

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

1865

HOUSE and SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE FILES, 1999 - 2000

10

Percentage of market value distribution

Advantages of POMV payout:

- Provides more predictability and stability in annual distributions
- Disconnects investment decisions from short-term spending considerations
- Spending provision becomes part of long-term investment strategy rather than tactical response to market cycles

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The Trustees' Papers #6

ALASKANS SPEAK OUT ON PUBLIC POLICY CHOICES

*The Role of the Permanent Fund on Alaska's Future:
The Principles & Interests Project*

THE TRUSTEES PAPERS • VOLUME NO. 6

February, 1999



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“If the Permanent Fund is one of our major resources, how can it be used to advance all Alaskans’ visions and values for the future?”



The Trustees' Papers #6



“Self-interest rightly understood.”

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*Alaska Permanent Fund Simulation Model
(Mother of Models, All - or MOMA)*

Understanding and Applying the Model:
Percent of Market Value Distribution Rules

March 31, 1999

Gregory C. Allen
EVP, Callan Associates Inc.

CAI

1

Fundamental Objective

To build a tool that allows us to
understand the potential impacts of
any policy change on:

- Fund Value
- Earnings Reserve Balance
- Distributed Income
- Inflation-Proofing

across a complete range of possible
capital market outcomes.

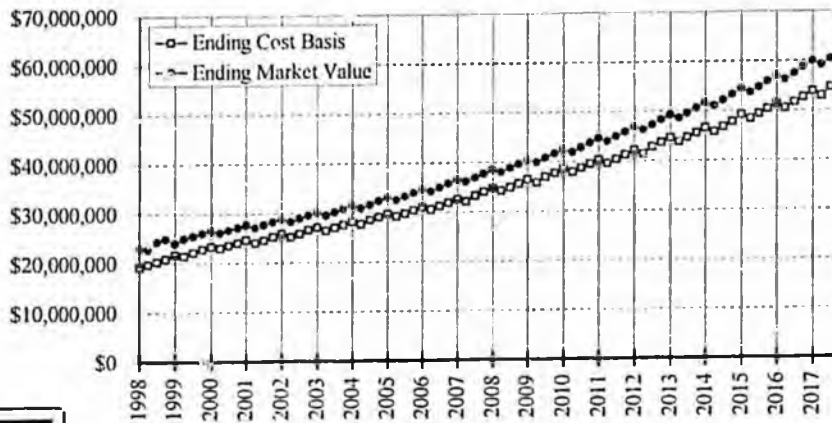
CAI

2

Fund Value

Base - Median Results

Cost vs Market Value of Assets



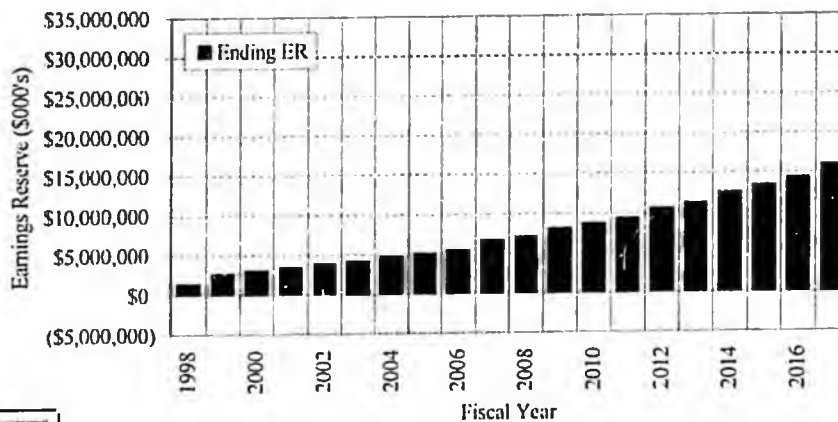
CAI

3

Reserve Account

Base Case - Median Results

Earnings Reserve Account - Ending Balance

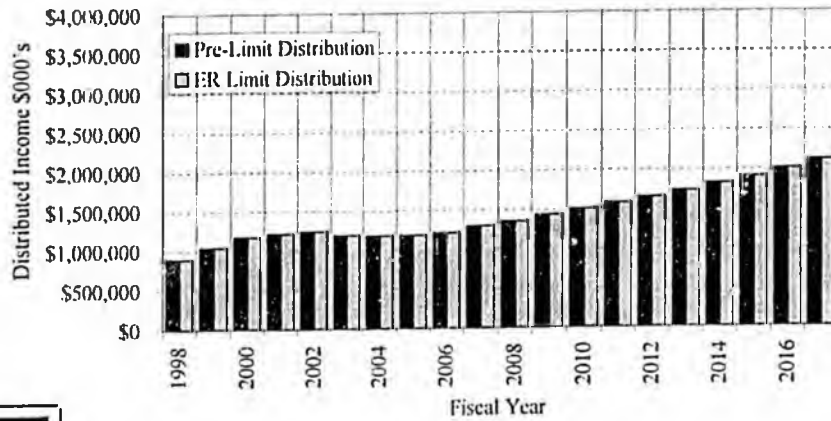


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4

Distributed Income Base - Median Results

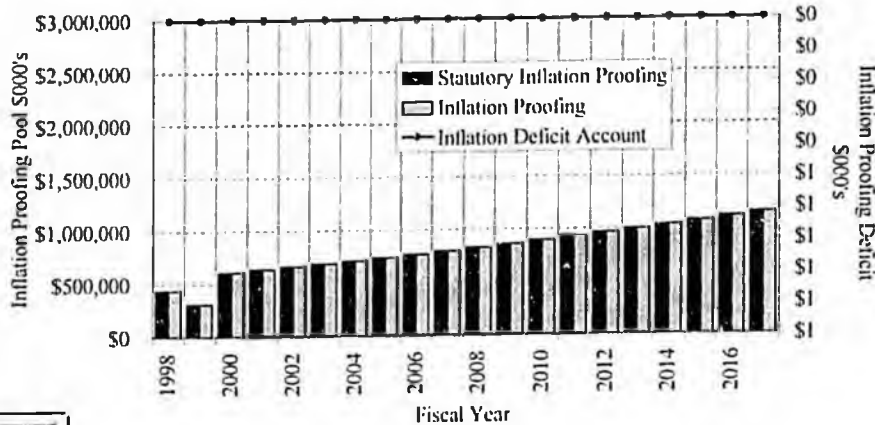
Distributed Income, Pre and Post Earnings Reserve Limitation



5

Inflation-proofing to Principal Base - Median Results

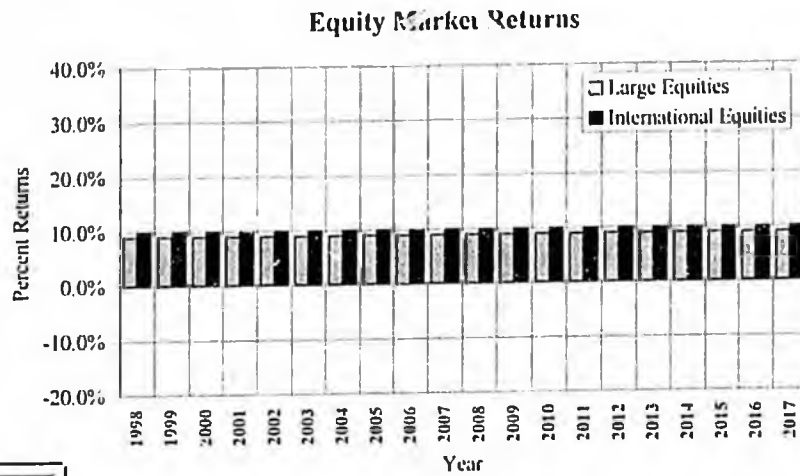
Statutory vs Actual Inflation Proofing



6

Equity Market Returns

Median Case - (Zero Risk)

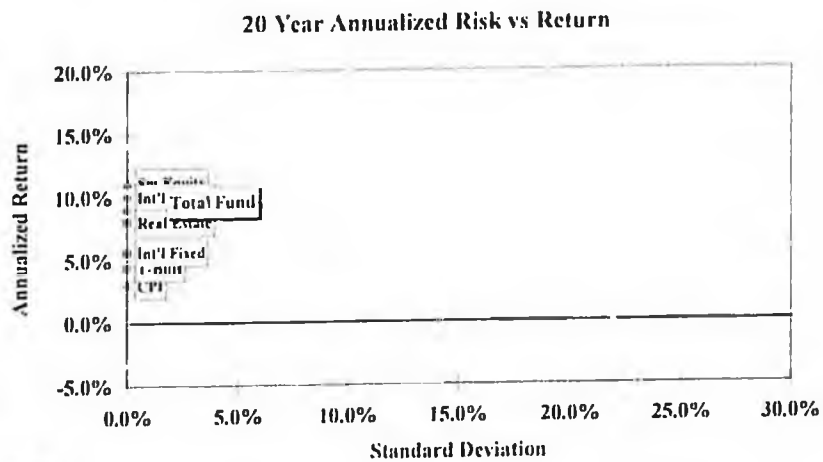


CAI

7

Risk vs Return

Median Case - (Zero Risk)



