

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE
March 2, 2018
1:05 p.m.

1:05:06 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Seaton called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Neal Foster, Co-Chair
Representative Paul Seaton, Co-Chair
Representative Les Gara, Vice-Chair
Representative Jason Grenn
Representative David Guttenberg
Representative Dan Ortiz
Representative Lance Pruitt
Representative Steve Thompson
Representative Cathy Tilton
Representative Tammie Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Scott Kawasaki

ALSO PRESENT

Jeff Short, Juneau School District Board of Education, Juneau; Lynda Watts, Self and Recovery Population, Juneau; Jeremy D. Simile, Juneau Alaska HOPE Dealers, Juneau; Shasta Myers, Self, Person in Recovery, Juneau; Kara Nelson, Self, Director, Haven House, Juneau; Greg Fitch, Self, Juneau; Joy Lyon, Director, Association for the Education of Young Children SE Alaska, Juneau; Stella Tallmon, Juneau Douglas High School, Juneau; Tom Chard, Executive Director, Alaska Behavioral Health Association, Juneau; Erin Walker-Tolles, Executive Director, Catholic Community Service, Juneau; Erin Laughlin, Student, University of Alaska Southeast, Juneau; Don Habeger, Coordinator, Juneau Reentry Coalition, Juneau; Sean Strauss, Self, Juneau; Charles Degnan, Self, Juneau; June Degnan, President, Haven House, Juneau; Anne Fuller, Self, Juneau; Tony Delgado, Self, Juneau; Breanna Walker,

Student, UAS, Juneau; Emily Ferry, Self, Juneau; Brenda Taylor, Self, Juneau; Maggie Winston, Key Coalition, Kenai; Lisa Parady, ACSA, Juneau; Dennis Haas, Key Coalition, Kenai; Michael Hutchings, Key Coalition, Juneau; Talea Kellar, Parents as Teachers, Juneau; Heather Mountcastle, Support for Mr. Fubao Goldsberry; Fubao Goldsberry, Self, Juneau; Representative Justin Parish; Representative Dave Talerico.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Craig Dahl, Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce, Juneau; Tom Abbott, Self, Petersburg; Cathy Long, Executive Director, Cordova Chamber of Commerce, Cordova; Pete Hoepfner, Cordova School Board, Cordova; Morgan Johnson, City of Ambler, Ambler; Hattie Keller, Self, Nome; Sue Steinacher, Nome Emergency Shelter Team, Nome; Ruthie Knight, City of Valdez/PWSEDD, Valdez; Frank Oxereok, Bering Sea Elders Group, Wales; Tom Lakosh, Self, Anchorage; Ida Nelson, Self, Igiugig; Kim Philips, Self, Haines; Jennifer Allen, Rural Cap, Haines; Evelyn Trefon, Self, New Halen.

SUMMARY

HB 285 APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET

HB 285 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

HB 286 APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET/LOANS/FUNDS

HB 286 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

Co-Chair Seaton reviewed the meeting agenda.

#hb285

#hb286

HOUSE BILL NO. 285

"An Act making appropriations for the operating and capital expenses of the state's integrated comprehensive mental health program; and providing for an effective date."

HOUSE BILL NO. 286

"An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs; capitalizing funds; amending appropriations; making supplemental appropriations; making appropriations under art. IX, sec. 17(c), Constitution of the State of Alaska, from the constitutional budget reserve fund; and providing for an effective date."

[1:06:15 PM](#)

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: JUNEAU

[1:09:16 PM](#)

JEFF SHORT, JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION, JUNEAU, testified in support of education funding. He asked the legislature to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$100. He relayed that inflation had resulted in a reduced budget of approximately \$600 per student since 2008; the losses had led to a \$3 million shortfall in the district's budget in the current year. He stressed that the district did an excellent job educating its students. He shared that students from low income and violent homes and those without homes struggled in school. He underscored the importance of keeping up with inflation. He reasoned that the state could either reinvest in education now or it could spend much more in the future on social services, prisons, and rebuilding the middle class.

[1:11:37 PM](#)

Vice-Chair Gara asked about the year mentioned. Mr. Short replied 2008 (based on the Anchorage CPI).

