

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

1651

HOUSE and SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE FILES, 1997-1998



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Finance
 committee name
 committee on House Bill 76, dated March 22, 1997
 bill/subject

I do not want the cuts to be made to the mental health monies because of the great need of these funds.

I am a consumer of these funds

Signed: *William Minoff*
 Testifier

Representing (Optional)
230 E. Paulton / HCO3 Box 5588 Palmer
 Address
745 3412
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Rep. Vic Kohring
committee name
 committee on House Bill No. 76, dated 03-22-97
bill/subject

This written statement is another
 reminder of a written submitted
 statement dated 03-20-97.

This is to please up keep out
 neoptics prescribed drug, psychiatrists
 apps and/or at least psych. tests.
 Again a solution to reinstate for
 final form a grant for ~~development~~
 for hearing aids

Signed: Grace A. Lundeberg
Testifier

private citizen
Representing (Optional)

P.O. Box 088, Palmer, AK 99545-3881
Address

1-907-746-0757
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Finance
committee name

committee on HB 76, dated March 22, 1997.
bill/subject

I am strongly opposed to the proposed budget cuts for community mental health services, as well as, medical services. These cuts will have a severely detrimental effect on the quality of my life.

Signed: Charlene Hanulek
Testifier

Nadezda Jarulek
Representing (Optional)

P.O. Box 521059
Address

Big Lake, AK

Phone No. 882-9006



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Finance Committee
committee name
 committee on HB 75/76, dated 3-22-97
bill/subject

Please restore cuts to medicaid, welfare and mental health services, as recommended by the finance subcommittee, I came to this hearing with 4 others mentally ill to testify. I recognized the faces of many mentally ill in the hearing room whom I have seen previously in the psychiatrists waiting room. Wish we could ha

Signed: Martin Hopkins
Testifier
VALLEY ALLIANCE FOR Mentally Ill
Representing (Optional)
P.O. BOX 1107 Palmer, AK 99645
Address
745-1551
Phone No.

MAHAY'S RIVERBOAT SERVICE

March 19, 1997

I own and operate a business in the upper Matanuska Valley, in the town of Talkeetna. I have operated this business for over 20 years and I am one of the largest employers in Talkeetna, with 32 employees. Without tourists my business would not be so successful.

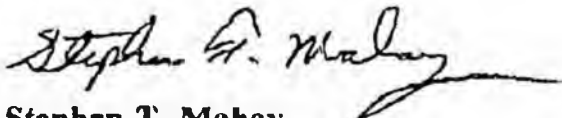
I am appalled that the Finance Committee would even consider cutting funding for the Alaska Department of Tourism. Many other states and countries are increasing their marketing budgets for tourism, so they can compete as destinations (Hawaii spends 30 million a year on tourism marketing). The Department of Tourism can reach places I, and many other small business owners, can only dream about. They are an important resource for many small business owners throughout the state.

Tourism is one of the largest economic resources that Alaska has. Why would you risk losing the 1.6 billion in tourism dollars, last year's tourism revenue, to save 3.5 million now? All business owners know that you have to spend money to make money. Sounds like you need to go back to school and learn business basics.

Small business owners are the backbone of our state's, and also the nation's, economy. They have worked long and hard to make Alaska a choice destination. You are in effect saying that all that hard work doesn't matter, small business doesn't matter. Small business owners are your constituents.

Climb down from your glass towers and take a good look at your state, the state that you are supposed to be representing. What you will find is a bunch of people, real people, who love this state and can see a future for her without oil. This cannot happen if the Legislature keeps cutting funding for tourism.

Sincerely,



Stephen T. Mahay
President/CEO

"Serving Sportfishermen Since 1977"

Box 705 • Talkeetna, Alaska 99676 • (907) 733-2223 • Fax (907) 733-2712



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Operating Mental Health
 committee name Appropriation
 committee on HB 75, dated March 21, 1997
 bill/subject

I am outraged at the large monthly rent increases being anticipated by our Pioneer Home residents, especially since their level of care is being reduced. These residents entered the Pioneer Homes in good faith that they would be able to afford to live out their lives there. Now they are facing unrealistic charges that most are unable to afford. Surely we can afford to take care of our senior citizens to the extent that we don't make paupers out of them. Please reconsider the implementation of these large rent increases.

Signed: Carol M. Atrouse
 Testifier
Myself
 Representing (Optional)
P.O. Box 354, Palmer, AK 99645
 Address
(907) 745-3532
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Operating + Mental Health
 committee on 75, dated 3-20-97
committee name
appropriations
 bill/subject

As a long term resident of the State of Alaska and a Senior Citizen I am concerned as to the future of the Palmer Pioneer Homes. I am also a spokesman for a resident there. A schedule has been already put into action to increase the rates of residency - No doubt an increase is warranted, but several hundred dollars per month!! - What is confusing and very puzzling - is that the increases don't match the service provided - In fact services are being cut! - It doesn't make sense. It is unsettling to think that this will be the pattern to be followed - I think it is only fair that an explanation be given to each resident - detailing exactly what they are getting for their dollar - when financial straits are straddled along with how much care will be given - their emotional well being is undermined - and they are made to feel like second-class citizens. Thank you for the opportunity to express my feelings.

Signed: Love C. Hermon

Testifier

Hilda Hermon

Representing (Optional)

325 E. Coergreen

Address

Palmer, Alaska

Phone No. 907-745-3788

1998 Legislative Information Office

Post-It™ brand fax transmittal memo 7671		# of pages > 1
To	Mat-Su Legislative Exec C Hermon	
Co.	Information Office	
From	Love C Hermon	
Phone #	907-745-3788	
Fax #	907-746-1036	



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance Committee
 committee name
 committee on HSS Budget , dated 3/22/97
 bill/subject:

I strongly urge you to reconsider the Medicaid cuts which have been proposed.

If implemented, these cuts will devastate people with disabilities. You need to exclude them at the least. The humane action would be to make NO cuts & allow people with disabilities to retain some quality of life.

Signed: Shawn Hawbold-Harrison

Testifier

My Children - Mike, Katie + Billy

Representing (Optional)

P.O. Box 2777 Soldotna AK 99669

Address

907-262-5370

Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HOUSE Finance
committee name

committee on Health + Social Serv. dated Mar. 22, 97
bill/subject

I strongly oppose the Medicaid cuts proposed by the sub-finance comm. I am the grandmother of a severely disabled little girl, who's life hangs in the balance of these cuts. Also my son-in-law is disabled and is the father of the little girl. Their family relies on the benefits of Medicaid. If these cuts take place, how can they survive?? You need to separate the disabled from the rest of the Medicaid/welfare population.

Please do not support these cuts.

Signed: Mary Ann Smith
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

2845 WAINWRIGHT WAY KENAI 99611
Address

283-0789
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance Committee
committee name

committee on Health Social Service dated 3/22/97
bill/subject

I am very concerned with your recent proposed cuts to Medicaid. My husband and daughter will be adversely affected with these cuts. If we cannot maintain the care at home due to these extreme cuts - it will cost the State of Alaska much, much more.

I personally brought my disabled husband and daughter to speak - but this system to speak to you is very ineffective.

Please do not support these cuts.

Signed: Laura Jaul
Testifier

Representing (Optional)
3410 S Kobuk Soldotna 2 99669
Address

262-3236
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance
 committee on Health + Social Services committee name
 dated Mar 22, 97
 bill/subject:

As a Grandmother of a severely disabled child - I request that you not support these radical cuts made to the disabled population. It is clearly inhumane to show such little regard for the disabled. Should families be unable to cope with these proposed cuts - the outcome will be obvious in a short period of time. The cost to the State of Alaska will be unbearable and you certainly be warned. Should this happen - we will hold you responsible. Do not support these cuts to balance the budget.

Signed: [Signature]
 Testifier

Health + Social Services
 Representing (Optional)

190 W. Park Ave - Soldotna AK
 Address

262-7939
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance Committee
 committee name
 committee on Health + Social Ser. dated 3/22/97
 bill/subject

I wish to address the proposed cuts in Medicaid. I work with & are friends with many people who experience substantial disabilities. These individuals are least able to advocate for themselves or bridge the gap in services created by continuing cuts in service. 2 years ago a co-pay was added. Last year dental, vision & hearing services were eliminated. These new cuts will be devastating. \$800-\$850 per month does not allow you to purchase these necessary, high cost services.

Please reconsider these devastating cuts.

Signed:

Wendi Crosby

Testifier

Myself, and Frontier Community Services
 Representing (Optional)

PO Box 2110 Soldotna, AK 99669

Address

907-262-6331

Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance Committee
committee name
 committee on HSS Budget, dated 3/22/97
bill/subject

The proposed Medicaid cuts would destroy whatever chance my children have to have a normal life. They have severe disabilities + will not be able to stay at home in the community. These cuts are leading to the destruction of the weak members of our society. My ex-wife will not be able to care for the children + they will have to be institutionalized. Do you care enough to find other ways to cut the budget?

Signed: Avery G. Hawbold
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

HC 3-4973 Soldotna AK 99669

Address

262-4778

Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance Committee
 committee name
 committee on HSS Budget , dated 3/22/97
 bill/subject

I object strongly to the proposed cuts in Medicaid. My brothers + Sister who are disabled will not be able to have any kind of a life. It's been hard enough with the cuts to date, Even more cuts will destroy whatever chance they have of living in the community + staying at home.

Signed: Jennifer J. Hawbold
 Testifier

Katie, Billy + Mike Hawbold
 Representing (Optional)

P.O. Box 674 Soldotna
 Address

262-8528
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance Committee
 committee name
 committee on Health, Social Service Budget dated 3/22/97
 bill/subject

I strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed cuts in the Medicaid Budget. Cuts in the areas of Medicaid and Disabled programs will serve only to further the struggle these people face daily.

Signed: Daniel Vail
 Testifier

Representing (Optional)

340 S. Kobuk St. Soldotna AK, 99669
 Address

262-9481
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance
committee name
 committee on the Budget , dated 22 March 1997
bill/subject:

I urge you to support the Governor's Budget for State Parks. I'm concerned about your proposed cuts, particularly the direction to cut staff.

~~I~~ I'm a member of the Kenai River Special Management Area board. The Kenai River is 82 miles long and is served by only 3 rangers who are on the water to watch over thousands of anglers each summer. In July, there can be 500 boats in the 11 miles between Soldotna and Brown creek - and only one ranger. The ranger's day begins at 4 am, the guides are on the river at 6 am, and the rangers are off the river by 2 pm. Just 10 years ago there were 4 rangers and 4 temporary hires who worked May - September. What we ^{need} this summer are 3 more rangers so the river can be patrolled in the afternoon and evening hours, as well. We are ill-prepared for this year's onslaught of anglers (I enclose p.12 of the latest Newsweek)

every year you have been "cutting the fat" out of the →

Signed: Peggy Mullen
 Testifier

Representing (Optional)
355 Lungherry Soldotna AK 99669
 Address
262.9225
 Phone No.

budget. The state now runs the risk of being "penny-wise and pound foolish."

As you have heard this morning, we risk the loss of salmon resources / long term economic resources, in addition to human resources lost by cuts to education, women & children and disabled programs.

Rather than continue to cut 8-10% from budgets every year and risk loss of essential government services, I urge you to show some political courage and begin discussions of revenue enhancement options such as:

- the establishment of a second permanent fund such as is being suggested by Dave Rose
- and/or a ^{progressive} state income tax with a credit for local taxes paid, so that we can begin to capture some of the oil and fishing wages that leave this state without paying for any of our state infrastructure.

Thank you!

Peggy Mullen



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HOUSE FINANCE
committee name

committee on BUDGET , dated 18 MAR 97
bill/subject

THE ATTEMPT TO TRANSFER FUNDS FROM THE A.S. SCIENCE & TECH. FOUNDATION & DELIVER IT TO A STATE AGENCY IS A BAD IDEA. WE HEAR ABOUT NOW WE NEED TO DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY & REDUCE STATE SPENDING. THIS PROPOSAL IS DOING JUST THE OPPOSITE. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO TAKE FUNDS FROM A FOUNDATION DEDICATED TO PROVIDE FUNDING & ASSISTANCE TO THE NEW & INNOVATIVE BUSINESS PROJECTS & PUT IT BACK INTO A STATE AGENCY ADMINISTERED BY BUREAUCRATS. THIS IS NOT WHAT THE MAJORITY IN JUNBERG SAID THEY WOULD DO WHEN ELECTED. PLEASE DROP THIS PROPOSAL FROM COMMITTEE DISCUSSION -

Thank you -

Signed: HARRY H. ALA
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

P.O. Box 1863 Soldotna, AK. 99669
Address

907-283-9166
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Finance committee name

committee on Budget dated 3/22/97
(bill/subject)

Why do we need to cut the Budget? We live in the richest state in the Union. We hear that the Budget must be cut so all state agencies or the same time the Legislature is increasing their own funding. Last session the Legislature was not funding state contractors at the same time that the Legislators were drastically increasing their personal incomes via per diem etc.