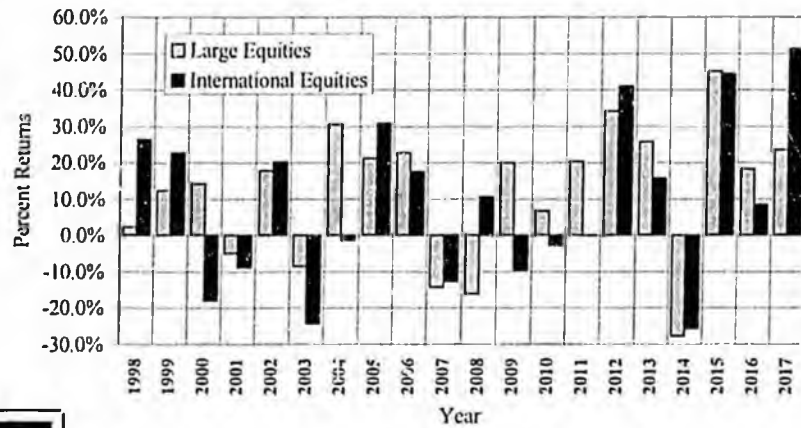
CAI

8

Equity Market Returns

Scenario #28 - (Introducing Risk)

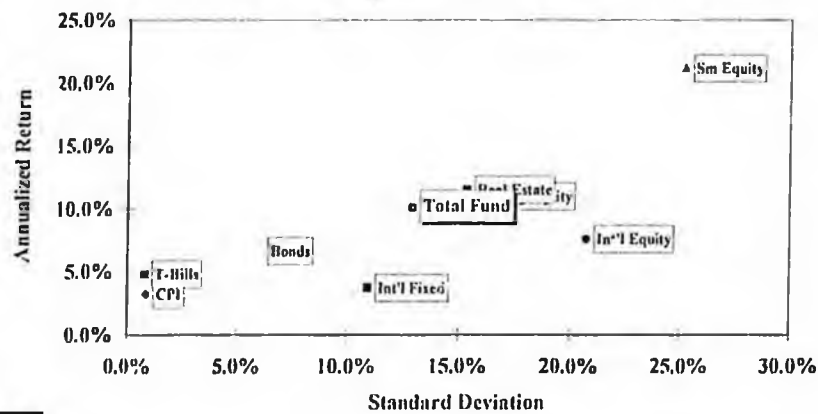
Equity Market Returns



Risk vs Return

Scenario #28 - (Introducing Risk)

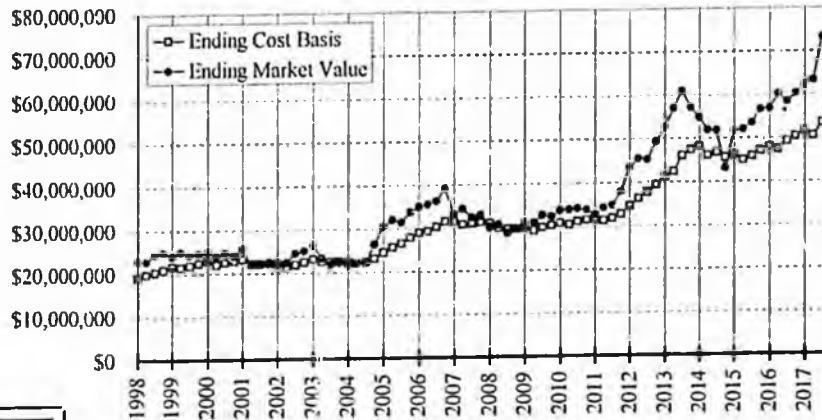
20 Year Annualized Risk vs Return



Fund Value

Scenario #28 - (Introducing Risk)

Cost vs Market Value of Assets

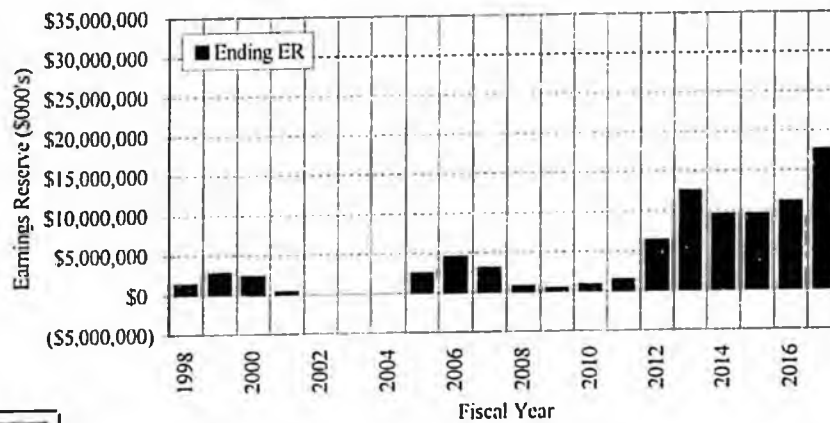


11

Reserve Account

Scenario #28 - (Introducing Risk)

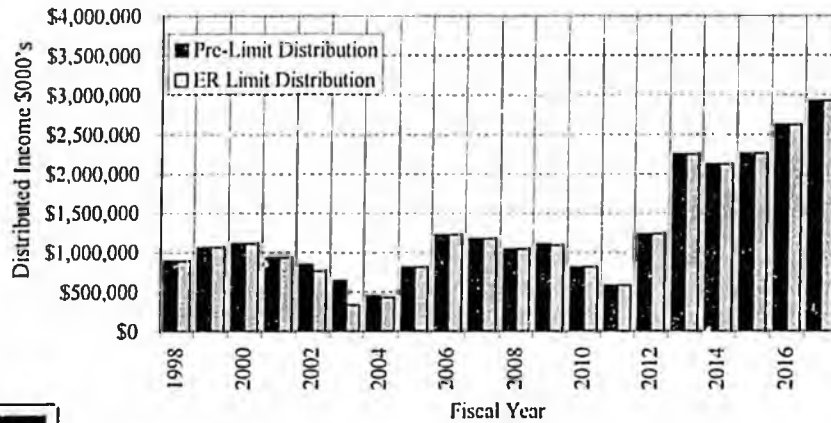
Earnings Reserve Account - Ending Balance



12

Distributed Income Scenario #28 - (Introducing Risk)

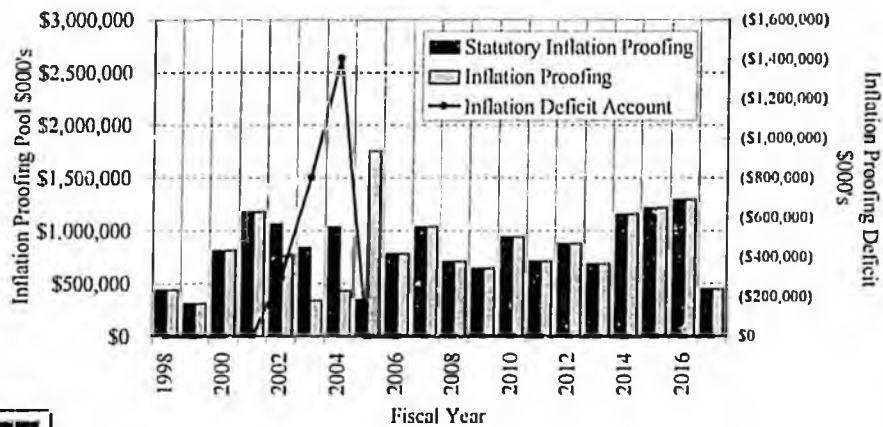
Distributed Income, Pre and Post Earnings Reserve Limitation



13

Inflation-proofing to Principal Scenario #28 - (Introducing Risk)

Statutory vs Actual Inflation Proofing



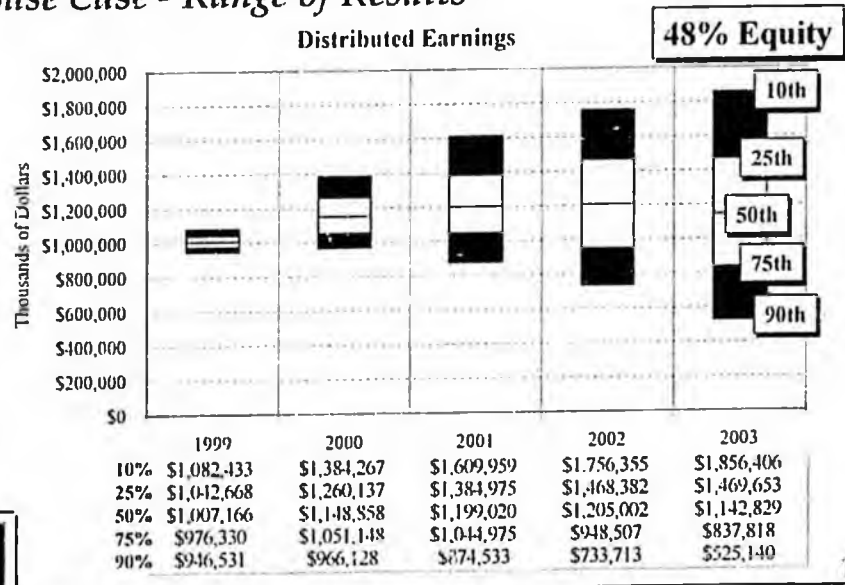
14

[Demo Model]



Distributed Income

Base Case - Range of Results



Applying the Model

Comparing the Status Quo to
three variations on a
Percentage of Market Value (POMV)
Distribution of Income.