[1:12:04 PM](#)

LYNDA WATTS, SELF AND RECOVERY POPULATION, JUNEAU, she shared her history with alcoholism, PTSD, and sexual abuse. She had thought of herself as the black sheep of society. She was receiving counseling through JAMI and worked with NAMI and the Juneau Reentry Coalition. She shared other treatment programs she was using. All of the services had empowered her to overcome past trauma that had led to her alcoholism. She wanted to be the best recovered person she could become. She spoke in support of community safety net

services, reentry and rehabilitation services, and \$18 million proposed to expand substance abuse treatment statewide. She thanked the committee for its time.

[1:15:14 PM](#)

JEREMY D. SIMILE, JUNEAU ALASKA HOPE DEALERS, JUNEAU, shared his personal story. He worked in construction and shared that he was in long-term recovery. His mother had been murdered when he was seven years old. He detailed that he had undergone multiple substance abuse treatment programs that had enabled him to live successfully. He was working with the Juneau Reentry Coalition. He spoke to the difficulty of breaking the criminal tide without treatment support. He believed the coalition was imperative for incarcerated individuals to become successful, productive members of society. He asked the committee to support the governor's request of \$375,000 to reduce recidivism and prepare individuals for reentry and \$18 million for substance abuse treatment.

Representative Guttenberg shared that he was a retired laborer and asked Mr. Simile to hang in there. Mr. Simile thanked him.

Co-Chair Seaton relayed that the public was free to answer or not answer any questions from the committee.

[1:18:35 PM](#)

SHASTA MYERS, SELF, PERSON IN RECOVERY, JUNEAU, shared her personal story. She lived at Haven House and had been sober for 90 days. She detailed she had spent time incarcerated and on probation. She recently graduated from inpatient treatment through Rainforest Recovery. She shared that she was doing long-term outpatient treatment through Gastineau Human Services and other programs such as JAMI and others. Doors had opened to her because she was sober and had undergone treatment. She would be released from probation the following week. She supported recidivism reduction funding and treatment funds.

[1:20:09 PM](#)

KARA NELSON, SELF, DIRECTOR, HAVEN HOUSE, JUNEAU, spoke in support of \$375,000 for treatment and \$18 million for substance abuse treatment. She is a woman in long-term

recovery. She stressed that the support services were imperative to heal Alaska. She testified as a mother of a daughter who was actively using drugs. She wanted to know the support services would be available. She thanked the committee.

[1:21:36 PM](#)

GREG FITCH, SELF, JUNEAU, testified in support of funding for mental health services and funds. He thanked the committee for work the legislature was doing. He believed he was a good living example of good mental health and what a good system could do. He stressed the importance of investing in people. The public counted on the funds and the legislature.

[1:23:09 PM](#)

JOY LYON, DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN SE ALASKA, JUNEAU, testified in support of education funds. She spoke to the importance of increasing the state's revenue in order to continue investing in children. She detailed that two out of three children coming into kindergarten were not prepared for school. She asked the committee to consider all the trauma that people were hearing about and to think about what a difference strong support for young children and their families could make.

[1:24:41 PM](#)

STELLA TALLMON, JUNEAU DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL, JUNEAU, shared that she is currently a sophomore at JDHS. She supported an increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA). She stressed the state could not afford to neglect its public schools. Increasing operating costs had forced school boards to make cuts to vital programs. She stated that flat funding of education would hurt schools. She underscored that kids from lower socioeconomic backgrounds would be hit hardest. Investing in education would only benefit the state. She believed that increasing the BSA was the greatest thing the legislature could do for the state's future.

[1:26:12 PM](#)

TOM CHARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION, JUNEAU, thanked the committee and the

individuals sharing their personal stories. He stated that behavioral health grants were flat funded in the governor's budget. The current funding for Medicaid was at FY 15 levels. The funding allowed providing access to mental health and treatment services. He understood the state was facing challenges beyond the typical demand - the opioid crisis. He appreciated the governor's \$18 million supplemental request by the governor that helped build capacity for services. He thanked the committee for its work.

[1:27:53 PM](#)

ERIN WALKER-TOLLES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICE, JUNEAU, spoke in favor of funds for child advocacy centers. She shared information about the organization that provided services to seniors throughout Southeast Alaska. The organization also ran a safe child advocacy center. She detailed the center did forensic interviews for children referred by law enforcement and the Office of Children's Services for suspected sexual abuse, physical abuse, and neglect. The organization had seen a dramatic and disturbing increase in the number of cases (59 percent in the current year). She shared that the services were funded through the Department of Health and Social Services with federal TANF funding. There was a dramatic increase in prosecutions as well. She asked the legislature to increase funding to child advocacy centers statewide.