This session the cuts continue to all parts of state Government except the Legislature which is increasing its funding by more than \$300,000,000. What kind of a message is this sending.

It is time to reauthorize the state Income Tax. We had one in the past and it worked. We have many workers in extraction and tourism who come to Alaska and either bring their supplies with them or import them (over)

Signed: William R. Dauter (William R. Dauter)

Testifier

SD/

Representing (Optional)

Hot Box 1112 Soldotna AK 99609

Address

907 362 7077

Phone No.

From co'side. They spend no money here, pay no taxes and extract money from the state. It is time to let all of those who earn their livings here to

● Help support the state and its infrastructure.

The current "Veto Proof" Legislature could easily pass a fair and equitable income tax that would

fund all necessary services. This is not an election year. I fear though that the Majority's agenda

is that of a cowardly bully. It has its own personal agenda and no social conscience and

no concern about what happens to the poor and children. They don't vote with the same power that VECO, Alyeska and other

● Large employers do.

Lets Please support the Governor's

Budget.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the

House Finance

committee name

committee on

D.S. 498

dated

3-22-97

bill/subject

I have a SEIZURE disorder brought on from a permanent Brain Disorder suffered 34 yrs. ago at age 16. Medication is needed to avoid EMERGENCY hosp. visits. Catch 22.

I also require glasses, & my eyes are at the age where the changes are closer & more frequent.

Rental Assistance is on the block & 74th (Rent) can't be far behind.

I'm buying my home. What then?

Signed:

Christina [Signature]

Testifier

Representing (Optional)

363 Aspen Sokolom

Address

262-7199

Phone No.

**ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE AND
THE ALASKA CONFERENCE OF MAYORS**
Testimony to the House Finance Committee 3/22/97
by Rosemary Hagevig, President AML

The Alaska Municipal League and the Alaska Conference of Mayors represent **135 municipalities and nearly 100% of Alaska's taxpayers**

Municipalities have the same job as state in providing basic services:

- education
- public safety - police/troopers
- roads, harbors, airports
- many other services are either half and half, or if the state doesn't do them munis are the provider of last resort. Roads for example.

Municipalities are about 50% or more funded by combination of property, sales taxes and user fees for water, sewer and other direct muni services.

The other part, comes largely from the state, and that comes largely from Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing, school funding, school debt reimbursement, and municipal Capital Matching Grants.

A lot of people still think their property taxes finance municipal government. **Actually, if you took away state support to municipalities, taxes in every large municipality would at least double or triple from today's levels.** Some small ones will collapse. That is why municipal governments and your constituents who pay municipal taxes are so vulnerable to cuts to programs like Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing.

Sharing revenues with municipalities is not an Alaskan idea, in fact every municipality in the U.S. does it. As of figures that are two years old, Alaska shared less than the average in the western states. Municipal revenue sharing programs are so critical because we would literally halt economic development in many areas because **property taxes would make Alaska a poor investment for business.** Alaska's great wealth is meant to keep

taxes low for residents of our state and that obviously includes municipal taxes.

The attached chart shows the \$ to \$ relationship between local property taxes and state funding of major municipal programs, specifically MARS, education, and Senior exemption.

- As you see from 1988 to 1991 munis were able to keep property taxes stable even in the face of growing state cuts. **This is great testimony to the efficiency and rightsizing of many munis who face state/fed mandates/ regs, cuts in state/fed programs, transfers of state services, inflation, rising crime rates, additional demand for other services.** All without raising property taxes.
- After 1991 you see a steady rise in property taxes, but still somewhat less than the direct impact of state budget actions on MA/RS, education.

Second, chart shows MARS against the overall state budget. MARS has been cut over 60% while the overall state budget has remained about the same.

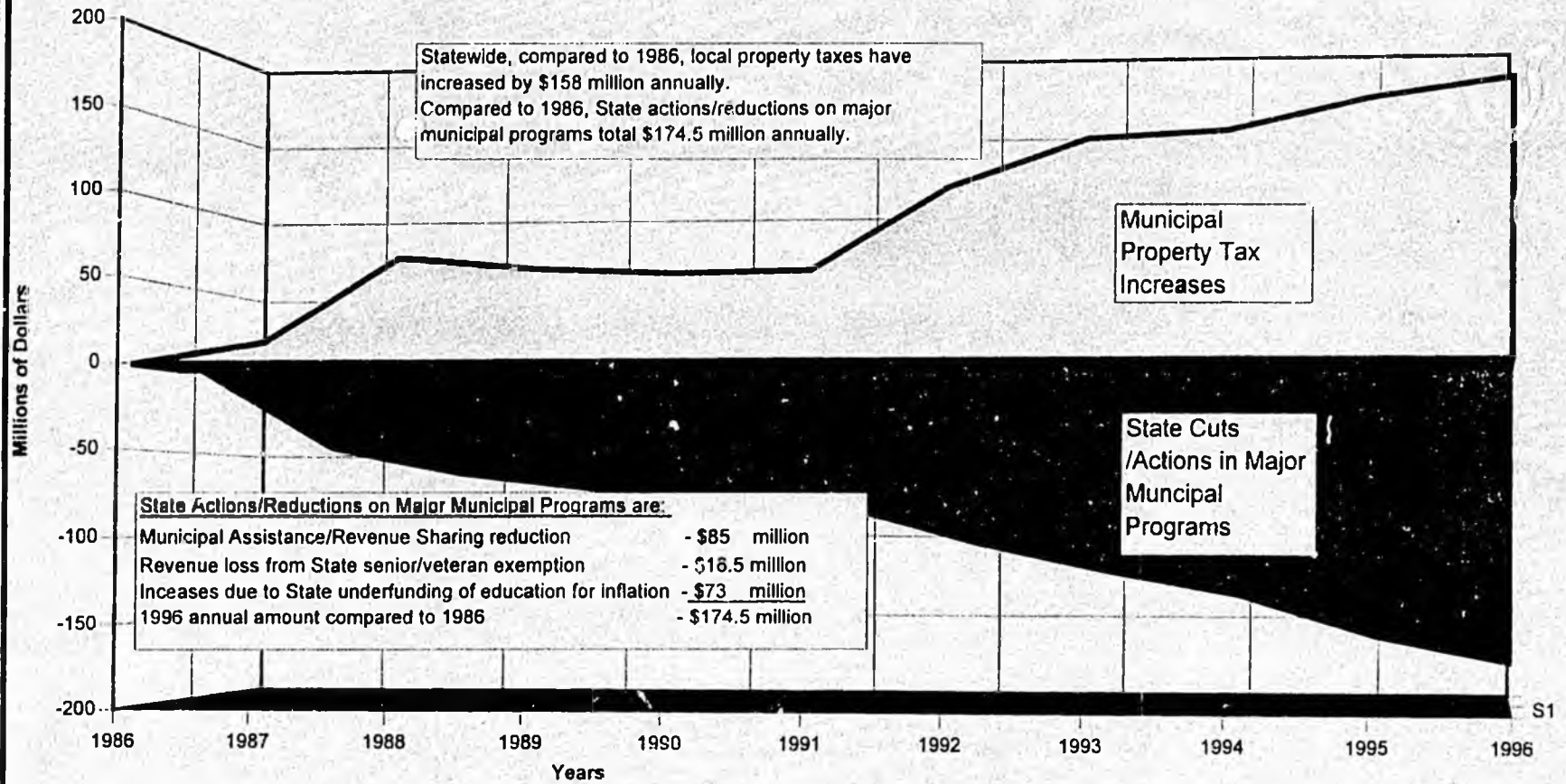
The municipalities and the municipal taxpayers of Alaska have one critical request to the legislature. **Please evaluate each budget cut or budget action you make to avoid putting more pressure on local property taxpayers.** Even though some communities have instituted property tax caps, they cannot stem the tide if state budget reductions continue to impact munis. If property taxes cannot be raised, then some other potentially equally unpalatable form of local taxation must be found or munis will have to put up with overcrowded schools, crumbling roads, and an inability to meet new challenges.

The five year plan to balance the state budget does not include increases in local property taxes. And the commitment has been made to exclude tax increases from the proposed \$60 million in budget reductions.

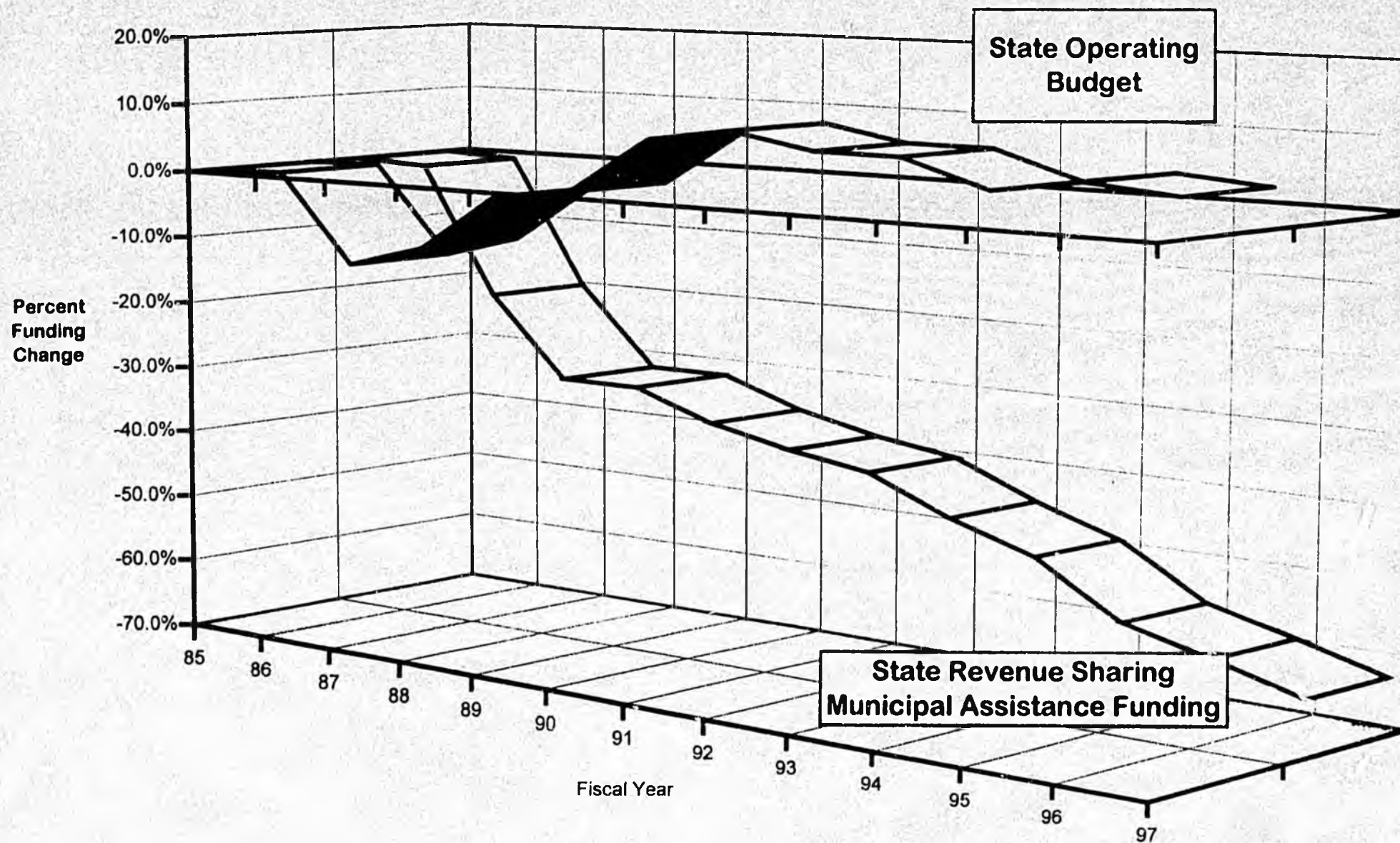
Thank you!