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Base Case

- Actual results through December 1998.
- No appropriation from ER in FY 1999.
- 1999 Callan capital market assumptions.
- Asset Allocation: 48% Equity.
- Distributed Income: status quo.
- Inflation-Proofing: status quo.
- Earnings Reserve limitation: status quo.



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*Percent of Market Value - 4.5%
Distribution*

- Actual results through December 1998.
- No appropriation from ER in FY 1999.
- 1999 Callan capital market assumptions.
- Asset Allocation: 48% Equity.
- Distributed Income: 4.5% of 5-year average market value.
- Inflation-Proofing: status quo.
- Earnings Reserve limitation: status quo.

*Percent of Market Value - 4.5% Distribution
Inflation-Proofing stays in Earnings Reserve*

- Actual results through December 1998.
- No appropriation from ER in FY 1999.
- 1999 Callan capital market assumptions.
- Asset Allocation: 48% Equity.
- Distributed Income: 4.5% of 5-year average market value.
- Inflation-Proofing: stays in Earnings Reserve.
- Earnings Reserve limitation: status quo.

Percent of Market Value - 5.5% Distribution Inflation-Proofing stays in Earnings Reserve

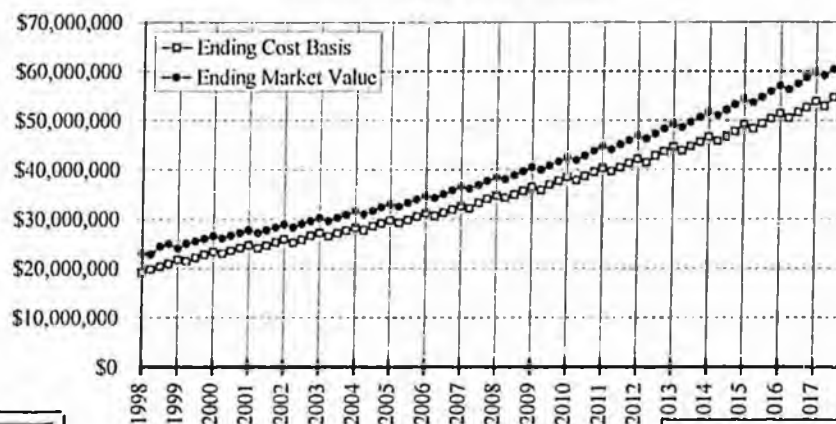
- Actual results through December 1998.
- No appropriation from ER in FY 1999.
- 1999 Callan capital market assumptions.
- Asset Allocation: 68% Equity.
- Distributed Income: 5.5% of 5-year average market value.
- Inflation-Proofing: stays in Earnings Reserve.
- Earnings Reserve limitation: status quo.



21

Fund Value Base - Median Results

Cost vs Market Value of Assets



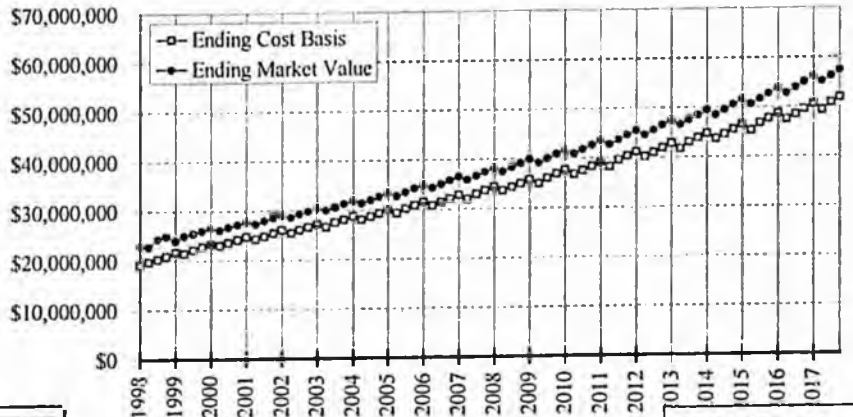
48% Equity

22

Fund Value

4.5 % of MV - Median Results

Cost vs Market Value of Assets



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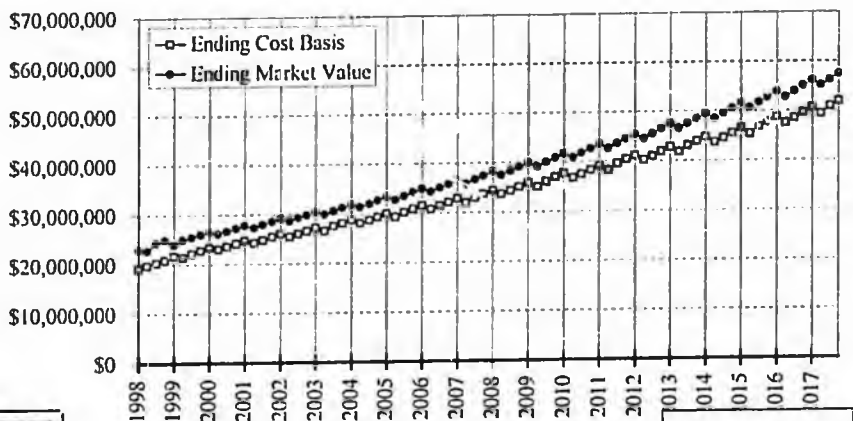
48% Equity