[1:29:43 PM](#)

ERIN LAUGHLIN, STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST, JUNEAU, provided detail about her studies at the University. She asked the committee to fully fund the Board of Regent's request of \$341 million. She shared her story about moving to Alaska. She implored the legislature to fully fund the University to provide opportunities for schools. She shared that she had postcards of support from other students.

Co-Chair Seaton recognized Representative Dave Talerico in the room.

[1:31:37 PM](#)

DON HABEGER, COORDINATOR, JUNEAU REENTRY COALITION, JUNEAU, spoke to the need for reentry services, which reduced

recidivism rates. He shared a story related to the importance of boots on the ground pertaining to the reduction of recidivism. He shared that the individual had fallen off the grid and had a substance abuse relapse. Fortunately, due to treatment services the individual was back on track. It was an example of smart justice. The coalition thanked the legislature for its continued investment in recidivism reduction and substance abuse treatment.

[1:34:31 PM](#)

SEAN STRAUSS, SELF, JUNEAU, testified in favor of a state income tax. He shared that he respected all the state's elected officials, but he wanted to illuminate an important boundary that if crossed would have natural consequences. He supported the implementation of a state income tax by the end of the current session. He believed that without one the state would face the consequences of various things including social dysfunction. The governor had cut Permanent Fund Dividends, which had received disapproval. He continued that the governor could not implement and income tax. He stressed that no income tax perpetuated uncertainty. He implored the committee members to get an income tax done. He thanked the committee.

[1:37:20 PM](#)

CHARLES DEGNAN, SELF, JUNEAU, provided detail about his life in Alaska. He stated that individuals living in rural villages took turns helping each other. He stressed the importance of considering where individuals lived. He detailed that most individuals living in the state relied on subsistence. He stated the state had a penalty giving government. Things had become illegal in rural Alaska including nonsensical bag limits and open seasons. He stressed the importance of helping people in the smallest communities first. He represented a student of hard knocks. He stated that taxes were the basic necessities of keeping the state operational. He thanked the committee for listening. He supported an income tax.

[1:42:05 PM](#)

Vice-Chair Gara thanked Mr. Degnan for his service to the state.

Mr. Deganan added that all the males in his family were veterans.

[1:42:36 PM](#)

JUNE DEGNAN, PRESIDENT, HAVEN HOUSE, JUNEAU, spoke in support of a graduated statewide income tax, which she believed would be the most fair. She shared information about her Native heritage. She stated that Alaska had wonderful resources that needed to be protected. She did not support borrowing money to fill the state's deficit. She believed it was necessary to look at other funding resources outside of oil. She stressed the importance of incorporating tribes and people who cared about the state. She asked the legislature to ask for help if there were things the community could do.

[1:45:35 PM](#)

ANNE FULLER, SELF, JUNEAU, supported funding for schools, counseling, and treatment options especially for teens. The state of the world raised many questions for her, but she believed what should be done was known. She had paid a school and income tax in the past and believed that was possible. She supported AMHS, schools, libraries, and well-funded justice agencies. She spoke to the possibility of living healthy lives and helping neighbors. She stressed the importance of taking care of the state's children.

[1:47:28 PM](#)

TONY DELGADO, SELF, JUNEAU, showed a photo of his family to the committee. He relayed that he had been in long-term recovery. He shared that the individual in the picture had shot herself in front of him. He elaborated that a person who committed suicide needed help and had not received it. He spoke to the importance of services to help individuals. He had been in the Army, but he was not afraid to cry any longer. He stated that a bill in the legislature could have helped the individual. He would give anything to have the individual back with his daughter. He shared additional detail about his life. He stated that money was not everything. He supported funding in the governor's budget.

[1:52:13 PM](#)

BREANNA WALKER, STUDENT, UAS, JUNEAU, testified in support of funding for the University at the Board of Regents request of \$341 million. She shared that the University provided an educated workforce. She had received great opportunity at the University. Full funding ensured a well-staffed university with excellent classes. She would provide copies of other students' requests. She detailed that the university had lost funding over recent years.

[1:55:10 PM](#)

EMILY FERRY, SELF, JUNEAU, introduced her second graders to the committee. She spoke in support of a robust education budget. Flat funding represented a cut to education. She noted that the district was looking at a \$3 million to \$5 million cut. She had been encouraged by earlier testimony supporting an income tax. She also supported an income tax. She believed the problem was solvable with political will. She encouraged the legislature to do the hard work. The state needed the legislature's support. She shared that her children had testified in support of an education bill earlier in session.

