3-2-1 pledge is simple: by replacing three regular light bulbs with compact fluorescents, lowering the thermostat two degrees in the winter, and unplugging one appliance when not in use, anyone can reduce global warming pollution and save money.

AYEA representative Megan Waggoner will travel to Washington, D.C. to accept the EPA award on behalf of her peers, and again meet with Senators Murkowski and Stevens. She will encourage both of the Senators to take more aggressive steps to curb global warming pollution, starting with the 321 pledge. She said, "As Alaska's teens, we have a big stake in the future of the state. 3-2-1 can help Alaska cut global warming pollution and do our part to fight global warming. But Alaskan youth cannot do it alone. We need our elected officials to legislate mandatory emissions reduction."

Megan will represent AYEА on Friday, April 20th at 1pm to receive the President's Environmental Youth Award at EPA headquarters in Washington, D.C.

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Background on 321 (see www.ayea.org)

Every light bulb you replace can save up to \$30 in energy costs over the life of the bulb, and will emit 100 pounds less global warming pollution annually! Plus, they're recyclable! By turning down the thermostat 2 degrees, you can save up to 10 percent of your heating costs, and reduce carbon emissions by 2,000 pounds. Appliances, like microwaves and VCRs, suck energy when they're plugged in, whether or not they're turned on. Unplug one and you can reduce emissions by up to 1,000 pounds annually and save up to \$20 a year.

Background on AYEА

Alaska Youth for Environmental Action's mission is inspire, educate, and take action on environmental issues facing our communities. Founded in 1998, AYEА has six chapters and over 1,200 youth from Native villages and urban areas have participated.

www.ayea.org

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