23

Fund Value

4.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Median Results

Cost vs Market Value of Assets



CAI

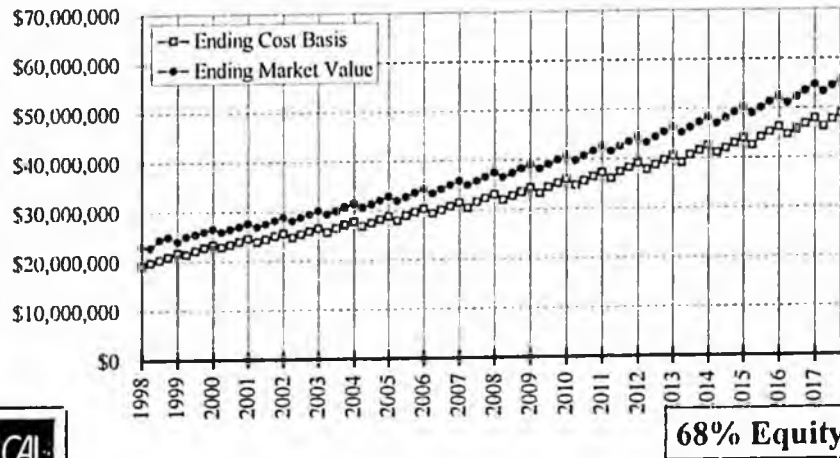
48% Equity

24

Fund Value

5.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Median Results

Cost vs Market Value of Assets

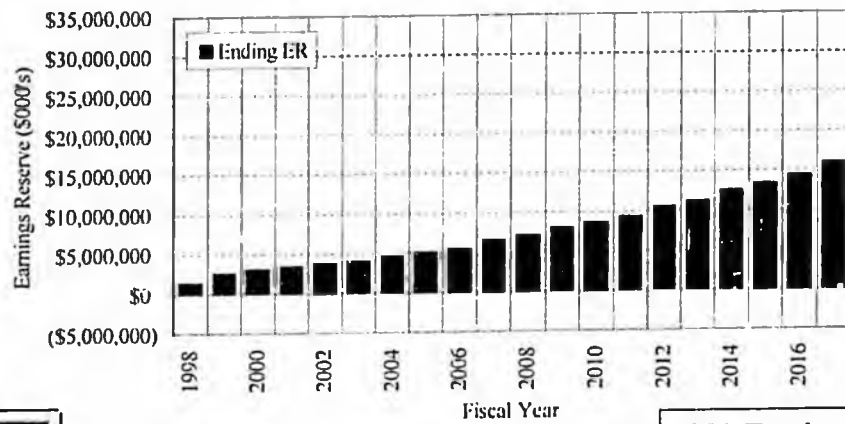


68% Equity

Reserve Account

Base Case - Median Results

Earnings Reserve Account - Ending Balance

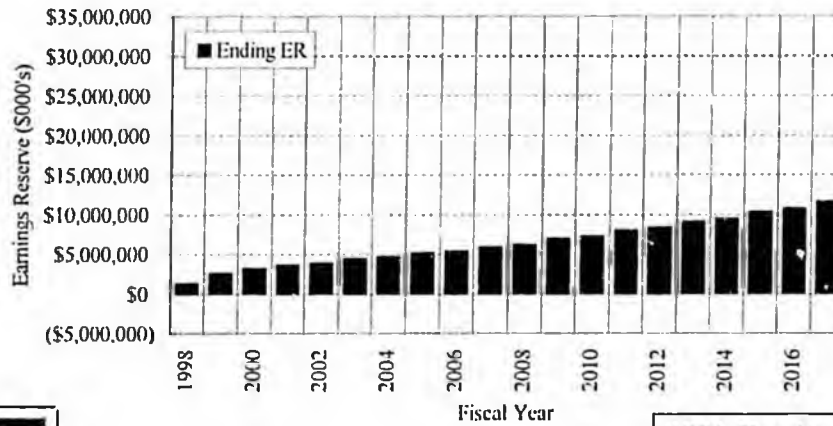


48% Equity

Reserve Account

4.5 % of MV - Median Results

Earnings Reserve Account - Ending Balance



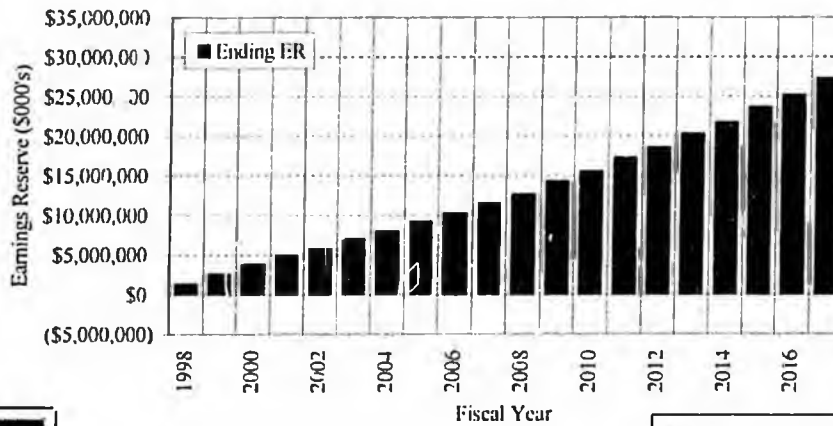
48% Equity

27

Reserve Account

4.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Median Results

Earnings Reserve Account - Ending Balance



48% Equity

28

CORRECTION

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT(S)
HAVE BEEN REFILMED TO
ASSURE LEGIBILITY OR PAGINATION



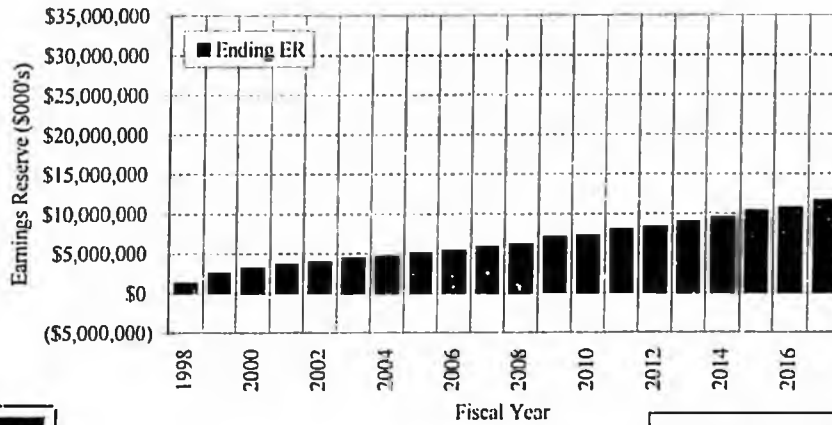
Rev. 6/98

Central Microfilm Services
Department of Education & Early Development
State of Alaska

Reserve Account

4.5 % of MV - Median Results

Earnings Reserve Account - Ending Balance



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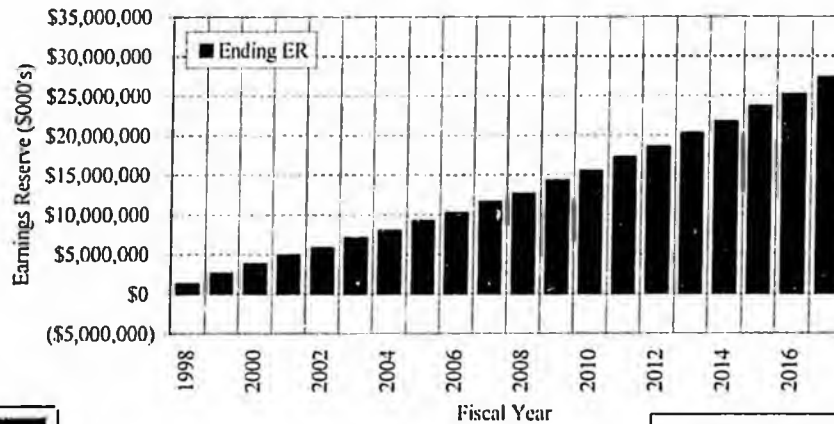
48% Equity