[1:58:10 PM](#)

Co-Chair Seaton shared that the House had passed an income tax over to the Senate [the previous session].

BRENDA TAYLOR, SELF, JUNEAU, spoke in support of education funds. She brought attention to the importance of STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, Math] education. She shared that STEM education was instrumental in developing adults who could collaborate and innovate and who were ready for STEM specific jobs. She stated that children needed practice solving complex problems that were reality-based. The STEM Coalition was working to get outdoor and hands-on experience in classrooms. She shared that the district had funded an integration specialist, but the candidates who would have been wonderful had no longer been available because of the late passage of the budget the previous year. The school was talking about cutting a librarian position and from two counselors to one, they were also talking about cutting CTE positions. She hoped the committee understood the importance of education for the long-term.

[2:02:04 PM](#)

MAGGIE WINSTON, KEY COALITION, KENAI, she provided detail about the Key Coalition. She stated that helping individuals to receive services and live independently in their communities was a passion of hers. She stated that the current fiscal situation was creating uncertainty. She asked the legislature to think about disabled individuals and about what cuts could mean for people like her.

[2:04:23 PM](#)

LISA PARADY, ACSA, JUNEAU, thanked the committee for the opportunity to testify. She shared that school districts' highest priority was timely and adequate funding. She thanked the committee for its work to provide early funding. She supported the work of the finance subcommittee for the Department of Education and Early Development. She spoke about tragedy related to school safety. She stated that it was important to support school districts and students' social and emotional needs. She supported counselors in schools for support. She supported the University as well. The two systems had never worked together as they were presently for the whole state.

[2:07:24 PM](#)

DENNIS HAAS, KEY COALITION, KENAI, thanked the legislature for its hard work. He shared that because of the legislature his daughter was alive - she received services through the Medicaid waiver. He saw agencies having a difficult time to provide quality care. He was worried about what would happen to his daughter if something happened to him. He had paid state income tax in Alaska when it had existed. He supported a tax. He would rather lose money than see the system continue to erode. There were 800 people who qualified for service that were waiting. The state had vowed to cut the list by 200 people per year, but that number had been reduced to 50 the previous year. He did not believe some of the cuts were thoughtful. He asked the legislature to do the right thing and help achieve a sustainable budget to care for the needs of all citizens.

[2:10:20 PM](#)

CRAIG DAHL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, JUNEAU (via teleconference), shared that the University had dealt

with major cuts. He supported a strong university system that was the backbone of the state's future workforce. He stressed the critical nature of training a workforce for the future. The business community expected a highly trained workforce. The University was one of the largest community employers in Juneau. He discussed the important role UAS played in teacher education, maritime safety, and other. He urged the committee to support the University's budget request in full.

2:13:40 PM

MICHAEL HUTCHINGS, KEY COALITION, JUNEAU, testified in support of the Medicaid waiver program that provided the ability for him to be more independent in terms of housing and other things. He spoke against to cuts to funding to services. He wanted to be known as Michael who did many things and happened to be in a wheelchair instead of Michael who was in a wheelchair.

Representative Ortiz asked for more detail about day-hab services Mr. Hutchings received.

Mr. Hutchings answered that the services allowed him to visit his parents, go to coffee, go to the pool, and other. With assistance being reduced to 12 hours significantly impacted his daily life.

Representative Ortiz surmised that the net impact would be an increased number of people more home-bound because of the reductions.

Mr. Hutchings replied in the affirmative. He elaborated that it took more time - there were people who needed the assistance. He stressed the importance of quality of life. He shared that he would provide a letter to the committee.

2:17:47 PM

TALEA KELLAR, PARENTS AS TEACHERS, JUNEAU, thanked the committee for its support for early childhood education. She stressed the value of support early on in children's lives.

Co-Chair Seaton relayed the committee would break until 2:45 p.m. to hear testimony from additional communities.

[2:19:42 PM](#)

AT EASE

[2:46:18 PM](#)

RECONVENED

[2:46:59 PM](#)

HEATHER MOUNTCASTLE, SUPPORT, MR. FUBAO GOLDSBERRY, introduced herself.

FUBAO GOLDSBERRY, SELF, JUNEAU, testified in support of Medicaid funding. He stated that the cuts to Medicaid with impact those with individuals with disabilities. He shared that he was disabled, so he used Medicaid funding.