State Actions on Major Municipal Programs are the Primary Factor in Local Property Tax Increases

(Increase in Property Taxes vs State Actions/ Reductions on Major Municipal Programs)



**Comparison of State Operating Budget vs.
State Revenue Sharing/Municipal Assistance Funding
FY 85 - FY 97**





Four Reasons Why Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing Should NOT be Cut this Year

- 1.** According to legislative leaders, the \$60 million reduction in state spending this year will “NOT include new taxes or revenues”. **Cuts to Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing simply pass on higher taxes to local taxpayers.** Therefore, reductions to Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing should not be considered as part of the \$60 million budget cut.
- 2.** Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing has been cut far more than any other major state program. It has already been cut by nearly 70% in the past ten years, and 15% in the last two years. **Due to past cuts to Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing, municipal taxpayers are already contributing over \$80 million per year in local property taxes to balance the state budget.**
- 3.** Reductions to Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing will ensure that there will be more dissolutions of small rural municipalities, loss of basic public services, and **may lead to a breakdown of municipal government in rural areas.**
- 4.** Accelerating local sales and property taxes, and reduced maintenance of local public infrastructure, fueled primarily by cuts in municipal programs, are already **discouraging long term business investments in Alaska’s communities and local economies.**

**Thank you for your consideration of local taxpayers
and your support for Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing.**

The Alaska Municipal League and the
Alaska Conference of Mayors.

Bill Legere

Mr. Chairman, over the past few years the proposed cuts to public broadcasting have been so extreme that these hearings you've heard from ^{50 or more} dozens of public broadcasting supporters. I'm grateful that the administration and the subcommittee has adopted a more reasonable approach, ^{good faith} and ~~but~~ we don't have to take up your time with dozens of people testifying, but I hope you realize that the proposed reduction will have consequences. Taken on top of 41% in state funding reductions over the past three years, this additional cut will further weaken local stations and jeopardize our offers to consolidate and restructure public radio and TV. There are ^{3 brief} ~~five~~ points that I'd hope you'll consider:

As a result of the state cuts, we've taken a steep loss of federal matching funds. Many stations are now right on the edge of losing all federal funding. Even the reduction proposed by the subcommittee may mean that some stations will lose their federal grants; any larger cuts will mean that many or most of the stations will lose the federal share.

The system has survived the large cuts of the past three years only because new technology came along at the right time to allow us to maintain service more economically. There aren't any more technological miracles out there to save the system from further dramatic cuts.

Before the big reductions in state support, public radio, public TV and RATNET were separate institutions. Now, in response to the cuts, we've merged organizations to the point that the whole system will collapse if any one of the legs are pulled out. The best example: we're all sharing the new satellite technology, and we depend on each other to fund it. If one of the satellite partners is forced to pull out, the other services will go down too.

I applaud Rep. Davis's subcommittee¹⁵ interest in learning about how the system operates today. As you know, public broadcasting is famous¹⁶ for our pledge drives. I'd like to renew the pledge we've made to the legislature every year for the past decade. I know that most of you don't want to see stations go off the air, but that most of you do want to make sure that we're doing everything possible to maintain service and attract new, private sources of funding, So I'll renew our pledge to work with you on a reasonable, responsible plan for assuring that the state dollars are invested wisely and that the system survives.

Finally, I'd like to note that our Senate subcommittee met this morning, and the Chairman proposed a reduction similar to the house number, but he warned that, quote, "public television isn't out of the woods..." If that means that ^{elimination} a large reduction to public television is being contemplated, you should know that it WILL force an end to Alaskan public television ^{by the Senate} service. If it is the intent of the legislature to kill public broadcasting, we're an easy target --- ^{stations BTOA, ARCS, and our stations in Anchorage, JUNO, PBY} just cut another couple of hundred thousand, and we'll be off the air in most communities by July 1. But if your intent is to work with us and ^{40 billion as most Alaskans} ~~most Alaskans~~, ^{I hope} than you'll adopt the subcommittee's recommendation....

(Name)

Rep Henry & Norton Quinn in DNR's Parks Management Component in the Division of State Parks and to

Name Ted Marvell
3240 Fritz Cove Rd
Juneau

Represent (Myself) - Testifying to restore the budget ~~and~~ ^{revenue} ~~restoration~~
Lived in Juneau 40 years - retired fish biologist
Member Juneau and State Parks Advisory Board

My family has ~~had~~ traveled and camped
throughout Alaska in ~~most~~ ^{many} of Alaska's state parks
in tents, and recently ~~by~~ ^{by} RV.

~~I understand that the House Finance~~
The Committee is proposing a \$184 k cut in
the State Parks ^{Management} budget, of which 1/2 (92k)
must be staff cuts.
~~This~~ ^{This} ~~cut~~ would cripple the State

Parks system. The proposed dollar cut is
bad enough, but a requirement for 1/2 the
cut to be in staff reduction, would ~~reduce~~ ^{hamstring}
the ability of State Parks to allocate
its resources ~~not~~ efficiently.

(2)

This draconian reduction in State

Park funds would result in:

* A 25% reduction in summer temporary

help who maintain parks and collect

Monies ~~and~~ (collected by those employees

user fees. ~~These~~ provide about 1/2 the

operating funds for the State Park system.

* Closure of 18 existing park units, 4 of

which are in Southeast Alaska at Sittka,

5 new park facilities, including the

* Not opening ~~the~~ Southeast Alaska

Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve viewing platform,

nature trail and parking lot — a major

attraction for out-of-state tourists.

* Not opening 10 new roadside outhouses that have already
~~Not opening~~ been purchased and are ready for
use in 1987.

* Loss of \$132,000 in revenue fees resulting

from closed facilities — which, with

the \$184. K reduction in state funding,

would result in an overall loss of

\$315,000 in park management funding.

Alaska's State Parks are among the

best in the nation, heavily used by

residents, and a major attraction

to out-of-state visitors who benefit

Alaska's economy.

I urge you to restore the projected

cuts, and ~~especially~~ especially to eliminate

a ~~the~~ requirement that 1/2 of any cuts be

~~this~~ ^{requirement} ~~provision~~ would deny ~~the~~

for staff personnel, ~~depleting~~ ~~the~~ ~~Parks~~

the Parks Division the flexibility ^{to deploy personnel} ~~to manage the parks~~

~~efficiently~~ most efficiently ~~and~~ ~~responsibly~~ ~~to~~ ~~ensure~~ ~~the~~ ~~best~~ ~~possible~~ ~~results~~

~~to~~ ~~ensure~~ ~~efficiency~~ ~~in~~ ~~attending~~

~~to~~ ~~ensure~~ ~~efficiency~~ ~~in~~ ~~attending~~

Thank you

Testimony before the House Finance Committee on March 22, 1997

Comments by Christine L Parce (a 30 year resident of the State of Alaska)

My phone # is 586-1267

I read, with dismay, in the Friday night Juneau Empire that you are taking Public Comment on the House Version of the FY98 budget Proposal.

I would like to state for the record that I am dismayed at the extremely short amount of time you allow us, the citizens of the state, to provide public comment.

This is ridiculous, unless of course, you do not intend to pay any attention to our comments anyway and this is just a facade to appease the public.

Having said that I would now like to enter my comments into the public record. I do so as a private citizen; however, I would inform you that I have, just this past November, retired from the State Department of Administration where I held the position of Department Finance Officer for 10 years: My comments will be made by department.

Public TV: It is a shame that this type of cut is required but I do understand that the budget
& radio: needs to be trimmed where possible without harm to the citizens and I think the citizens want this service enough to come up with private funding to fill this gap. I know I am a contributor now and will continue to contribute.

Page -2-

Rural Communications: I think this is increase is required

DEC: Solid waste is a health issue and if the Department receives 1.2 Million cut the Legislators should make certain it is not this program that takes the hit but that it comes out of surplus staff department-wide... or in some other areas rather than an area that deals with a serious health issue.

Court System: I agree with this cut to the degree that it may increase the States current Security Service as that service is as near as totally useless as any group that has ever contracted with the State of Alaska. I don't know who monitors their work but it needs more attention.

They seem to think their main job is to write parking tickets. They appear to be unable to deal with any serious issues. I have personally been involved with them on several different issues and they provide a nearly worthless service.

If the Governor's proposed Increase has to deal with an upgrade of those types of services plus technical services then that increase is most probably legitimate, we are far to insecure in most of our state facilities during these times of terrorist

activities across the nation and we should protect our public officials and employees from suffering a disaster before one does happen rather than be sorry we didn't after the fact.

Department of Labor: No Comment

Department of Revenue: The Department is absolutely right ! Someone must ensure that parents be made to support their children, frankly most citizens are sick and tired of paying to keep people on AFDC because the parents have not been made to provide for their children.. Cost savings to the State of Alaska would come about through more enforcement of child support collections not less

I do not understand what thought process you must go thru to come to the conclusion that cutting enforcement of child support collections will save the state money. That is an amazing conclusion!

Page -4-

If the Legislature is serious about trying to save serious money - Like 60 Million this year- then you must quit nibbling at this process and quit chipping away a little here and a little there.

It is time for some Serious Streamlining. The following is one very serious suggestion that will knock out a large chunk of dollars being spent on duplicate Administrative cost.....which by the way is where the Citizens of the State of Alaska want those cuts to come from.....They want cuts in what they perceive as excess administrative costs.....They do not want their services cut.

The entire Department of Revenue should be eliminated! It is true they perform many services that are necessary & must still be performed but those services should be reshuffled in order to eliminate a High burden of unnecessary overhead cost such as the Office of the Commission and the Administrative Services group.

I would move Child Enforcement Services to H&SSwhere AFDC resides now and these two functions are really linked.

Many functions performed in Revenue should be performed in DOA, Division of Finance.

Some functions could be privatized.

Page -5-

The PFD function needs a total overhaul to make it more efficient. DOA Commissioner Boyer had several great ideas about redesigning that system and I hope some of those ideas have been put in place. The DOA, Division of Information Services could be doing this job through some computerized system that does not require so much key punching and the volume of paper that both goes out and comes back in to perform that Service

The PFD Investments should be handled by the Board of Trustee through Privatization with a Brokerage Firm.

The Investments that occur in Revenue on behalf of the DOA , Division of Retirement and Benefits should be handled by the Boards of those bodies through privatization.

I am sure there are many other types of efficiencies that can take place but this type of thinking will require you, the Legislators to "think outside of the box" and invest your time in the bigger picture of the budget rather than concentrate on these little cuts here and there which mostly result in taking away services from the Citizens of the State of Alaska rather than reducing the bureaucracy which is what they want.

Please consider the Combination of the DOA & Revenue to eliminate a large cost of duplicate Commissioner and Division of Administrative Groups. There is no need in this effort to reduce the services to the citizens of the State.

H&SS: Cutting this Department really hurts the neediest of the States Citizens. Cuts here cost the State many dollars in Federal Funding. These services will have to be provided some how to these needy people.

Cutting Welfare to the truly needy recipients is crazy. We need to reform welfare and, I hope, we are in that process. That might not mean savings right away in that process.

We need to Privatize other functions of Government so there are more private jobs available and put dollars into training our welfare recipients (those that can be) and enable them to get jobs and get off the welfare system so as to cut that cycle of need for the long term.

We must learn to be strong to accomplish welfare reform but we must not be "mean" to the neediest amongst us.

Division of Tourism: This is one Division that we absolutely must to Keep!
I believe they will provide the best service by being kept together to share their skills & information so as to avoid duplication of efforts.
They have developed a very competent Profession staff that does great work on behalf of the Citizen of Alaska, this is attested to, in

part, by the Huge increases of Tourist and the dollars they bring to our state every year. These services really need to be continued in support of all those folks that work in this industry in the private sector. Especially now when our timber and fishing industries are on the ropes.

These Services are best provided by a group of top notch professionals that work together to accomplish their mission, not by being spread out to various departments.

ASTF Program:

Elimination of this function is crazy! The world is becoming ever more technologically advanced.....Alaska needs to keep up and create new concepts and ideas to insulate our citizens from the effects of falling behind in these technical areas.

Our citizens need to be come up with ways in which to use , what is becoming more limited daily, our timber resources and find ways to add value to this resource. This could mean more JOBS.

Likewise in seafood, aerospace and agriculture

We certainly do need road maintenance and building maintenance but part of that money can be found I suspect if one would really review DOT, a Department that is the most inefficient in the entire state system with regard to it's administrative functions and most probably in the delivery of services.

Law:

While not mentioned in the Juneau Empire article I have a few comments to make about the Department of Law also.

My comments apply specifically to the Attorney General's Office & its role in Consumer Protection Enforcement.

I have been led to believe by the Assistant AG in Anchorage, an office of one, that he is the only person assigned to cover this extremely important area for the Citizens of the State. The reason for this is the "Lack of Funds" for such services.

This is ridiculous in an affluent state such as ours.