27

Reserve Account

4.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Median Results

Earnings Reserve Account - Ending Balance



CAI

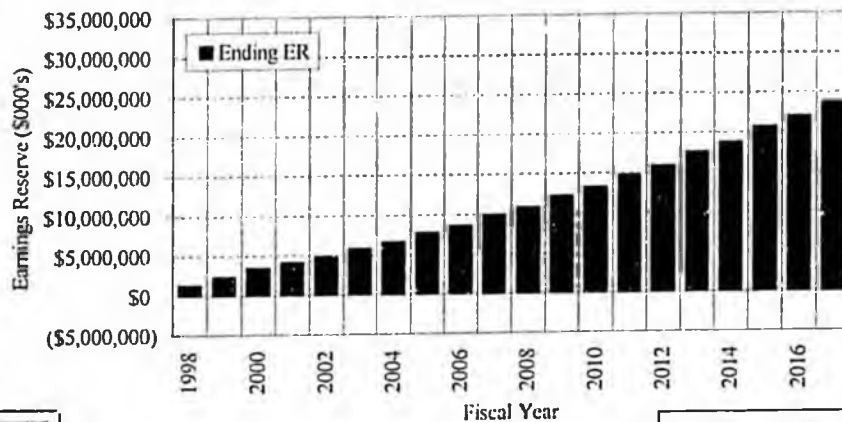
48% Equity

28

Reserve Account

5.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Median Results

Earnings Reserve Account - Ending Balance

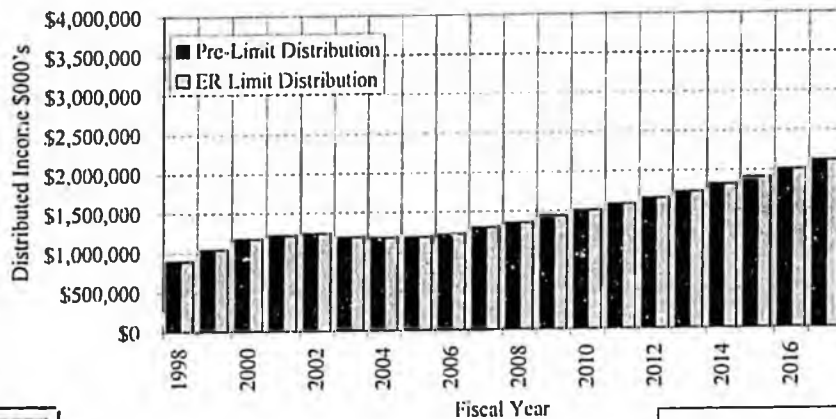


68% Equity

Distributed Income

Base Case - Median Results

Distributed Income, Pre and Post Earnings Reserve Limitation

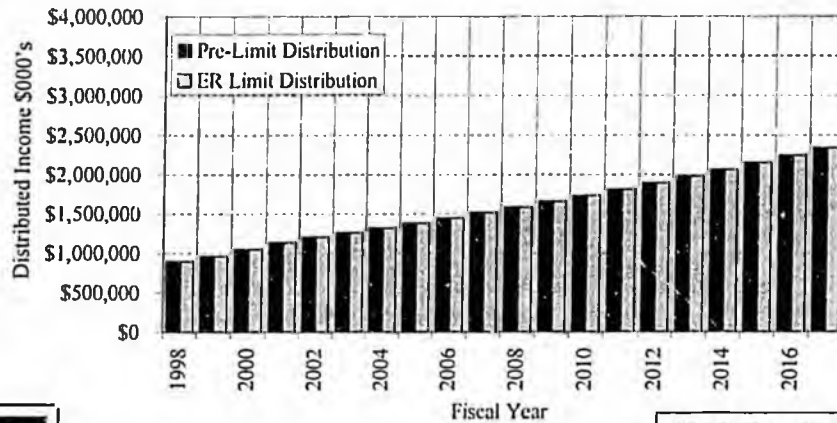


48% Equity

Distributed Income

4.5% of MV - Median Results

Distributed Income, Pre and Post Earnings Reserve Limitation



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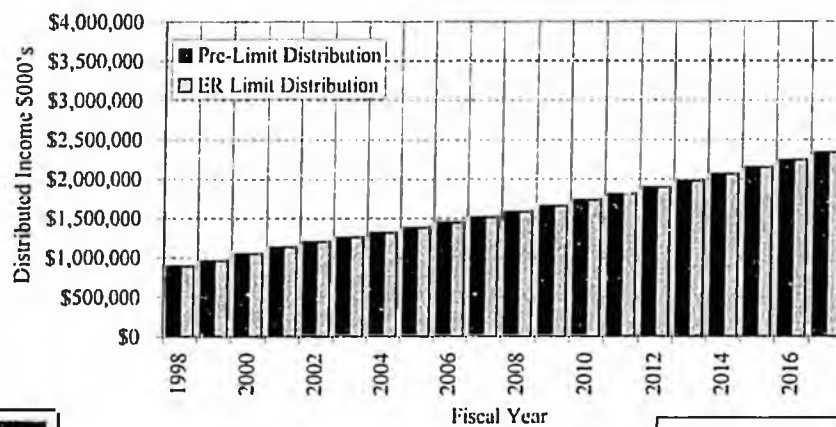
48% Equity

31

Distributed Income

4.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Median Results

Distributed Income, Pre and Post Earnings Reserve Limitation



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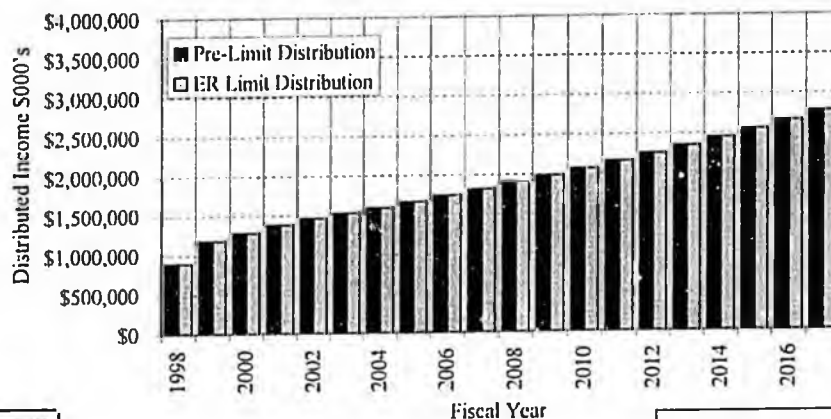
48% Equity

32

Distributed Income

5.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Median Results

Distributed Income, Pre and Post Earnings Reserve Limitation

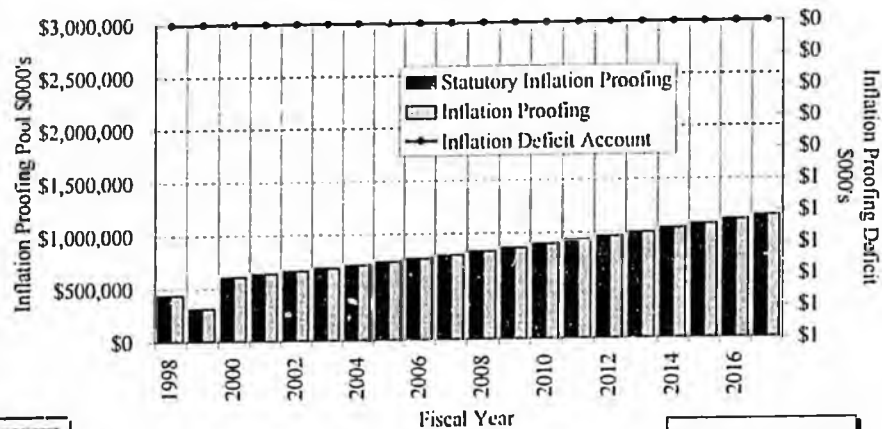


68% Equity

33

Inflation-proofing to Principal Base - Median Results

Statutory vs Actual Inflation Proofing

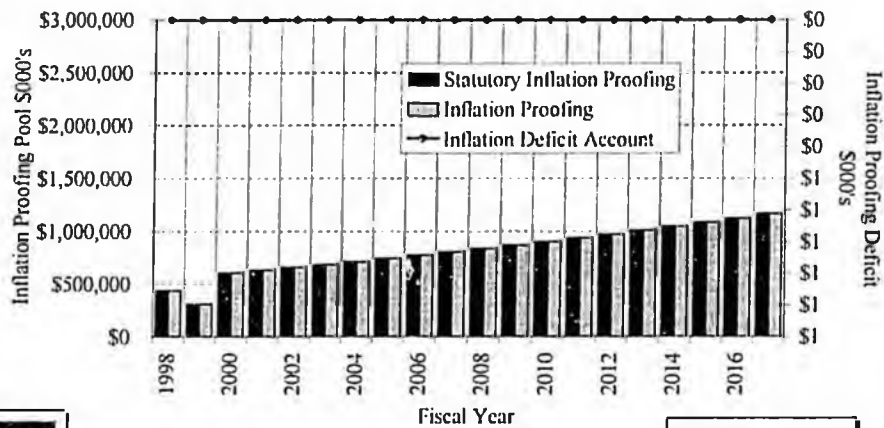


48% Equity

34

Inflation-proofing to Principal 4.5 % of MV - Median Results

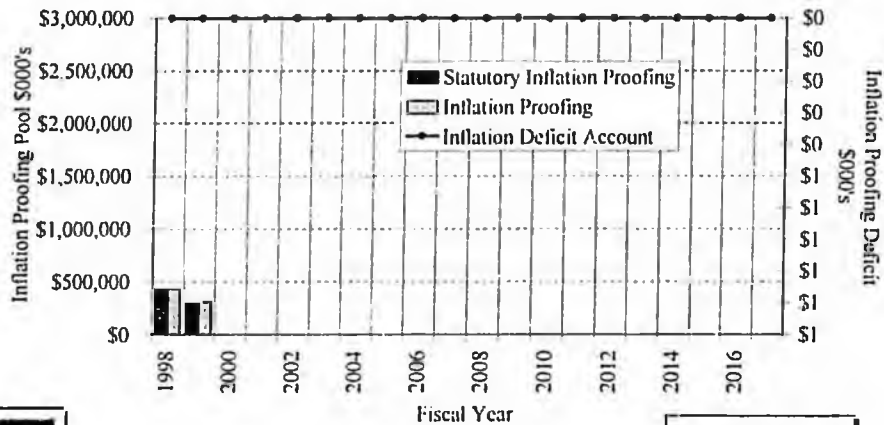
Statutory vs Actual Inflation Proofing



48% Equity

Inflation-proofing to Principal 4.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Median Results