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: SITKA, PETERSBURG, DELTA JUNCTION, UNALASKA, GLENNALLEN, and TOK

[2:49:41 PM](#)

AT EASE

[3:02:01 PM](#)

RECONVENED

[3:02:33 PM](#)

TOM ABBOTT, SELF, PETERSBURG (via teleconference), spoke in support of public broadcasting funding, the Alaska Marine Highway, and public education funding. He supported the governor's proposal for public broadcasting. He remarked that public broadcasting had recently received significant cuts. He remarked that the Alaska Marine Highway was important, not only for Southeast Alaska, but across the state. He felt that it was a more cost-efficient way to travel than air travel. He stressed that education was an investment in the future.

[3:05:44 PM](#)

AT EASE

[3:26:24 PM](#)

RECONVENED

Co-Chair Seaton announced that there was no one signed up to testify, so he would wait for three minutes to see if

anyone signed up. If there was no additional testimony he would take a longer recess from 3:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

[3:27:17 PM](#)

AT EASE

[3:31:51 PM](#)

RECONVENED

Co-Chair Seaton stated that there were no additional testifiers, so he would recess until 4:00 p.m.

[3:32:22 PM](#)

AT EASE

[4:01:40 PM](#)

RECONVENED

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: BETHEL, CORDOVA, KOTZEBUE, NOME, VALDEZ, WRANGELL

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: OFF NET SITES

[4:02:16 PM](#)

CATHY LONG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CORDOVA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CORDOVA (via teleconference), read testimony from the president, Jim Cash. He relayed that the Alaska Marine Highway System advocated for a functional ferry system that supported the economy, food security, health, and well-being of its citizens. Otherwise, those things were in serious jeopardy. People in Cordova were very concerned about the short funding of AMHS. The ferry transport was Cordova's livelihood and a basic infrastructure which had to remain intact. She thought AMHS had been addressed as an afterthought in the current budget draft. It was unacceptable that the primary ferries in Cordova would not be operating in the fall. She reemphasized that Cordova needed the ferry service and asked for full funding.

[4:04:54 PM](#)

Representative Ortiz asked Ms. Long about the change in the AMHS service.

Ms. Long thought the ideal service would be comprised of a fast ferry in the summer and a slower ferry in the winter

months. She spoke to the difficulty of interruptions in service. She mentioned the importance of being able to plan things in advance. There were businesses dependent on the ferry service.

4:07:20 PM

PETE HOEPFNER, CORDOVA SCHOOL BOARD, CORDOVA (via teleconference), spoke in favor of education funding. He spoke of the need for increased BSA funding. He mentioned the fiscal issues occurring in small cities. He spoke of unfunded mandates such as school safety training. He surmised that the underfunding is affecting the education of students. He thanked members for their efforts in resolving the state's fiscal issue.

4:09:22 PM

MORGAN JOHNSON, CITY OF AMBLER, AMBLER (via teleconference), advocated for community assistance funding. He thanked the legislature for its work on the supplemental budget and community assistance funding. The village was struggling with existing funding. Like other villages, Ambler was suffering for lack of funding. He thanked the committee for its funding.

4:11:22 PM

HATTIE KELLER, SELF, NOME (via teleconference), advocated for funding for pre-kindergarten grants and education. She detailed that the City of Nome funded 75 percent of its school compared to 100 percent in Valdez. The school was currently looking at budget cuts and cuts to teachers. She was looking at increasing the number of Inupiaq immersion schools. She spoke of the importance of giving children a good start in life.

Co-Chair Seaton relayed there were no additional individuals signed up to testify. The committee would break until 4:25 p.m.

4:13:06 PM

AT EASE

4:26:32 PM

RECONVENED

SUE STEINACHER, NOME EMERGENCY SHELTER TEAM, NOME (via teleconference), spoke in support of the governor's proposed \$18 million to expand substance abuse treatment. She relayed a personal story related to her affiliation with the Nome Emergency Shelter Team. She spoke of a patient coming out of treatment into homelessness. She recently died from acute alcoholism. She supported continued investment in treatment followed by an investment of housing and case management. She emphasized the importance of the governor's proposed funding for the items in addition to treatment.