I have been personally involved with a Hugh "class action type case" and am trying to help a group of 40 Alaskan Citizens in a fraudulent case involving a telephone company scam. Remember I said I was working with a group of 40, but let me tell you there are hundreds of Alaskan citizens involved and they will become financially harmed by this company when it files for bankruptcy sometime in the very near future. These citizens have not been able to get any assistance to get their hundreds of thousands of dollars back that was taken from them in deceptive practices and through direct fraud. This is an actual ongoing case that I am having to fight daily, right now, without the aid of our Consumer Protection Arm of the Attorney General's office.

I only tell you this as an introduction to my comments, If I thought I could get any assistance from my State Officials I would go on.. buthaving written to The Governor, my local legislators and the Attorney General, and having received no assistance from them, it is clear my problem falls on deaf ears.. The attorney general's office has the details if anyone is interested.

What should be important to you and to the public as it was to me when faced with need of assistance. I learned the AG's office is unable to provide the kind of protection we the citizens believe we have available to us..

The AG Consumer Protection section is unable to provide this assistance due

to lack of funds.

In the distant past the AG's office did provide some assistance through their effort to combine forces with the Better Business Bureau but the BBB has been forced to close its doors due to lack of funds.

The citizens of the State of Alaska are being taken advantage of every day by lower 48... and perhaps even some local... unscrupulous business enterprises that enter our state with the knowledge they will have it easy because the State of Alaska is not willing to provide funding to protect our Citizens from these fraudulent business practices.

The case I mentioned above is a case that will be going National as a class action. Many other States are going to take up this case and defend their citizens however the Great State of Alaska apparently will not be standing up for their citizens due to lack of funding of their consumer protection legal office.

Nationwide states fund their Consumer Protection Services Legal Offices because they realize it is one of the important needs of citizens... ..to help them if they have been victimized by Fraudulent Business Practices

This Unit of our Government needs to be adequately funded for the balance of FY97, for FY98 and in the future.

CAPITAL BUDGET

1. Introduce self... on CBJ--ADA, IL Specialist with SAIL, Board member and Local M.S. Chapter support service representative, and Partners Project (explain what that is).

TABS on committee

PROBLEMS


1. Over 1000 Alaskans will lose services and remain on public assistance.
2. State ADA compliance will be limited.
3. Independent Living Services will become limited around the state. Especially rural areas just when the concept is catching on.
4. Impact on client services from DVR who will lose an equal share of federal matching dollars. **ALL THESE ARE IN FRENCH'S LETTER (READ FRENCH'S LETTER)**

*Do this
1st*

OTHER PROBLEMS

1. Impact on children and families: (READ MAJORITY CUTS).



MEMORANDUM


State of Alaska
 Department of Education

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation *

Anchorage Admin Office

To: Representative Reggie Joule
Date: March 14, 1997
From: Duane M. French
Phone: (907) 274-5606
Fax: (907) 274-5605
**Subject: Impact of House
 Budget Reductions**

DRAFT

I am writing in response to your request for information on the proposed reductions made by the House of Representatives to the budget of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).

The reduction of \$10,100 to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) component would further limit the State of Alaska's ADA compliance efforts. The ADA component has already been reduced by 39% with the reductions made in FY 97 and those proposed in the Governor's FY 98 budget. The reductions proposed by the House of Representatives would blunt the State's ability to fully comply with the ADA and will leave the State vulnerable to being sued under the ADA.

The reduction of \$20,400 to the Independent Living component will limit the ability for staff of private non-profit Independent Living Centers around the State to travel to rural and remote areas to provide services to Alaskans with significant disabilities. By not making Independent Living Services available to rural and remote residents of Alaska, the chances of them facing costly institutionalization is increased.

The most devastating reductions and resulting impact is on the Client Services component of the DVR budget. With the House reduction of \$378,400, the Division will lose an equal reduction of Federal funds being reduced because of the Division's Maintenance of Effort requirements. The net loss of funds to DVR would be \$758,400. The only way the Division could cope with such a reduction is to invoke the Order of Selection process which will limit services to only those Alaskans with the most significant disabilities.

Over one thousand Alaskans with disabilities would lose services and remain on Public Assistance, at a far greater cost to the State, rather than moving to meaningful jobs and paying taxes.

The proposed reductions to the travel line item of \$43,500 directly impacts the ability of DVR to send staff to rural and remote areas of Alaska. Reducing the travel of the Client Services component will make it extremely difficult to get needed vocational training and services.

The rollback of the Contractual line item of \$45,400 will cut job placement services and other training made available through private sector vendors. Private sector vendors are a critical part of delivering rehabilitation services to Alaskans with disabilities.

In summary, the proposed reductions of the House of Representatives will have a dramatic and negative impact upon the lives of Alaskans with disabilities.

Reggie Joules Fax 465-4586

Proposed House Majority Budget Cuts for FY98: *Impact on Children and Families*

Governor Knowles' proposed FY98 budget made more than \$40 million of cuts to agencies and programs in order to absorb increases in school enrollment, other formula programs, inflation and labor contracts. This meets his commitment to help close the budget gap by cutting the budget \$100 million over three years. **Budget cuts are necessary, but the House Majority is proposing large cuts on top of cuts already made by the governor, many of which are irresponsible and dangerous to the health and economy of Alaska.**

What challenges does the Governor's budget address?

- More children in our public schools, requiring \$12 million more in state funds.
- Graduates who lack adequate skills for the workplace.
- Highest child abuse rate in the nation and rapid increase in juvenile crime.
- Lack of access to basic health care for poor, elderly, disabled and other adults.
- Second-fastest growing senior population in the nation.

How would Majority budget cuts hurt Alaska's children and families?

- 1 • Cuts out medical supplies and equipment, artificial limbs, rehabilitation and mammograms for poor, elderly and disabled Alaskans.
- 2 • Risks school districts losing \$13.5 million in federal funds by having \$750,000 cut in quality schools and special services, including setting standards and assessing results.
- 3 • Eliminates all rental assistance for the very poorest Alaskans, a program in place since territorial days.
- 4 • Completely eliminates grants that help keep child care safe and affordable and hurts welfare reform by cutting \$1.7 million from child care programs.
- 5 • Eliminates job training for welfare recipients even though training investments are necessary for families to shift from welfare to economic self-sufficiency.
- 6 • Cuts \$2.5 million from the University. *How I got my degree and went to work*
- 7 • Hurts child abuse prevention efforts of the highly successful Healthy Families program.
- 8 • Reduces the governor's budget for juvenile probation services by almost \$600,000 which was targeted for innovative community-based programs to reduce juvenile crime.
- 9 • Cuts over \$600,000 from Child Support Enforcement efforts.
- 10 • Jeopardizes our most vulnerable seniors by reducing Adult Protective Services and licensing of assisted living programs.
- 11 • Eliminates federal funds for innovative community programs to solve children's health and education problems with local solutions.

*11 impacts on families and children
will talk about 4*

Proposed House Majority Budget Cuts for FY98: *Impact on Rural Alaska*

Governor Knowles' proposed FY98 budget made more than \$40 million of cuts to agencies and programs in order to absorb increases in school enrollment, other formula programs, inflation and labor contracts. This meets his commitment to help close the budget gap by cutting the budget \$100 million over three years. Budget cuts are necessary, but the House Majority is proposing large cuts on top of cuts already made by the governor, many of which are irresponsible and dangerous to the health and economy of Alaska.

What challenges does the Governor's budget address?

- Need to diversify community economies with jobs in tourism, fisheries, timber, etc.
- Lack of safe sanitation and solid waste disposal in many communities.
- Inadequate child care and job training so families can get off welfare and become economically self-sufficient.
- No Village Public Safety Officers in many communities.

How would Majority budget cuts hurt Rural Alaska?

1. • Eliminates funding for Village Public Safety Officers in at least seven communities that don't have any officers now.
2. • Jeopardizes the safety and economic viability of rural utility systems by reducing training and business management services.
3. • Cuts the Fish & Game Subsistence Division by \$115,000 and divides it into separate "subsistence" and "rural subsistence" programs.
4. • ~~Disrupts rural energy projects and increases likelihood of power and heating emergencies due to severe reductions in the Division of Energy.~~
5. • Leaves landfills and industrial wastes completely unregulated by the state (including oil field and mining wastes), threatens public health and removes regulatory options unique to rural Alaska.

— Mike Butler

To: Area Superintendents and District Rangers
From: Jim Stratton
Re: Budget cuts

The House Finance committee has proposed a \$183.9 budget cut to Parks and have directed that \$92.0 of that be staff. This means a 25% reduction in summer ACC employees. As a result, we are proposing to close 18 park units, not open the new facilities, and will mothball 10 new roadside outhouses. Not having these facilities open will exacerbate our funding cut by an additional \$132.0 for a total budget impact of \$315.9.

There is a Teleconference schedule for this Saturday, March 22, from 9:30 to 5 at your local Legislative Information Center to hear public testimony. I have communicated with all the advisory board chairs, but I imagine there are other user groups for parks in your area that I don't know about. Feel free to share this information far and wide.

There are many horrid budget cuts proposed, so these hearing will be packed. They have identified a schedule so people don't have to sit at the hearings all day waiting to talk, but I strongly suggest that those that want to testify arrive early to get their name on the list. There is a 2 minute limit on testimony.

9:30 to noon - everywhere but Anchorage, Fairbanks, & Juneau

1 to 3 - Anchorage and Fairbanks

3 to 5 - Juneau

Capital Rm 519

With this memo are materials that include the areas proposed for closure. Remember, this is the first cut on the budget and I expect some changes to our benefit, but only if the Finance Committee members hear from the public. And if we were to have to swallow this cut, we would make some changes to lessen the impact on closures though we would close units. We've all cut our budgets enough over the years, its now time to wake up the public with closures.

MAJOR ATTRACTIONS — LAND

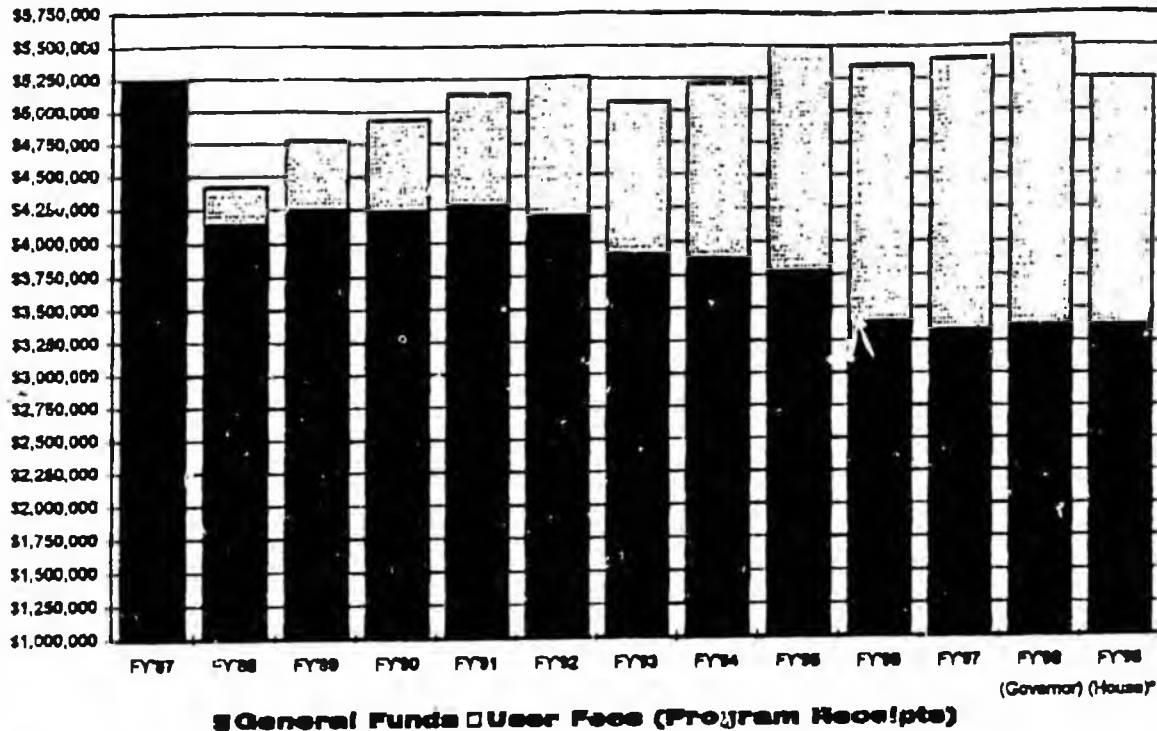
Tourism # 2 — # 1 Resource Focus -
Investing

~~The End of~~

① Budget has been cut for Ten years.
Replaced with user fees

② Budget Cuts — 1987 - state Budget

**House Finance Sub-Committee Proposal
Alaska State Parks
Operating Budget
FY87 - FY98**



* Showing \$132.0 lost fee revenues due to staffing reductions and park closures.