Statutory vs Actual Inflation Proofing

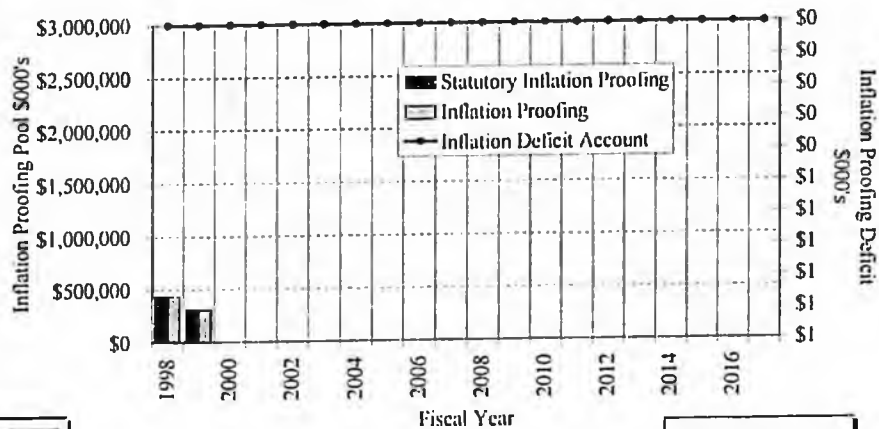


48% Equity

Inflation-proofing to Principal

5.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Median Results

Statutory vs Actual Inflation Proofing



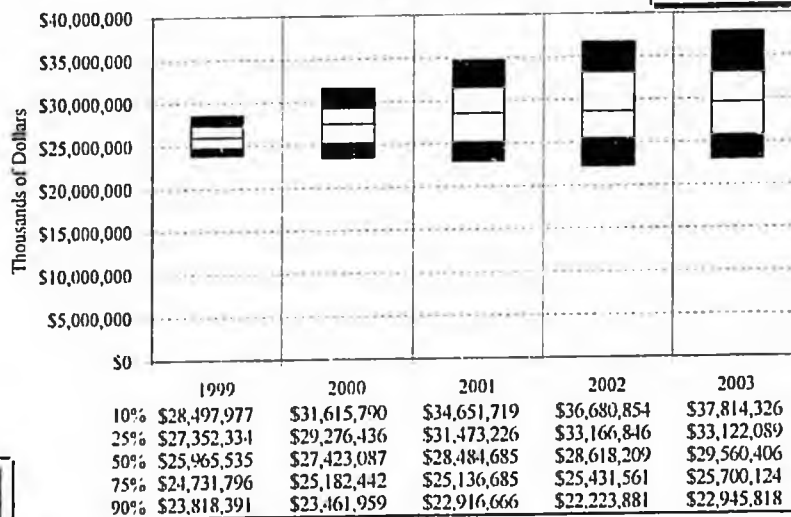
68% Equity

Fund Value

Base Case - Range of Results

Ending Market Value

48% Equity

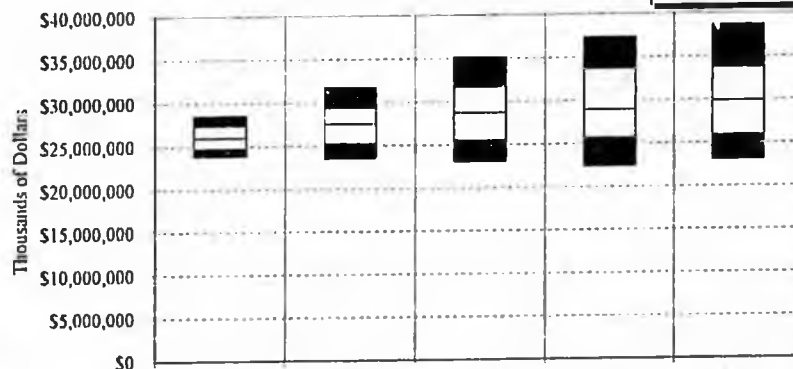


Fund Value

4.5 % of MV - Range of Results

Ending Market Value

48% Equity



	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
10%	\$28,499,272	\$31,716,220	\$35,183,363	\$37,314,996	\$38,645,776
25%	\$27,354,575	\$29,372,295	\$31,688,040	\$33,667,778	\$33,740,520
50%	\$25,965,233	\$27,498,078	\$28,669,871	\$28,922,841	\$29,862,971
75%	\$24,730,899	\$25,207,018	\$25,480,442	\$25,644,392	\$25,919,694
90%	\$23,818,244	\$23,495,579	\$23,006,922	\$22,370,000	\$23,069,445

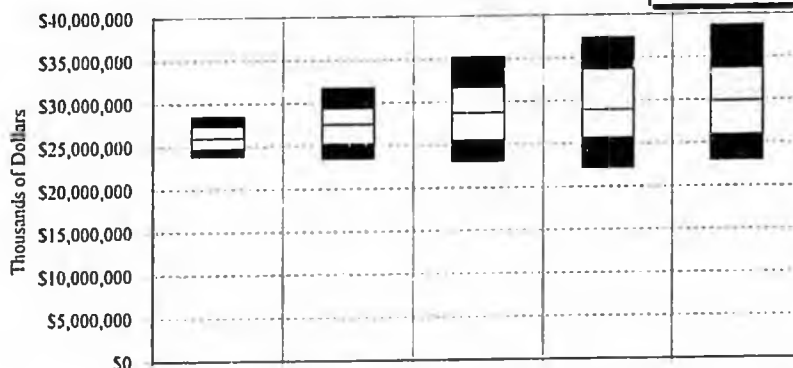


Fund Value

4.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Range of Results

Ending Market Value

48% Equity



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90%	\$23,818,244	\$23,495,579	\$23,006,922	\$22,177,223	\$22,988,804

