

Konrad Jackson

From: Tom Moran <TMoran@nomealaska.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2016 3:23 PM
To: House Labor and Commerce
Subject: Testimony on Proposed Tobacco Tax Increase

Greetings:

Please let this e-mail serve as written testimony in support of Governor Walker's proposal to institute an increased tobacco tax in Alaska. Governor Walker has been faced with a very unique challenge that I do not envy one bit. Our state's economy, predicated on the oil industry, is on the brink of collapse. While some of our citizenry urges us to "Cut the fat!," we all know that there isn't anything to cut. Alaska is entitled to the same level of government services that the rest of the country receives. The economies of our continental brethren, however, have not been based wholly on what appears to be a dying industry. Just like the next Alaskan, I hope for a return to the days of \$100+ per barrel...but I'm not holding my breath. And even if oil prices suddenly do soar, the fact will remain that our economy is a one-trick pony. It's time to diversify our interests and protect our infrastructure. Many people in the lower 48 call Alaska a "Libertarian state," but I believe that perception has been colored, in large part, by the fact that we do not adequately tax our citizenry. I am not advocating for a tax-and-spend government; rather, I am advocating for our government, whichever party is in the leadership, to see the writing on the wall and change with the times. In the near future, when you address other sections of Governor Walker's budget, I will echo my sentiment that it is time to turn the page on the old way of doing things. Until then, however, please count this testimony as a ringing endorsement of an increased tobacco tax in Alaska.

Most sincerely,

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"Do more than is required of you." - General George S. Patton, Jr.