

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
March 03, 2004  
5:32 PM

TAPE HFC 04 - 42, Side A  
TAPE HFC 04 - 42, Side B  
TAPE HFC 04 - 43, Side A

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Harris called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative John Harris, Co-Chair  
Representative Bill Williams, Co-Chair  
Representative Kevin Meyer, Vice-Chair  
Representative Mike Chenault  
Representative Eric Croft  
Representative Hugh Fate  
Representative Richard Foster  
Representative Mike Hawker  
Representative Reggie Joule  
Representative Carl Moses  
Representative Bill Stoltze

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Representative Sharon Cissna; Representative Ethan Berkowitz; Joseph Pichler, Council Member, Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education, Anchorage; Gwendolyn Lee, Mary Dyer, AWRC, Anchorage; Carl Evertshusch, Margaret Lowe, Former Commissioner, Department of Health and Social Services, Anchorage; Cyd Bartee, Anchorage; Kathleen Fitzgerald, Anchorage, Donna Jordan, Matsu; Jason Smart, Anchorage.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Mary Dyer, Executive Director, Alaska Resource Center, Anchorage; Francine Harbour; Chelsea McDonald, Anchorage; H. Lee, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Anchorage; Mary Bell, Anchorage; Tim Steele, Anchorage School Board Member, Anchorage; Bob Satin, Board Member, Alaska Communications, Public Radio KSKA; Lisa Rieger, Vice President Alaska Legal Services, Anchorage; Janet McCabe, Partners for Progress; Mike Couturier, representing self, Sergeant, Anchorage Police Department; Brian Saylor, Alaska Public Health Association, Anchorage; Lorne Smette, Alaska Chapter of

National Association of the Mentally Ill; Patti Hong, Anchorage; Greg Wilson, Alaska Geological Society; Trevor Fulton, Student, University of Alaska Anchorage; Justin Durling, Student, University of Alaska Anchorage.

#hb375

GENERAL SUBJECT (S):

The following overview was taken in log note format. Tapes and handouts will be on file with the House Finance Committee through the 23rd Legislative Session, contact 465-2156. After the 23rd Legislative Session they will be available through the Legislative Library at 465-3808.

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY RELATING TO HB 375 and HB 377  
ANCHORAGE TELECONFERENCE**

LOG	SPEAKER	DISCUSSION
	<b>TAPE HFC 04 - 42 SIDE A</b>	
000	Co-Chair Williams	Convened the House Finance Committee at
0222	MARY DYER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA RESOURCE CENTER, ANCHORAGE	Expressed concern over cuts in sexual assault, alcohol treatment programs
0346	FRANCINE HARBOUR, ANCHORAGE	Voiced opposition to further cuts to disabilities and Governor's Mental Health budget.
0635	Co-Chair Harris	Responded to Ms. Harbour that there is no need to be afraid to talk to the legislators on the committee.
0756	CHELSEA MCDONALD, ANCHORAGE	Spoke in support of Denali Kid Care
1006	H. LEE, NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL, ANCHORAGE	Voiced opposition to further cuts to disabilities and Governor's Mental Health budget, and to Medicaid cuts.
1305	MARY BELL, ANCHORAGE	Voiced opposition to further cuts to disabilities.
1441	TIM STEELE, ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, ANCHORAGE	Spoke in support of additional funding for education. Urged long-term, sustainable funding and discussion of adequate funding. Increase formula to PERS and TRS.
1743	Co-Chair Harris	Asked if Municipality is maxed out, could city contribute more
1806	Mr. Steele	As funding from state has been reduced, local share has risen. Will be over the maximum cap within federal guidelines in FY 05-FY 06-budget cycle. Co-Chair Harris asked could city contribute more

		if assembly chooses. Mr. Steele said would take longer to change process than FY 06. In response to a question by Co-Chair Harris, Mr. Steele said the reason is state contribution is declining; still not at the 23% level.
2049	Co-Chair Harris	During his six years in legislature, state has not lowered its funding for education. Mr. Steele, replied level funding for education is no longer adequate.
2209	BOB SATIN, BOARD MEMBER, ALASKA COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC RADIO KSKA	Testified in support of full funding for public broadcasting.
2436	Representative Joule	Asked how much is raised locally to fund the station. Mr. Satin replied rely on small percentage state funding in larger cities, but smaller stations rely more heavily on listeners.
2552	LISA RIEGER, VICE PRSIDENT ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES, ANCHORAGE	Spoke in support restored funding for Alaska Legal Services.
2713	Janet McCabe, Partners for Progress	Spoke in support of Office of Public Advocacy new position on Wellness Court, and adding \$66 thousand to OPA.
3025	Representative Hawker	Expressed that he is thinking about the issue.
3054	Representative Chenault	Asked clarification of the position request. Ms. Mccabe explained that in arrests outside Anchorage city limits, the court has arranged for change of venue so DUI offenders are treated in therapeutic court.
3239	Mike Couturier, representing self, Sergeant at Anchorage Police Dept.	Voiced opposition to further cuts to mental health budget. Provide services to mentally ill before decline into crisis situation. Community based services need funding.
3557	Representative Hawker	Explained that have cut \$6 million off original budget cuts, and added discretionary funding for crisis situations at local level. Requested that the speaker let him know if it's not working.
3728	Mr. Couturier	Rural areas are raising funds, and need time to set up infrastructure
3759	Brian Saylor, Alaska Public Health Association, Anchorage	Expressed support for restoration of funding for social workers. Urged amendment to increase the state revenues with income tax.