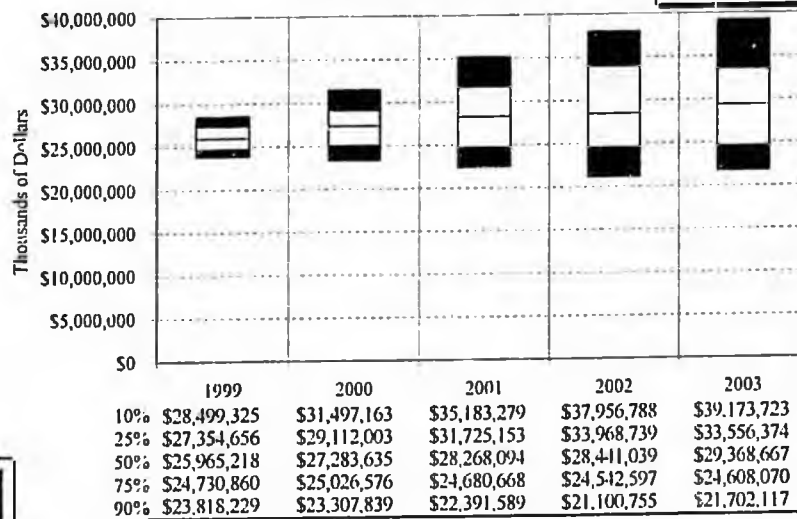


Fund Value

5.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Range of Results

Ending Market Value

68% Equity



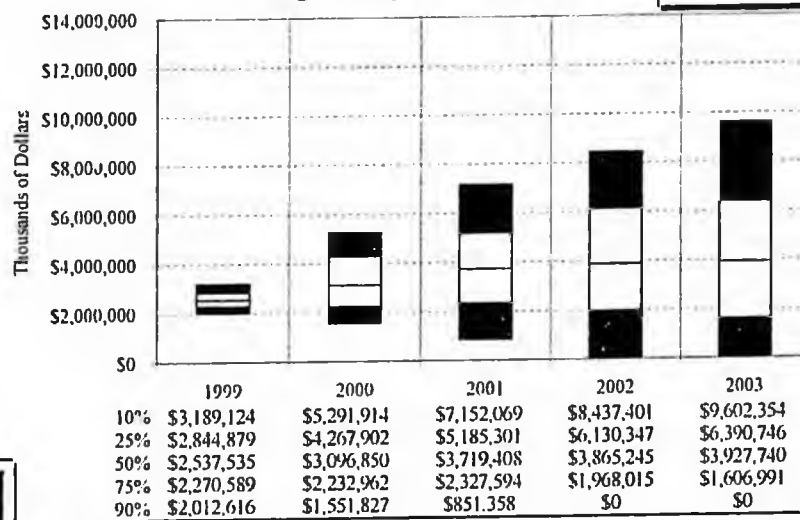
41

Earnings Reserve Balance

Base Case - Range of Results

Ending Earnings Reserve Balance

48% Equity



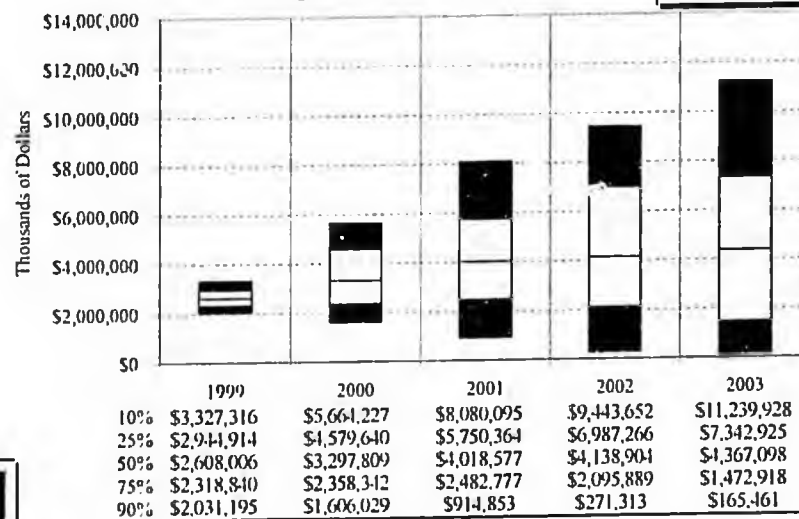
42

Earnings Reserve Balance

4.5 % of MV - Range of Results

Ending Earnings Reserve Balance

48% Equity



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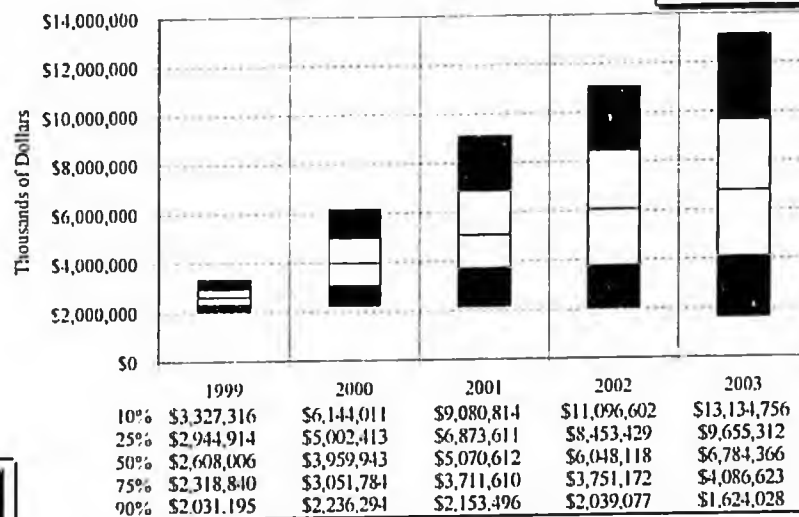
43

Earnings Reserve Balance

4.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Range of Results

Ending Earnings Reserve Balance

48% Equity

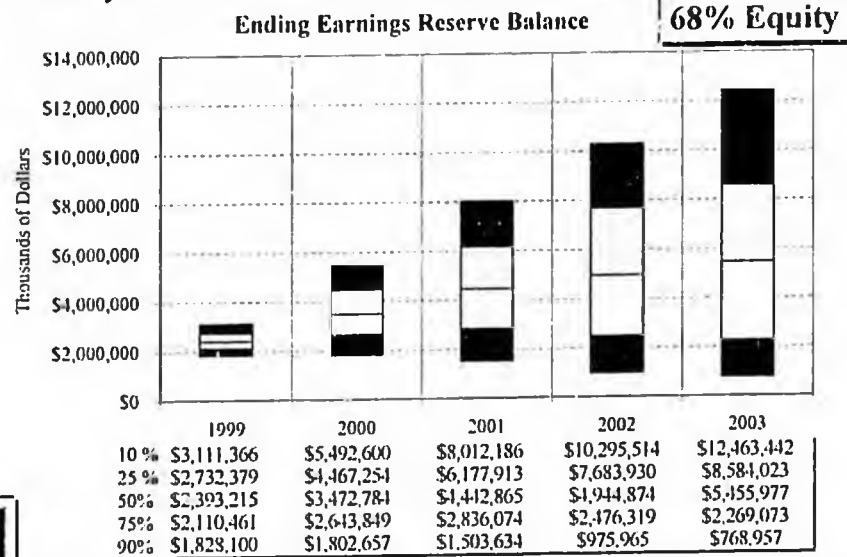


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Earnings Reserve Balance

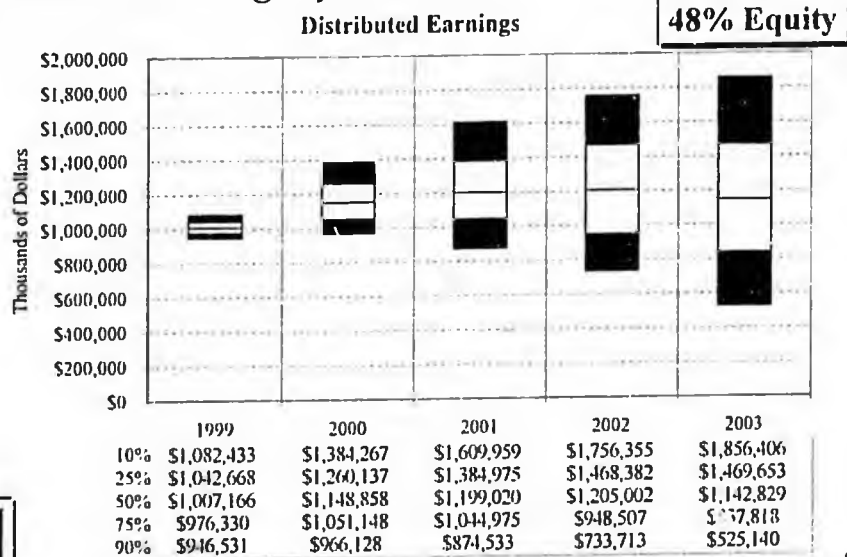
5.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Range of Results



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Distributed Income

Base Case - Range of Results



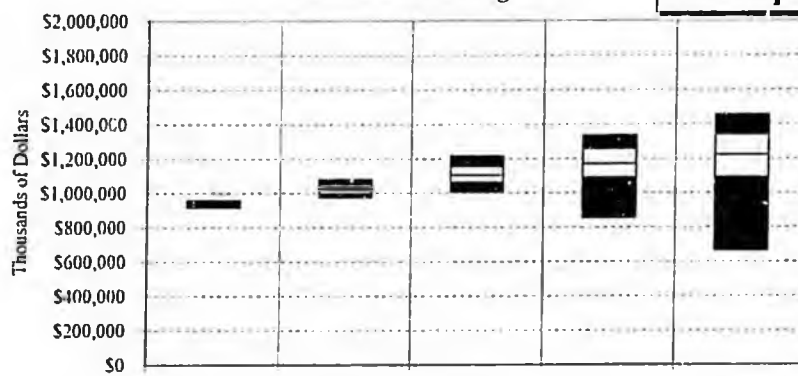
46

Distributed Income

4.5 % of MV - Range of Results

Distributed Earnings

48% Equity



	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
10%	\$957,877	\$1,080,746	\$1,214,267	\$1,333,758	\$1,454,563
25%	\$947,759	\$1,050,472	\$1,154,639	\$1,256,887	\$1,340,682
50%	\$935,479	\$1,023,954	\$1,102,302	\$1,168,911	\$1,220,040
75%	\$924,568	\$998,915	\$1,061,955	\$1,090,428	\$1,091,402
90%	\$916,501	\$976,047	\$1,006,505	\$855,192	\$664,984

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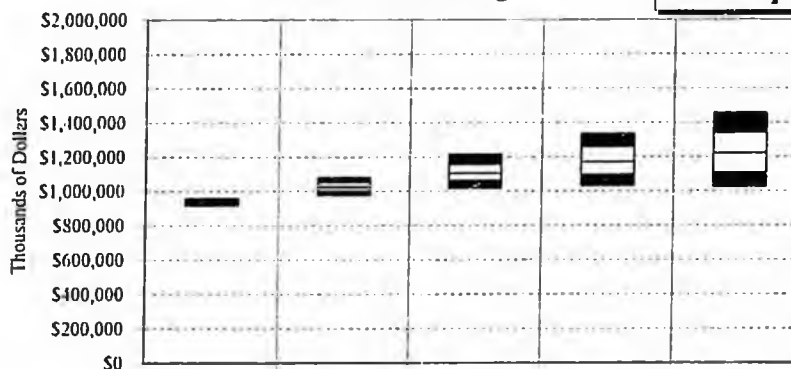
47

Distributed Income

4.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Range of Results

Distributed Earnings

48% Equity



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50%	\$935,479	\$1,023,954	\$1,102,302	\$1,168,911	\$1,220,040
75%	\$924,568	\$998,915	\$1,061,955	\$1,094,858	\$1,106,966
90%	\$916,501	\$976,047	\$1,015,828	\$1,029,881	\$1,023,187

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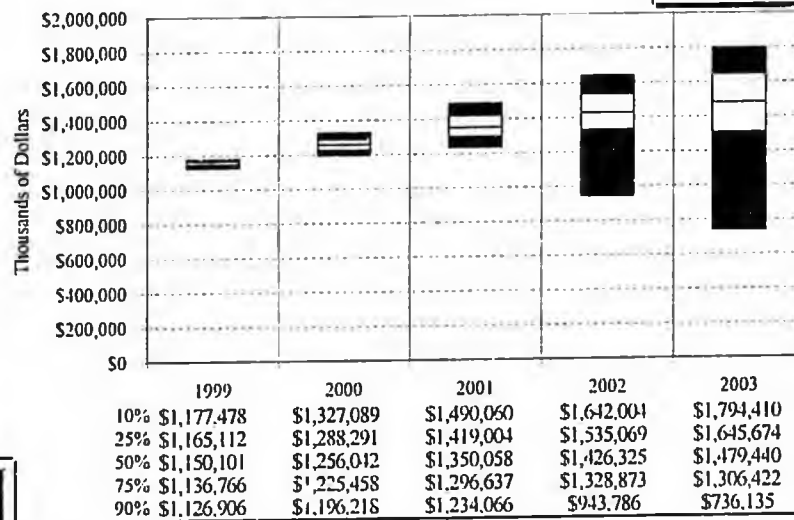
48