The FY98 House Finance proposal cuts the Parks budget \$183.9 with no recognition that these funds are necessary to maintain basic park operations. This approach is unnecessary, since user fees could be used to maintain campgrounds, outhouses, boat launches, and other park facilities. Parks has the ability, should the legislature authorize it, to fund increased expenses from higher visitation and new facilities which further reducing its dependence on the General Fund.

This chart illustrates almost \$2 million in General Fund cuts to the state parks budget over the past ten years and increasing reliance on user fees (Program Receipts). Starting in FY88, user fees have enabled the parks to stay open while still reducing the General Fund. The park system has coped with increasing visitation and brought new facilities on line through slow growth in fee authorizations. Even the additional costs of collecting more user fees have been absorbed entirely within the existing Parks budget.

**House Finance Committee proposed budget cuts to the
Alaska State Park Management budget for FY98**

Proposed Finance Committee reduction	\$183.9
Lost fee revenues from closed facilities	132.0
Real reduction to Park Management	\$315.9

Impact overview:

6% reduction in operating monies
Close 18 park units
Not open 10 new roadside outhouses
Not open 5 new park facilities
Redeploy permanent staff to 4 parks/clusters of parks

- The Finance Committee has directed that Parks cut \$91.6 from its personnel expenses. This translates into a 25% reduction in temporary summer seasonal hires, the Alaska Conservation Corp (ACC). This reduction in ACC help has caused parks to propose closing certain of its facilities and redeploy its permanent staff, Rangers and Natural Resource Technicians, to other facilities to compensate for the loss of summer ACC staff. A list of 18 facilities that are proposed to be closed is attached.
- Permanent staff at the 18 park closures will be redeployed to Chena River State Recreation Area, Nancy Lake/Willow Creek, Haines area parks, and Deep Creek/Ninilchik parks to compensate for loss of the ACC support at these operations.
- The closing of 18 facilities exacerbates the budget cut by \$132.0 in foregone revenue. An emphasis was placed on maintaining ACC fee collectors at those units that remain open and for administrative assistance in processing fees at area offices.
- Parks has 10 new roadside outhouses that will be mothballed pending eventual restoration of funds to operate these facilities. A list of those facilities is attached.
- Parks was planning to open five new facilities (which include some of the 10 mothballed outhouses) in summer 98. These facilities will not be opened. Two facilities recently underwent an upgrade that required increased operational support - Alaska Veteran's Memorial and Bird Creek. A priority was made to fully operate these previously existing facilities and not open those that are new. A list of new facilities not opening is attached.

Attachment

FY98 Proposed Park Closures

The 18 state park units listed below will be closed, passively managed or proposed for transfer to other management as a result of the general fund budget reductions in FY'98. To close a unit means to cancel refuse removal service, board up the restrooms, eliminate park staff patrols of the facilities, and to close and lock gates where they exist. Passive management means park access will be allowed but there will be no refuse service, restrooms will be closed and park staff will not patrol the area. Some units will be proposed for transfer to local jurisdictions or managed on a limited basis by non-profit organizations.

Northern Area

Lower Chatanika SRS
Upper Chatanika SRS
Chena River SRS

Management Status

Close campground, passively manage day use
Close campground
Close campground, possible contract option

Mat-Su Area

Big Lake North SRS
Big Lake South SRS
Hatcher Pass/Independence Mine

Close campground and boat launch
Close campground and boat launch
Passive and transfer of Visitor Center to operation by Friends organization

Kepler-Bradley SRA
King Mountain SRS
Long Lake SRS
Matanuska Glacier SRS
Rocky Lake SRS
Wolf Lake SRS

Close day use area
Close campground
Passive
Passive
Close campground
Close campground

Kenai Area

Anchor River SRA
Stariski SRS

Close campgrounds, passively manage day use
Close campground

Southeast

Sitka State Park Units (4)

Transfer to City of Sitka

New park units that will not open:

The Pillars (Kenai River)
Cooper Landing Boat Launch (Sterling Highway)
Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve viewing platform/nature trail/parking lot
Lake Aleknagik Boat Launch (Wood-Tikchik State Park)
Denali View North (Parks Highway)

Attachment

FY98 Proposed Park Outhouse Closures

These are new or relatively new outhouses along the highway system that will be closed under the proposed House Finance Committee budget. Funding is needed for janitorial and pumping. Parks simply does not have the money to maintain these additional facilities on top of those it already manages.

Kenai River - Pillars boat launch

Kenai River - Cooper Landing boat launch and scenic overlook

Haines Highway - Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve

Seward Highway - Indian Creek, Potter Creek

Alaska Highway - Harding Lake, Salcha boat launch ramp

Chena Hot Springs Road - Chena Rec Area

Aleknagik Road - Aleknagik boat launch

① Encourage you to ~~write~~ ^{convene} the statutory effort by
Mr. ^{Jim} Merrill

② To Add to those and suggest the General
Course of Alaska State Parks. I would ask
you to be mindful of the ~~perspectives~~
perspectives of the budget of State Parks. ^{Historical}

Ⓐ Flat since 1987

- State operating has all most doubled

Ⓑ → State Budget has double.

③ The ^{use fees} public perception is that we
have this huge state park system
- Fact - most ~~state~~ park land in Alaska
is Federal land.

- 100 of Alaska is State Parks.

④ projected cuts → Reduce Public Access -

8255 Aspen Avenue
Juneau, AK 99801-8904
(907)789-3686

Subcommittee on Community and Regional Affairs
Alaska State Legislature

My name is Michelle Zeiger. I have been a licensed Family Child Care Provider here in Juneau for over two years. I am a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Southeast chapter of the Alaska Family Child Care Association. I have a Bachelors Degree in Psychology and Sociology and I am currently working on my Child Development Associate Credential.

Four years ago when I was expecting my daughter I knew little about professional child care. My husband and I got referrals from friends and visited some of the local child care centers. We placed our six week old infant in a family child care home run by a very loving and nurturing woman. After less than a year I knew my heart was not in my job at a brokerage firm, but at home with my daughter, so I took the steps to begin a licensed family child care. This was a chance to run my own business, be my own boss, and to be with my child as she grows and develops.

I soon realized I needed to learn more about how children learn and develop in order to do I good job caring for them. I had been to trainings given by Child Care and Family Resource and learned about the possibility of earning a Child Development Credential. I enrolled in the CDA courses through UAS and got the foundation of knowledge that every quality child care provider needs. Education and Training funds administered through Child Care and Family Resources paid my tuition.

If it weren't for this training I probably would not be doing child care today. I wouldn't understand how to listen to children's needs or how to provide a nutritionally balanced meal. I would not be aware of the methods of maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment or how to advance physical and intellectual competence in children. I would not know what supporting social and emotional development and providing positive guidance means. I would not have positive and productive relationships with families or have a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs. I would not have a commitment to professionalism.

Child care professionals care for the children of those who must work and those who want to work during the most dynamic years of the child's development. If you vote to

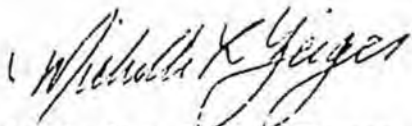
eliminate funding for child care resource and referral and education and training of providers, new providers will not have the opportunities to develop themselves and the support network that is essential to this type of business.

Child care providers, like school teachers, need continual training to keep up with the vast amount of information on child development. More individual development occurs between birth and age 6, than in the rest of one's life. During this time a person develops one's view of the world, and how one fits into it. Adults caring for children during these years need to know what they are doing or we will end up with a state full of people who have no social skills and who are not adequately prepared to be productive citizens.

The upcoming Welfare Reform will create a very large need for additional child care homes and centers. Continuing this funding will help to ensure that they are quality, developmentally appropriate programs.

As I understand it, your job is to channel funds to programs that develop our state. The money will best be spent on the programs that develop our youngest citizens into decent, law-abiding workers and tax payers. This will cost the state less now than paying later for problems associated with child neglect: truancy, vandalism, and substance abuse in the teen years. I often tell children not to be foolish, meaning, don't do something wrong when you know how to do it right. Please don't be foolish with our money.

Yours,



Michelle L. Zeiger, Owner
Small Wonders Childcare

8255 Aspen Avenue
Juneau, AK 99801-8904

Subcommittee on Community and Regional Affairs
Alaska State Legislature

Honorable Legislators:

You are considering proposed cuts to Alaska childcare and education. I am writing to oppose these cuts. I am not doing so because my wife operates a childcare. She is perfectly capable of finding work at higher pay and better security with much less personal sacrifice. I am more concerned with the quality of care provided to my daughter, and to the sons and daughters of my fellow Alaskans. I am also appalled by your complete disregard—contempt even—for Alaskans, implied by these proposed cuts.

Cuts to Alaskan childcare and education doubly betray the children of this great state. If these cuts are approved, today's children face detriment to their development which will seriously impact their ability to become productive members of our society. Those who escape the condemnation you are proposing today will be left to pay much higher costs to correct your short-sightedness. These costs will come from increased need for physical and mental health services, welfare, and other social programs necessary to correct character flaws developed in early stages of development—the very stages currently shaped and guided by trained, informed, and funded childcare providers.

These providers are not baby-sitters. Aside from holding our society's highest trust—the care and nurturing of our children—they are business owners, playing an important, even vital role in our state's economy. You cannot claim to be pro-business or pro-development while ignoring the very industry that enables citizens who are parents to work in all other industries in Alaska.

Everyone talks about family values. These are the real family values: caring for our children; helping and guiding them when they need it most, in their formative years; providing education necessary to reach their full potential. Endangering this to reduce state costs is morally reprehensible. If you approve these funding cuts, you will not be able to recall this with pride. No one will remember you for saving money in the short-term. Instead, you will be remembered for negatively altering the future of Alaska.

You are entrusted with the power to make this choice: will you betray the citizens you serve, or will you choose wisely for the future of Alaska? The people whom you represent are watching and waiting.

Sincerely,



Mark A. Zeiger

P.O. Box 10224
Fairbanks, (Two Rivers) Alaska 99710
phone/fax 488-3746
18 March 1997

Mr. Mark Hanley,
Alaska State House, Finance Budget Committee
re: current budget considerations

Dear Mr. Hanley:

In 1968, the year after I came to Alaska, the state budget was about 150 million dollars. 270,000 Alaska residents derived enough benefits from those monies to let them keep the roads plowed all winter and teachers in the classroom. Though I lived north of Bettles then, everyone I knew in town made their monthly mortgage payments, sent their kids onto college and once in a while took a vacation. Life was quiet, content and enough.

Today, with little more than twice the population, the cost of state government - almost 2.5 billion dollars, yields almost eight times per resident in state spending more than what kept everyone happy 30 years ago. Life isn't as simple as it used to be, but I shake my head when too many greedy Alaskans cry they now can't do with less.

Most of those 30 years, I've worn only a few hats. I haven't had a wage-paying job in 15 years, as I make my living from Alaska's wildlife and wilderness. I've always been a hunting guide. But I've changed with the times and today make more money from birdwatchers than bear hunters. I've filled in as a consulting wildlife biologist during the early days of the oil industry, and later as an ecotour consultant for mainstream tourism.

With this diverse, independent background, two governors, including the incumbent, asked me to sit on the game board. I declined both. It's a winless job and there are other ways to give something back to Alaska's wildlife and wilderness that have been so good to me. As an Alaskan, I feel obligated to make some contribution. As a businessman, I must also meet my obligations, and have learned to survive and even thrive in lean times.

The State of Alaska can do as well. But perhaps achieving that simple goal is more difficult than I realize.

What we can live without

If it was my budget, I would cut those things we got along fine without in 1967. Breaking the budget into blocks, Health and Social Services eg, has grown like a virus. We haven't instilled a sense of self-reliance and pride in Alaskans: we have taught them instead to expect something for nothing.

One-third of the budget is for education - our sacred cow. But sacred cow's leave a mess. We have teachers of 11 years (one-third of a working career) working September-June making \$49,000. A friend's daughter took a home ec class at North Pole High. There were five fully-equipped kitchens, but only one in use at any one time.

If you reading the help-wanted ads, you'll find the damndest list of State jobs imaginable, and all paying not only whopping wages, but benefits that will pull your teeth as well. Who knows why we need a \$50,000 counselor for people who are victims of violent crimes. The medical community should be providing this, not the State.

Government does not need to be the benefactor of every social need. When people give government that mandate, they lose their sense of personal responsibility and expect someone else to pay for it.