4146	Co-Chair Harris	Replied members of the committee and House Ways and Means have addressed the revenue issue, which is foremost in importance.
4347	Lorne Smette, Alaska Chapter of National Association of the Mentally Ill	Voiced opposition to further cuts to mental health budget. Described need for critical medical care.
		<b>TAPE HFC 04 - 42, Side B</b>
4519	Patti Hong, Anchorage	Voiced support for the public health nursing program.
4253	Greg Wilson, Alaska Geological Society	Testified in support of the Division of Geological Development and Survey component and stressed the importance toward long-term resource development.
3919	Representative Foster	9 percent increase over last year.
3906	Mr. Wilson	Clarified that geological development is being reduced.
3733	Co-Chair Harris	Responded to a questioned regarding the possibility of an informal forum to discuss issues regarding mental health services. He noted that there would be little time to develop a forum, but recommended that individual members be contacted.
3436	Representative Hawker	Noted that Medicaid spending was increased by \$20 million.
3326	Representative Foster	Observed that funding for the Department of Health and Social Services has increased over the years.
3247	Representative Hawker	Observed that Department of Health and Social Services spending was over \$100 million more than in FY03.
3208	JOSEPH PICHLER, COUNCIL MEMBER, GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES & SPECIAL EDUCATION, ANCHORAGE	Voiced opposition to further cuts to mental health budget. He observed that there were 300 people in Juneau to testify regarding the Key Campaign in support of mental health services.
2811	GWENDOLYN LEE, ANCHORAGE	Voiced opposition to further cuts to mental health budget and support for persons with disabilities. She emphasized that community based services saves the state money in the long run. Expressed concern with reductions to senior services. Voiced opposition to the cuts in Medicaid Services. Called for an action plan to solve the fiscal crisis.
2442	Representative Hawker	Acknowledged the Key Campaign's commitment to solving the state's fiscal crisis.

2302	Ms. Lee	Pointed out that institutionalization costs far more.
2252	Representative Stoltze	Stressed that the intent is not to return to institutionalization.
2236	Representative Croft	Pointed out that the Department of Health and Social Services' budget has been reduced by \$30 million in general fund, 10 in federal funds, and \$20 in other funds. 7.8 actual reductions.
2032	Representative Hawker	Argued that Department of Health and Social Services spending has been increasing in the state.
2029	CARL EVERTSHUSCH, KEY COALITION, ANCHORAGE	Voiced opposition to further cuts to the mental health budget and cuts in Medicaid services. Noted support for additional revenue measures.
1741	Co-Chair Harris	Observed that the revenue issue is strongly debated and expressed his hope for a solution.
1648	MARGARET LOWE, ANCHORAGE	Pointed out that there have been improvements in special education services in schools and stressed their success. Noted support for additional revenue measures and stated that she is willing to give up her permanent fund dividend. Stressed that services need to be organized and supported by the state.
1240	CYD BARTEE, ANCHORAGE	Voiced opposition to further cuts to the mental health budget. She observed that her son would have to be institutionalized without state assistance. Observed that her child receives wrap around services and noted support for additional revenue measures and her willingness to give up her permanent fund dividend.
821	Ms. Bartee	In response to comments by Vice-Chair Meyer, noted that autistic children can greatly improved. She explained that wrap around services coordinate her son's services.
559	KATHLEEN FITZGERALD, ANCHORAGE	Noted that her daughter, who is autistic, has improved through state supported waivers. Noted support for additional revenue measures and a long-term solution.
		<b>TAPE HFC 04 - 43, Side A</b>
132	BARBARA JORDON, MATSU	Voiced opposition to further cuts to the mental health budget. She stressed that her special needs children benefited from involvement in the Infant Learning Program and waivers. Noted support for

		additional revenue measures. Stressed that early intervention works and that for every one dollar spent, four are saved.
1246	JASON SMART, ANCHORAGE	Voiced opposition to further cuts to the mental health budget and support for waiver services. Noted support for additional revenue measures.
1932	TREVOR FULTON, ANCHORAGE	Spoke in support of additional funding for the University. He noted recent improvements to the University. He stressed the need to put funding for the University in the operating budget as opposed to the capital budget.
2613	Co-Chair Harris	Stressed support for the University, but emphasized that all the needs of the state need to be balanced.
2756	JUSTIN DURLING, ANCHORAGE	Voiced support for funding for the University and observed that tuition rates have increased.
	<u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 PM

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