[4:30:01 PM](#)

AT EASE

[4:30:43 PM](#)

RECONVENED

RUTHIE KNIGHT, CITY OF VALDEZ/PWSEDD, VALDEZ (via teleconference), She advocated for full funding of the Alaska Marine Highway System. Although Valdez had access via road, air, and ferry, better ferry service lead to greater economic development. She suggested placing the funding in the fast track supplemental bill. She noted that there was significant support for an additional revenue stream including an income tax.

Co-Chair Seaton remarked that money was in the fast track supplemental bill which would be voted on the House Floor shortly. He reported that there were no testifiers online. The committee would break for 5 minutes, at which time, if there was no one else online, the committee would break until 5:00 p.m.

[4:33:55 PM](#)

AT EASE

[4:39:02 PM](#)

RECONVENED

Co-Chair Seaton indicated no one was online to testify; therefore, the meeting would stand at ease until 5:00 p.m.

[4:39:30 PM](#)

AT EASE

[5:01:38 PM](#)

RECONVENED

FRANK OXEREOK, BERING SEA ELDERS GROUP, WALES (via teleconference), spoke about the high cost of living in the area. He shared that recently the community had lost two young people to suicide. The village had no resources to help families that had been impacted. He detailed that resources that could help young people were next to nothing. He furthered that older children had no after school activities. He stressed that the young people were the future of the community. He stated that the community had lost a generation of young people primarily due to illegal marijuana sales - there were two marijuana dealers operating openly because of a lack of law enforcement. He was concerned about the young people in the community. There was no law enforcement in the region. He relayed that 99 percent of the households in the region did their laundry at a laundry mat that needed replacement pumps. He explained that the community had a high cost of construction. The community had a honey bucket system. There was a lack of jobs in the community. He wondered how some people in the community survived.

Co-Chair Seaton conveyed condolences for the loss of the young people in the community.

[5:08:36 PM](#)

TOM LAKOSH, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), asked the legislature to make it clear that the governor or court could not use veto to change what had been passed by the legislature pertaining to the Permanent Fund Dividend. He believed the state's supreme court had erred in allowing the governor to use a line item veto to change statutory language pertaining to distribution of the PFD. He believed \$1,000 had been stolen from residents two years earlier. He believed the bill's language was binding on the corporation unless amended in statute.

[5:11:16 PM](#)

IDA NELSON, SELF, IGIUGIG (via teleconference), was in support of adding funds for pretrial officers, state troopers, and Village Public Safety Officers (VPSO). She supported an increase to the BSA. She did not believe the fisheries budget needed any further cuts. She shared that the Lake and Peninsula School District had already

shortened its school year by four weeks to save money. She stressed that the district could not afford to cut two additional weeks of school. The funding that had been cut had already dramatically impacted predictions of salmon returns because they no longer had the data.

[5:13:54 PM](#)

KIM PHILIPS, SELF, HAINES (via teleconference), testified in support of Parents as Teachers. She thanked the committee for its past support. She provided detail about her work as a parent educator. The program had received a superb rating. She shared that she had observed parent educators - the program built on family strengths. She gave further detail about the benefits of the program. She underscored the value of the program that supported families. Group activities were provided to prevent children from being isolated. The program encouraged parents to take an active role in their children's lives.

[5:17:54 PM](#)

JENNIFER ALLEN, RURAL CAP, HAINES (via teleconference), spoke in favor of funding for Parents as Teachers. She thanked the committee for support it had provided to the program. She emphasized the value of the program. She stressed the importance of investing in young children and families.

Co-Chair Seaton relayed that the committee would break until 5:30 p.m. and would adjourn at that time if there were no additional callers.

[5:19:30 PM](#)

AT EASE

[5:29:59 PM](#)

RECONVENED

EVELYNN TREFON, SELF, NEW HALEN (via teleconference), spoke in support of education funding. She wanted her daughter to have all the educational opportunities she had. She relayed that fisheries management had not been adequately managed in the area. She stated that if funding had been in place ahead of time the fish would have been counted. She implored the committee to fund the Department of Fish and Game in full. She asked the committee to fund public safety

and troopers. She discussed the lack of troopers due to budget cuts. She often felt that unless someone was killed a trooper could not come to the village. She encouraged the committee to protect community assistance and Power Cost Equalization. She did not support special sessions and encouraged the legislature to do its work within a 90 to 120-period.

[5:33:05 PM](#)

HB 285 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

HB 286 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

Co-Chair Seaton reviewed the schedule for the following day.

#

ADJOURNMENT

[5:34:39 PM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 5:34 p.m.