Last summer I saw two DOTPF workers filling a pot-hole, while five others stood around doing nothing. Walking through their offices is the same scene. Dick Randolph had it figured right. Take every state job, chop 25% off the salary, put these jobs out on the street and you'll still have qualified people lined up three-deep for them.

Real cuts in the budget? Go after jobs and entitlements. How many are filled by people who came here after the Prudhoe Bay sugar cube? If eliminated, how many state jobs and programs would keep the sun from coming up tomorrow? The State has a billion-dollar backlog of deferred maintenance in state buildings, but proposed to spend 35-million dollars for a un-needed intertie to Glenallen. Are there no priorities? As a businessman, I face them daily. We can all live with less. However large the vacuum, it rises to the top.

What to support

I support government where it achieves what individual citizens cannot. Where it engenders programs that generate new monies. The Division of Tourism eg. Most of our economy is service-oriented. We have no trade to speak of. Except for oil and fisheries, we produce little. Timber is subsidized to the crown. Oil, our #1 revenue producer, is declining every year. Yet, we subsidize it at all cost. Look at the Northstar lawsuit.

Tourism is Alaska's #2 revenue producer. It is sustainable. Unlike oil, growing 7% annually.

As a businessman, I'm a poor advocate for state subsidies, or the state being in business. Except where state government does what I cannot. DOT has proven to me that some programs are making all of us new monies. These programs are an asset. I have direct and personal knowledge they work for me, and others like me. The heart and soul of Alaska's tourism industry are small operators little myself. Why? Our money stays at home!!!

DOT's marketing programs and travel workshops to international markets have opened new doors I could not. Their contribution at ITB, NTA and Pow Wow eg, realize a return that make any businessman take note. And for the poor traveler we are all squeezing, at least the APLIC offices give them something useful for their money.

As a consultant to Princess Tours and Holland America, I would have to say their 30-million dollar budgets function great without any state programs. None of this makes much real difference to them. Just like the wasted monies I have spent with ATMC and the vacation planner doesn't make any difference to me. Yet, you propose to transfer the few remaining DOT functions to ATMC and Trade/Development.

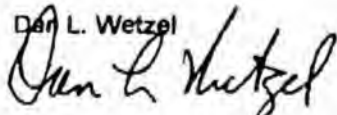
The state subsidizes a declining oil industry, yet proposes to eliminate the fastest growing segment of our economy - tourism. It doesn't make sense to me. For 30 years I have signed my own paychecks, paid my own dental bills and alone contributed to my retirement, all based on my own wise choices and sound business decisions rendered useful from the hard school of life. I know what works when I have to balance my budget.

Governor Knowles proposes huge corporate tax credits to subsidize a profligate educational system, but Gail Phillips doesn't think we as a society with two billion bucks a year can find a few for public broadcasting, the only decent channel on TV. I'll be damed if I can figure it out. We have too much money, and too little good sense.

Like too many other choices and decisions in Alaska today, not much of all this makes sense. Least of all killing a goose that lays a few golden eggs, while a lot of fat foxes "stand around doing nothing." Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Dan L. Wetzel



329 Katlian Street

Sitka, Alaska 99835



March 22, 1997

Members of the House Finance Committee:

This letter is written to provide strong, continuing support for the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation (ASTF). Over the past years, ASTF has been an integral part in assisting Alaskan industries develop and implement new technologies that benefitted the Alaskan economy. A prime example would be the "Pouched Pink Salmon" project.

The "Pouched Pink Salmon" project was conceived by Arctic Alaska Seafoods, Inc. (AASI) and North Pacific Processors, Inc. (NPPI) and based on the canned salmon market assessment. The advent and continual development of farmed fish has nearly doubled the world's salmon production; increasing inventory while decreasing retail prices. More importantly, the technology in canned salmon has not changed since the turn of the century. Consumers were left with a limiting, antiquated product.

With the funding through ASTF, Arctic Alaska and North Pacific processors developed a viable, high quality alternative to the can. The "Pouched Pink Salmon" or PFS became and continues to be a success. In 1996, Alaska Pacific Seafoods (APS), a division of NPPI, became the largest buyer of pink salmon in Kodiak. The food service industry has bestowed praise, accolades, and purchases of the pouch product. The possibility of additional pouch production lines with other companies is real. Most importantly, year round employment was created for Kodiak with the possibilities for other coastal communities.

The "Pouched Pink Salmon" project continues to be well worth the initial \$500,000 investment. The returns have been multifold: revitalization of a diminishing salmon canning industry, creation of permanent employment, and economic benefits for a number of businesses. The lack of ASTF funding will impede new technology and developments in Alaska's industries, greatly lessening the chances of innovative projects like the "Pouched Pink Salmon" to germinate from idea to reality.

Sincerely,

John Sevier
General Manager, South East Region

(907) 747-6662

FAX (907) 747-6268

FRESH AND FROZEN SALMON, COD, SABLEFISH, HALIBUT, ROCK FISH, CRAB, HERRING



FAX TO HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE, 465-~~2278~~ 2418

FROM Karen Parr 479-6779
Finance Chairman
Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly

I was signed up to testify at the teleconference today, but was advised my turn would not come up before the 3:00 p.m. deadline, so I left. Did not realize the time would be extended. So I will write what I was going to tell you.

First, I'd like to comment on the continued decline in education funding of the past several years. While the nominal amount per instructional unit has remained unchanged, the purchasing power of that amount has declined, and the net result is that local taxpayers have had to fund a larger chunk of the education bill each year. We are told we must trim our education costs. The school board has cut out much of the administration and nearly all special programs requiring staff, such as special reading teachers, in order to maintain a reasonable pupil/teacher ratio. We have one of the lowest administrator/pupil ratios in the country. The only way to cut now is to increase the number of students per class.

The "basic education" required by the Alaska Constitution as a responsibility of the state, has been defined by the Legislature as "the amount we are willing to spend for basic education". If we tried to operate our schools on the amount given us by the state, we'd have classes of 50 students or so -- a slap to our children we could not tolerate.

The result of short-funding education every year, plus annual decreases in revenue sharing and aid to municipalities, plus non-funded mandates like property tax exemptions, has been an 18.6% increase in local property taxes over the last five years.

Some of the proposed departmental caps will make this far worse. As an example, zeroing out the solid waste program from DEC will force us to deal directly with EPA, whose rules are more stringent and more unreasonable. It will cost us \$1 million more, for example, just to cover the landfill we are now closing, because the EPA requires one grade less permeability on the material, which would then have to be hauled from far away, instead of next door. Other EPA requirements will cost us \$14 million more. This is only one community; think of the costs to cities and boroughs state-wide, all just to save \$1 million at the state level. Local taxpayers are willing to pay for local services, but why force up the price like that?

We have not heard what you plan to cut from education and funding to municipalities, but we are apprehensive. Please consider the costs to local taxpayers, when you cut state programs, and consider who is actually paying those taxes.

**ALYESKA RESORT****Facsimile Cover Sheet**

- To:**
- STATE OF ALASKA HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR, MARK HANLEY
 - SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR DREW PEARCE
 - REP. CON BUNDE

Company:**Phone:****Fax:**

(907) 465 - 2418, 3872, 3871

From: LARRY DANIELS,
GENERAL MANAGER 

Company: ALYESKA SKI RESORT**Phone:** (907) 754-2262**Fax:** (907) 754-2296**Date:** 03/23/97

**Pages including this
cover page:** 1

Comments:

I would urge you to reconsider the proposed budget cut which would eliminate the State Department of Tourism.

I would liken such a move to elimination of the Department of Natural Resources, Gas & Oil Leasing Department, or the Alaska Department of Fish & Game. These are all departments which help the State exploit it's natural resources.

The Department of Tourism is able to undertake pilot projects to promote the "Alaska" private industry cannot explore. The Department also provides organization and direction for the many and varied opportunities available to both prospective visitors as well as to the private sector.

On the other hand, if we would rather see the tourism industry's historic growth slow down or even start to shrink with our would-be visitors siphoned off to other destinations such as Hawaii or Canada, then elimination of Department of Tourism would be right on target.

329 Katlian Street

Sitka, Alaska 99835



March 23, 1997

page 1 of 2

Members of the House Finance Committee:

I am writing in response to the proposed house budget cuts to the Division of Trade and Development within the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. I am not in support of these cuts.

The Alaska Seafood industry is in the midst of a salmon crisis. We have lost our world market share through increased wild salmon stocks and the availability of farmed salmon which has significantly reduced the price of salmon. The Division of Trade and Development staff- through Governor Knowles' Salmon Industry Response Cabinet (SIRC) - has been instrumental in the development of various strategies for the implementation of many new and innovative projects for increasing Alaska's salmon marketability.

If the legislature persists in it's current impetus to delete necessary positions in the Division of Trade and Development, my company will be seriously affected. Specifically, I am concerned with my company's ability to market my seafood product in the foreign market. I depend on the Division of Trade and Development to provide foreign market information, trade contacts, the ability to meet buyers face to face, i.e., the Taiwanese trade mission, Chinese market contacts, made through the "Chinese Markets for Alaska Seafood" manual, and the availability of foreign market reports from Taiwan, Korea, China and Japan.

Loss of international trade staff will be reduced by 50%. This cripples the state's ability to maintain effective trade and governmental relations with key partners in Asia. These people handle protocol, government-to-government relations, advocacy and policy issues. Alaska's efforts to strengthen seafood exports- both in a crucial existing market such as Japan and in a previously untapped market such as Taiwan- will be undercut. (In 1996, Japan imported nearly 80% of all the state's seafood exports. Taiwan, as a new market, saw its seafood imports leap nearly 38% to almost \$20 million.) My company, as well as the rest of the seafood industry, will lose in-state contacts for Japan and Taiwan, as well as trade show and trade mission assistance receiving cut backs.

(907) 747-6662

FAX (907) 747-6268

FRESH AND FROZEN SALMON, COD, SABLEFISH, HALIBUT, ROCK FISH, CRAB, HERRING

329 Kotliar Street



Sitka, Alaska 99835

page 2 of 2

The elimination of the Fisheries Assistant position (Administrative Clerk 1) causes the loss of the ability to effectively organize industry meetings, fisheries conferences, business travel, informational mail-outs, the preparation of fisheries related manuals and all efforts to assist the seafood industry. There will be greater difficulty in the implementation of the work plan by the SIRC, the expansion of the CDQ program, and Alaska's participation in the annual International Boston Seafood Show. A clerical position is a necessary part of any team, as without this staff person the Fisheries Development Specialist will be severely limited in her ability to provide the services necessary for the advancement of the Alaska Seafood Industry.

Additionally, the loss of this position will throw a significant clerical burden to a decimated administrative unit, as well as to the professional level staff, reducing productivity, and provide no savings to the General Fund as it is funded through the Commercial Fisheries Loan Program.

Sincerely,

John Sevier
General Manager, Southeast Region

(907) 747-6662

FAX (907) 747-6268

FRESH AND FROZEN SALMON, COD, SABLEFISH, HALIBUT, ROCK FISH, CRAB, HERRING



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

PLEASE ENTER INTO THE RECORD MY TESTIMONY TO THE House Finance
COMMITTEE NAME

COMMITTEE ON Budget Cuts DATED 3-22-97

BILL SUBJECT

Re: Cuts to the Dept. of Tourism

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I regret I had to leave the public testimony session today before being able to testify in person. I represent the Alaska Hotel/Motel Assoc & I am a small BUSINESS OWNER. As a small business owner I have had the opportunity to MAKE MANY MISTAKES & benefit from the lessons learned from those mistakes. One classic mistake is when times are tough ~~and~~ financially — then cut the marketing budget. Results can be devastating when this approach is taken — this action can cut off the very life blood of business —

Similarly — the drastic cuts proposed for the Dept of Tourism will devastate small businesses that rely on tourism for their survival. That means loss of jobs & economic development for our GREAT STATE

SIGNED Martha Wilson

TESTIFIER

Alaska Hotel/Motel Assoc & Alaska Lodging Mgt Inc.
REPRESENTING (OPTIONAL)

POB 72478 FB 99707 907 488-4400
ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

PLEASE CONSIDER THIS AS BUDGET CUTS ARE REVIEWED

790 Pelican WY
FAIRBANKS, AK
99709

To: House Finance Committee
Senate Finance Committee

479-0823

Date: March 22, 1997

From: Charles (Chick) Hartman



Subject: Written Testimony on Proposed Budget Cuts,
Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

I am writing you this letter as a proponent of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. I am a proponent because like most Alaskans I use the state parks many times during the year, both in summer and winter. I also should tell you that I am an advisory board member of the northern area state parks, but my testimony is as a private citizen.

In FY 87 the general fund budget for state parks was approximately \$5.25 million. In FY 97 it is approximately \$3.4 million, a 35% cut in ten years. This cut has partially been made up by gradually increasing state parks ability to budget for and collect user fees (program receipts). Today the total parks budget is approximately \$5.3 million, including program receipts.

The house finance committee's recommendation to cut \$183,900 from the program receipts budget makes absolutely no sense at all. These are funds that would be collected from users of the parks system, and do not cost the state any revenues. The only reason I can see to cut them would be so that certain politicians could posture that they cut the budget, even though no real money was saved; I hope no members of these committees would stoop to this type of "smoke and mirrors."

As a boardmember, I am familiar with the staffing levels and funding for the state parks in the northern area. You might not know that presently there is only one seasonally funded ranger in the whole Chena Hot Springs Recreational Area. I believe that there is only one seasonal ranger in the Harding Lake to Delta area. The division of parks does a great job of extending these employees' usefulness by hiring seasonal help consisting of the Alaska Conservation Corps (ACC), and by utilizing a very large volunteer force. Cutting their budget will reduce their ability to make use of these efficient ways to run the state parks system.

Alaska's state parks are the largest in acreage of all the states. In visitation numbers, they are approximately 35th. In staffing levels, they are 49th, and they would be by far the lowest, if Hawaii had not almost completely privatized their state park system. This is the situation that you as legislators are promulgating when you consider more budget cuts to the Division of Parks. Instead of proposing mindless cuts, please support a modest increase in the Program Receipts portion of the parks budget, as is requested in the governor's budget. This small increase is to fund maintenance items such as sewage pumping for additional roadside outhouses that the legislature funded last year. Hardly glamorous items, but also of vital importance to anyone who does much traveling on Alaska's road system.

As a citizen of Alaska, I believe that there are cuts needed in our state budget. What I don't believe is that Alaska's citizens want wholesale budget cutting of every state program. There are agencies that have already been cut to the bone; the Division of Parks is one of them. I strongly believe that most people in Alaska would support a moderate increase in the budget for state parks. Please listen to these people. Please do not continue with these wholesale cuts without thinking of the results.



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

PLEASE ENTER INTO THE RECORD MY TESTIMONY TO THE Finance Committee
Mark Hanley/Pete Kelly
 COMMITTEE NAME

COMMITTEE ON Childcare/ Jobs Program DATED 3-22-97

BILL/SUBJECT

my name is Karla Lomax. I am a client in the JOBS Program. You want people to get out and get jobs, I hope, to support their own families. And you expect them to do that with no skills and no education. You cut childcare, and the JOBS program and in a short time you will need to figure out how to decrease the levels in child abuse, alcoholism, homelessness and many others. Do you want that?

The JOBS Program enabled ^{me} to get my GED in December because the GED program waived the fee as I was a JOBS client.

JOBS has enabled my Husband to attend classes to obtain his GED.

JOBS has given me hope for the future and the knowledge I can truly do anything I put my mind to. ~~It~~ Fortunately for you, my plans do not include taking your job in the future. I'd rather be a police officer, which JOBS has also helped me to take action on. Unlike you I will serve and protect this community.

SIGNED

Karla D. Lomax

TESTIFIER

Karla D. Lomax / Sheila Kivi (NASW)

REPRESENTING (OPTIONAL)

1120 Washington Dr. #7 FBKS, AK 99709 (907) 456-2702

ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

Attn: House Finance Committee
Rep. Gene Therriault
Rep. Pete Kelly
Rep. John Davies

Dear Representatives:

I am writing to voice my concern regarding the House Finance Subcommittee's proposed cuts to the FY 98 Operating Budget.

I am a single parent of two small children, I am proud to say I have never experienced such a hardship in which I had to rely on welfare, and I would like to be able to continue to provide for my children in such a manner.

I would like to say I support welfare reform, and think it is a positive step for our country. But in order to successfully move people off welfare, there must be assistance available to insure quality care for their children. Most recipients of welfare have limited skills, which means low paying jobs. How can a family of a low to moderate income cover all expenses such as food, clothing, shelter and childcare. I know first hand child care is expensive, my daycare bill is \$840.00 per month. If child care assistance was not available to me, I too would be a welfare recipient!

I am greatly opposed to the proposed cut to eliminate the Child Care Grant Program. This grant makes it possible for Child Care Providers to continue education in early childhood development. Enables them to gain resources and materials to enhance a child's learning skills. Quality care is already hard to find, please do not make it impossible for providers who truly care for children, to teach them. This is a cut that will effect every family that uses Day Care Facilities. Early childhood development is extremely important in the nurturing of our children into productive, successful adults. As a Tax Payer I would much rather see our tax money spent developing a child's mind at an early age, and guide them to become responsible adults. When trying to rehabilitate a juvenile when it may be too late.

I am thankful I can work, pay my bills, feed my family and support my children. I am thankful for the Child Care Assistance that I receive. Please do not cut funding from this vital program, without it I truly believe you will see More of the working poor on Welfare.

Respectfully Yours,

Milissa Ackels
830 5th Ave #A
Fairbank, Ak 99701





ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

PLEASE ENTER INTO THE RECORD MY TESTIMONY TO THE Finance Committee
COMMITTEE NAME

COMMITTEE ON Childcare cuts / job program DATED 3-22-97
BILL SUBJECT / #

To whom it may concern,

I believe the deep cuts in the job program + childcare will do a great deal more damage than what is apparent on the surface.

I know that people on welfare must work, yet we want to cut childcare + the job program. Several serious consequence may follow. People may be forced to leave children alone, have inadequate people watch their children etc... I am sure when people are pushed so hard, then given no opportunities to win; the incidents of child neglect + abuse will rise. I say lets atleast provide for the children, they are our future. It appears to me that we will have a great influx of people needing assistance. For instance, the working poor. By cutting child care benefits this puts them in a position to not work or succeed.

~~With~~ as far as medical care, I believe a state like Alaska should provide care for all children. Actually even the poor deserve health care. I believe it would shame our state to allow people to die because of lack of funding for medical care.

With the proposed cuts we will have more problems economically. I believe I would rather leave a state that does next case, rather than support middle class predators.

SIGNED Shaila Kivi
TESTIFIER

NASW
REPRESENTING (OPTIONAL)

3142 Lawrence Rd N. Anchorage AK 99505 498-7993
ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

PLEASE ENTER INTO THE RECORD MY TESTIMONY TO THE WAFSS
COMMITTEE NAME

COMMITTEE ON _____ DATED 3-21-97
BILL/SUBJECT

Once again the attack begins on the poor, disabled, and children. How can welfare reform possibly work without sufficient child care, housing, medical care, or adequately staffed assistance programs. Please reconsider. I would like to challenge the legislators to spend some time in the real world ~~are~~ of those people who rely on rental assistance, child care, medicaid & related programs and see what it's like.

SIGNED Luis Bush
TESTIFIER

Single Parents & Displaced Homemaker's
REPRESENTING (OPTIONAL)

510 2nd Ave Flks AK 99701
ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

WAF
TVC



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

PLEASE ENTER INTO THE RECORD MY TESTIMONY TO THE DHRS
COMMITTEE NAME

COMMITTEE ON Budget DATED 3
BILL/SUBJECT

I want to express my concern and disbelief at the recommended budget cuts to child care assistance and rental assistance. The common ground that the majority and minority and people like me was that welfare reform was necessary. For welfare reform to work these programs need to be increased, not cut. Moving from welfare to work takes increasing child care assistance. More families on welfare will need more child care for the required work or volunteer time required by the w regulations. Volunteer work is unpaid entry level jobs to support \$700-800/mo child care costs. You need to support the efforts required within welfare reform to make it successful. Child care costs + rental assistance are a necessary parts in this complex plan of reforming the welfare system. The goal is to get more people into the working world, supporting their families. Please consider leaving the budget for these programs at current levels, or provide for increases. Thank you for your consideration.

SIGNED

Green Cummings
TESTIFIER

REPRESENTING (OPTIONAL)

1267 Jacquelyn Lane, North Pole Ak 99705
ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

My name is Cheryl Keepers, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

I oppose cuts in child care programs: child care grant, education & training, resource and referral programs are all small but important pieces of state support for child care.

In this state we have learned the importance of quality education through our schools, we have learned the value of quality education through programs like Head Start, yet we have trouble seeing that child care is at least as important to the learning and growth and development of our youngest children. Cuts that decrease the quality of care are very short sighted.

I oppose the cuts to the Department of Health & Social Services, especially to the programs that might make it possible to actually achieve welfare reform: cuts to staff levels within Public Assistance; cuts to supports for parents as they try to achieve self-sufficiency, such as child care assistance and Medicaid; and refusal to use available federal dollars to improve state services through one-stop efforts.

I also oppose cuts to child support enforcement. All children deserve the support of two parents. If one parent chooses to be irresponsible, the state is better served in calling that parent to task than having to provide assistance out of our tax dollars. CSED caseworkers bring in half a million dollars each per year: eliminating 7 positions would be penny-wise and pound foolish.

There are other cuts I question, and increases that seem ill advised if we are truly in need of trimming the budget. Increasing legislative spending while cutting funds for wheelchairs is just plain tacky.

I have heard it said that families ⁱⁿ our state are in better shape now than 5 years ago. Then why is Alaska still suffering from the highest rate of domestic violence? Why did one out of three Fairbanks residents turn to charity, the local Food Bank, for supplemental food last year? Let's not fool ourselves: some of us are better off, but many are not.

I realize you have hard choices to make: but I urge you to not make hard-hearted ones.

Cheryl Keepers
Box 7489B
Fairbanks, AK 99707

March 21, 1997

Representative Gene Therriault
State Capital Building
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Representative Therriault,

As Executive Director for Fairbanks Native Association, I am writing to express my concern regarding the recommended budget cuts in Medicaid. As the Department of Health and Social Services portrays the Medicaid situation, a reduction of the governor's proposed Medicaid non-facility budget line item of \$3 million would result in cuts that would significantly impact several of our substance abuse treatment programs, two of which provide essential services for women with children and expectant mothers. The greatest impact will be on our Women and Children's Residential Treatment Program. A loss of benefits to cover substance abuse/mental health and targeted case management/rehabilitation services means a loss of approximately \$180,000 annually in client pay which comes from Medicaid payments.

FNA's Women and Children's Program is the only one of its kind in the state. Its outstanding reputation has been instrumental in promoting the health and well-being of women and children from throughout Alaska. Funding for this program comes primarily from the federal government (annual budget of approximately \$900,000) with all the benefit going to the state at a minimal cost of approximately \$90,000 by way of Medicaid billings.

If the situation is other than that portrayed by the Administration with the current house budget, please advise me. However, if the potential for the cuts are correct I would request that you take action to avoid these reductions or direct the Administration not to allocate the reductions as they have indicated because they would negatively impact treatment programs for women and children.

If you or your staff have any questions whatsoever regarding this matter, please give me a call at 452-1648 ext. 223. FNA will be testifying via teleconference on Saturday, March 22.

Sincerely,

John W. Regitano
Executive Director

cc: corr out excc
Representative Mark Hanley, Co-Chair
Representative Pete Kelly
Representative John Davies

3-2297

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

I am writing of my support in funding ALL Childcare Assistance programs and grants.

Being a single parent of two, I rely on the daycare assistance program. This program helps me with the costs of childcare enabling me to support my two children WITHOUT being on welfare.

I work, pay rent and I am able to give my children a quality life. I can support their needs.

Without the childcare assistance program BOTH of my paychecks would have to be used to pay childcare costs, leaving nothing leftover to for food or rent. ~~Eliminating~~ the childcare assistance program would literally FORCE me to stay home and turn other assistance programs to feed and support my family.

I NEED my job and my children rely on the income from my job. Without the help from daycare assistance I couldn't afford to work.

Having a child with a disability raises the cost of care for this child. Thus childcare costs for me would Double

MARK-22-91 SAI 11:58
Monica McLeod
611 E. 41st St. Anch 98504
1-907-337-9608

ANCHORAGE LTU

FAX NO. 9072581201

3-22-97

~~SENATOR~~ Hanley,

Thank S for listening
to me today. I hope
that you won't cut medica

DENTAL VISION

and Physical
Therapy
Vision

If you can't figure out
what I mean then write
me at 611 East 41st St #1
Anchorage, Alaska 98504

CITY OF ST. MARY'S

P.O. Box 163
St. Mary's, AK 99658
(907) 438-2515

March 22, 1997

To: The House Finance Committee

From: Walton Smith, City Manager of St. Mary's

Gentlemen, due to time constraints I was not satisfied with my brief comments to you by telephone a short time ago. I wanted to elaborate my concerns.

All of the proposed health, social services, legal system and tourism cuts have an impact upon our village and the villages of the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta. We lack the majority of basic services locally that your cuts will impact. But we will feel the effects as local residents have even greater difficulty in receiving these scarce services.

As you cut programs that serve individuals as well as cut programs to small communities, our village budgets are further restricted. At the same time, we have greater pleas for assistance from local residents. I cannot cut 30% of my manpower from a department that has only one worker.

My major goal has been to keep our water and sewer services funded and functioning. This task becomes more difficult each year. As you make cuts to other basic services, disposable income drops, and local people can no longer pay the city for water and sewer. As you cut other programs to villages, we cannot continue to subsidize the operation of these services.

I have a commitment to these services not only for us, but for the other communities of the Y-K Delta. Many of our villages do not have the benefit of flush toilets and circulating water systems. This is one of the most basic of human services. Most of the increase in life expectancy that has occurred in the world this century has been a consequence of the provision of good sanitation and the public health movement, not of sophisticated medical procedures. Yet these basic services seem to be the first that are cut when the budgets get tight.

You have indicated that you will cut the DCRA budget, particularly in the area of the RUBA program. While I know we cannot demonstrate with this program that we have "saved a system"; the program has provided invaluable services to villagers as well as State and Federal agencies. These services improve the planning, development, and management of village sanitation systems. This helps to insure that the State will be able to reduce assistance in the future that might otherwise be necessary to keep a system running. Your additional direct cuts to DCRA will eliminate some LGS positions that represent some of the most productive workers within DCRA-- a further cut to our villages.

I hope the House Finance Committee can review their current decisions on budget cuts and pursue alternatives to the gap between spending and revenue. We are few in number in the Bush, so we do not represent a great deal of power with our votes. We can only hope that our representatives collectively act from a stance of concern for residents rather than a concern for the votes of individual interests from their respective constituencies.

Thank you for your consideration.

RECEIVED

March 18, 1997

MAR 22 1997

To: Mark Hanley

It seems strange that our government considers our disabled citizens so unimportant!!! I have a granddaughter who is severely disabled and has been since she was six weeks old. She needs constant care and gets it at home, but if her benefits are cut, it will be a tremendous burden on her family. I'm not writing just for her. There are a lot of children, teens and adults on the Kenai Peninsula who will be very "Hard Hit" by the proposed cuts.

The cuts made back in 1987 to the department of developmental disabilities of 19% was never regained. Programs have been expanded to meet more service demands with no additional funding made available. What do you expect??? I have been directly asked by legislators on where to cut in all of Alaska's budget, and after careful consideration, I consider the following to be areas that could substantially be cut.

1. salary cuts of all teachers
2. the arts-- drama society, music, dancing, drawing and painting. Let people pay for these pleasures themselves rather than getting support from our government.
3. Sports--this should not be a part of any government grants.
4. Expensive trips and dinners of our government officials.

I also understand that there was illegal selling of land in past years by the State of Alaska that belonged to the Mental Health Trust. Had all the properties disposed of been left to the mental health trust, as was the original intent, the income would have covered all the needs of our disabled citizens.

All the disabled citizens I have met, are first class, NOT fourth class as you have designated them.

Do not support the cuts to the Medicaid program.

Elizabeth J. Bartlett
Soldotna grandmother



Ms. Elizabeth Bartlett
190 W. Park Avenue Apt. 4
Soldotna, AK 99669-7565

3700 McGinnis
Juneau, Alaska 99801
789-9370
March 24, 1997

Dear Legislator:

I have just read the EMPIRE (3/21/97) article which purports to summarize the proposed cuts in the state budget and their "potential" impacts. I am agitated by the doom sayers who pronounce that such reduction in government services (intrusion) may or could hurt individuals. The editor headlined an accompanying article, "Budget cuts would mean drastic change for many Alaskans" (accents mine).

The proposed reduction in level of funding for public broadcast is warranted on a values base as much as an economic one. The folly of extensive security measures for government buildings is expensive. It would have taken unusual security measures which would violate commonly accepted freedom of movement to prevent the Oklahoma City tragedy. This move seems to be more a "make work" program.

I believe tourism, fishing, and other industries should fund their own promotion. The same is true of using government funds to subsidize the construction and/or operation of housing. Why should a private property owner have to compete with such unreasonable competition? Why not established with state funds "The Mother of All Tourist Shops" enterprise?

Medicaid has outgrown its proper bounds. I know of cases in which goods and/or services were provided which had little if any lasting benefit to the recipient. Much press is given to the extravagant number of heart bypass, joint replacement, and other surgeries which occur. It often seems to benefit the medical establishment more than the patient. The bureaucracy is implicated, also.

The Alaska Science and Technology Fund is another "boondoggle" pushed by those who seek to be "on the edge" of new development. The recent participation by ASTF in the governor's push to place Internet access into all our schools smacks of "political paybacks".

I personally believe Senior Services could be reduced. I recently became a senior, though still employed. I have long argued that the Longevity Bonus is based on an invalid argument. I can receive only \$100 per month because of my birth year, though some whose children brought them here in old age get \$250; perhaps having spent only one year in Alaska. If an Alaskan senior needs help to stay in their home or community, let's seek to help them. BUT to aid in building an estate is not worthy.

I propose education funding be rethought. I believe the state has an obligation to seek some equity in opportunity. This does NOT infer everyone will graduate from high school having met specific test objectives, regardless of how long it takes. I know that some have been funded for over SIX YEARS in their high school career alone. I say, "That's too much".

I suggest the state legislature consider funding a maximum 14 years education, adjusted for out of state time. Our youth and their families and probably our society may gain even more if we can open our thinking to allow more parental choice. Charter schools may be a start.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill".

Bill Elkinton

FAX: March 22, 1997
465-2418
Public Testimony re: House Majority Budget Plan

From: Taber Rehbaum, President, Arctic Alliance for People, Fairbanks
P.O. Box 438, Ester AK 99725 458-0423

Arctic Alliance for People strenuously opposes the proposed cuts in the Health and Social Services budget. As the Department endeavors to implement last year's agreed upon Welfare Reform plan, it is critical that the resources with which to enact meaningful reform be available. Budget reductions in Health and Social Services would be shortsighted and illogical, a recipe for failure for the painstakingly crafted Welfare Reform plan. In order to reduce future Welfare costs to the State, people must be properly prepared for work. This means funding Jobs Training and Child Care, both of which are targeted for drastic reduction in the House Majority recommendations. Proposed cuts would also cost the State of Alaska an additional \$4 million in Federal dollars. Medical assistance, including prosthetic devices and rehabilitative services, is also targeted for massive cuts, as well as prevention programs (Healthy Families), Youth Probation Services, and General Relief Assistance (which has been in place since territorial days). The proposed reductions in the HSS budget would be devastating for all Alaskans.

We hope that our legislators will carefully review the impact of these proposed cuts, maintain current levels of funding for the Department of Health and Social Services, and make sure that the essential components of Welfare Reform (Jobs Training, Child Care, Public Assistance Field Services, ATAP, General Relief, Medical Assistance) are funded to the levels projected to be necessary by the Department.

Let this be a legislature remembered for allowing more Alaskans to become independent and productive citizens rather than one whose actions create new legions of the hungry and homeless in our fine state.

Thank you.
Taber Rehbaum

ALASKA CHAPTER

national electrical contractors association, inc.

712 West 36th Avenue • Anchorage, Alaska 98503
(907) 561-1858 • FAX (907) 561-8633

March 22, 1997

Representative Mark Hanley
Co-Chair, House Finance Committee
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 507
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

VIA FAX TO (907) 465-2418

Dear Representative Hanley:

I just left the Legislative Information Office in Anchorage so I could fax some testimony to your committee for consideration in your budget deliberations. Our organization represents electrical contractors throughout the State of Alaska. We are concerned with the proposed cuts in the Department of Labor's budget for FY 98, especially following the cuts made last year.

The Department of Labor is charged with several responsibilities, including enforcement of Wage and Hour requirements, Mechanical Inspection (including electrical inspections) and Occupational Safety and Health. As an employer-association representing employers in the construction industry, we are concerned with maintaining responsible levels of wages, benefits and working conditions for the employees of not only the firms we represent, but all employees in the industry. Maintaining a level playing field for all who compete in our industry is important to our employers and their employees. Adequate and consistent enforcement of existing wage and hour requirements, safety regulations and installation standards is vital to that level playing field. At current levels of funding, enforcement activity is at a minimum. In fact, two inspector positions were eliminated last year due to budget cuts (one electrical inspector and one boiler inspector), leaving the northern portion of the State without an electrical inspector.

THE TOP OF THE WORLD CHAPTER



Representative Hanley
March 22, 1997
Page 2

Active inspection of electrical, plumbing and boiler and pressure vessel installations is an important public safety function. Rural areas that cannot support building safety departments depend on State inspectors to provide at least a minimal amount of inspection activity which combined with the licensing requirements that Labor also enforces gives some assurance that installations meet the minimum code requirements adopted by the State. We urge you and your committee to not reduce the level of these activities any further.

I would like to point out that employees working for our contractor members pay the Department of Labor fees for certificates of fitness for their classifications. These fees were increased substantially in the recent past to \$80 per year which is more than double the fees paid in other northwest states. It only seems fair that a minimum level of service could be provided in light of their willingness to help support the program.

Recent comparisons of bid estimates put together by our contractors made against the reported hours of competitors' wage and hour reports have revealed significant and consistent differences in the amount of hours estimated by our contractors versus those actually reported by the successful bidders. Certainly not all contractors will have the same amount of hours estimated to perform a project, but the differences are significant enough to cause concern. Without adequate enforcement of the wage and hour requirements and even education of the employers and employees as to the requirements, the playing field tilts in favor of those employers not meeting the requirements.

We realize that your committee has a difficult job and judging by the testimony I heard and the large number of people present to testify, I can see what you're up against. We are asking for your consideration on behalf of responsible and active employers and the people they employ to fund an adequate Department of Labor budget.

Sincerely,
Alaska Chapter, NECA

Steven F. Boyd
Steven F. Boyd
Chapter Manager

To House Finance
TC # 70466/Budget
10 pgs
465-2418

To: House Finance Subcommittee for Health and Social Services
From: Concerned Citizen, Margaret J. Grasse
RE: Medicaid Cuts to Medicaid Options

Restoration of Vision, Dental, and Hearing Services.

Mammography

Prosthetic Devises

Medical Supplies & Equipment

Targeted Case Management

Rehabilitation Services

Alaska Work Program, ATAP Program, General Relief

Childcare Benefits, Cuts to Public Assistance Staff

Mammograms:

Cost 85.00 at 35 years for baseline

recommended on annual or biannual depending on age

Preventive medicine costs are less expensive

Early detection reduces the need for invasive treatment.

Medicaid should cover the cost of a preventive treatment

Medicaid options are preventive and maintenance items

and are more cost effective than crisis management of

progressive disease.

**Do Not Cut Medicaid Options
They are the Most Cost Effective
Medical Treatment**

Margaret Grasse
24251 Hamann Rd.
Eagle River, Ak. 99577

TESTIMONY BEFORE LEGISLATIVE TELECONFERENCE / RALLY

My name is Charlie Johanson-Adams and I am here as a member to the Eagle River - Chugiak Community, a director of a local non-profit, (that provides Head Start and early childhood services) an advocate for children and families, and a member of the state team for revising child care through welfare reform.

The proposed budget cuts to the welfare reform act are premature. We have been given a rare opportunity as a state to design and implement one of the most monumental movements of our time. The promotion of individuals and families to increase independence and decrease dependence on the government system

There have been statewide efforts to assist in the design of our state plan for welfare reform. Program managers, non-profit directors, private, licensed child care owners, campfire (before and after school care) program leaders, children's recreational program directors, state and local officials, public assistance personnel, and consumers (our parents) are to name just a few of the dedicated, grass-roots, community level people willing to make a difference.

The Child Care plan will be complete mid-April. Within its contents there lies strategies which strengthen collaboration, encourage consolidation, increase partnerships with private corporations and broaden the relationship with tribal groups. The plan emphasizes growth, independence and an all out streamlined effort to simplify the system so that parents can easily access the program for their child care needs.

Without this plan, without the budgetary support from legislature, without these options for families working themselves off welfare, we are endangering our children. Their safety is at stake when their parents are forced to choose between work and care.

Give this plan a chance to prove it's value. Allow the state departments and local authorities to proactively support community programs which provide options of child care while parents are at work or in training. Let's not make this yet another reactionary way to meet the needs of families and children.

CHILDREN DESERVE OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY. That should go without an explanation.

March 22, 1997

Charlie Johanson-Adams

PO Box 671891

Chugiak, Alaska

99567

907-688-1499