Distributed Income

5.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Range of Results

Distributed Earnings

68% Equity



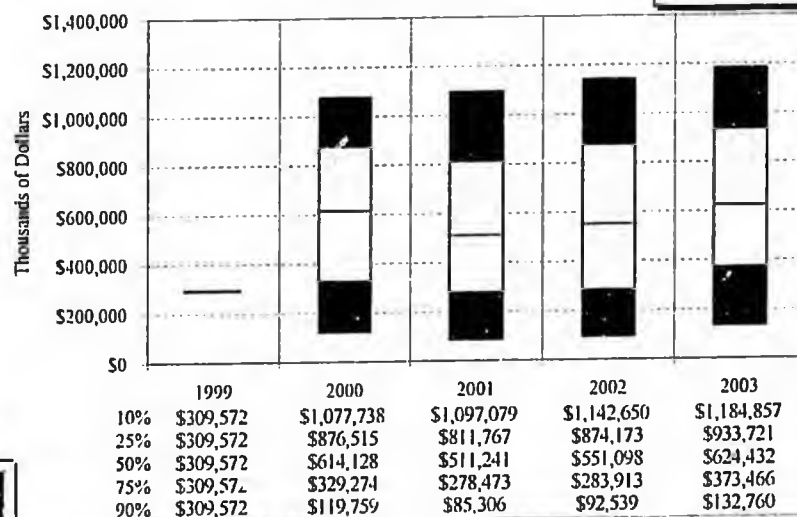
49

Inflation-proofing to Principal

Base Case - Range of Results

Inflation Proofing

48% Equity

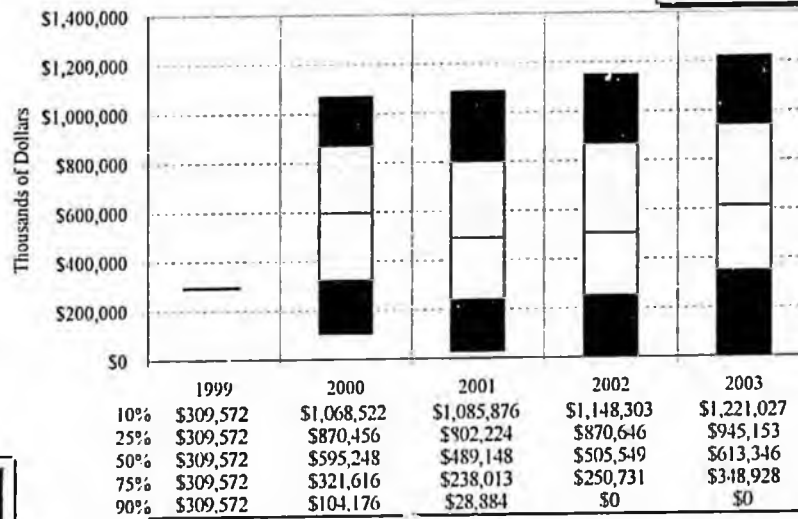


50

Inflation-proofing to Principal 4.5 % of MV - Range of Results

Inflation Proofing

48% Equity

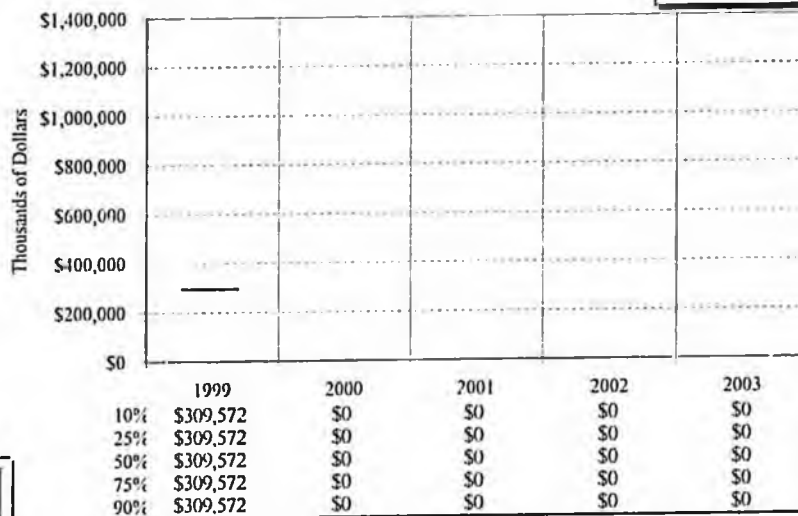


51

Inflation-proofing to Principal 4.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Range of Results

Inflation Proofing

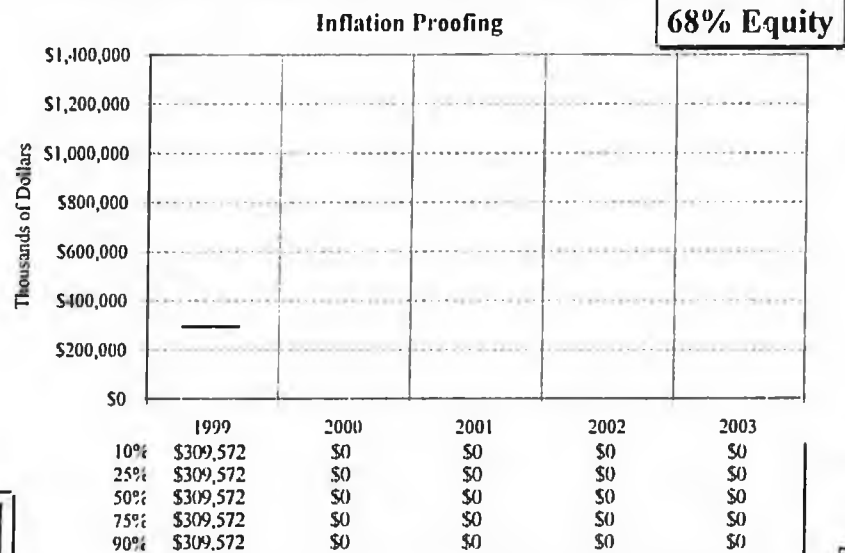
48% Equity



52

Inflation-proofing to Principal

5.5 % of MV, IP in ER - Range of Results



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Key Findings

- The Permanent Fund can support its three objectives under the current distribution formula across most market outcomes.
- A POMV distribution of income can result in a more stable distribution stream than the current income-based distribution rule.
- Higher levels of distributed income require greater allocations to higher-return, higher-risk assets (i.e. equities.)
- Distributing income in excess of sustainable levels creates potential shortfalls in future distributions due to the Fund's requirement to preserve principal ("if you pay out more today, you must pay out less tomorrow.")



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Capital Market Assumptions

Annualized Asset Class Assumptions

Asset Class	Return	Rtn Std Dev	Yield	Active Prem
CPI	3.00%	1.00%	NA	NA
Cash Equivalents	4.40%	0.70%	4.40%	0.20%
Domestic Bonds	5.60%	5.50%	5.60%	0.60%
Large Cap Domestic Equity	9.00%	15.00%	1.90%	0.90%
Small Cap Domestic Equity	11.20%	25.30%	1.30%	2.00%
International Equity	10.00%	21.50%	1.50%	1.35%
Real Estate	8.00%	16.50%	6.50%	0.00%
International Bonds	5.60%	11.00%	5.60%	1.50%

ALASKANS SPEAK OUT ON PUBLIC POLICY CHOICES

The Role of the Permanent Fund in Alaska's Future:
The Principles & Interests Project

THE TRUSTEES PAPERS • VOLUME NO. 6

February, 1999



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801 W. 10th St., Suite 302, Juneau, Alaska
Mailing Address: P.O. Box Box 4-1000, Juneau, Alaska 99802
(907) 465-2047 Telephone
(907) 586-2057 Fax
www.apfc.org



Dear Alaskan,

Now 22 years old, the Alaska Permanent Fund has exceeded the most optimistic expectations. Last year the Fund's net income exceeded revenue from oil taxes and royalties, heralding a new era for Alaska. For now, and at least into the near future, Fund earnings have become the state's largest source of income. While actual amounts may vary from year to year - based on oil prices, production levels and annual investment returns - it appears that the lines have finally crossed and Fund earnings have become the state's largest source of income for the future.

This new fiscal reality was underscored by two major developments. The Alaska Legislature voted last year to leave the Fund's so-called "surplus earnings" in the Earnings Reserve Account where it would be available for any purpose the legislature deemed appropriate. Surplus earnings represent the money left over after the payment of dividends and inflation-proofing. With the Fund's high earnings in recent years, and the low level of inflation, the Earnings Reserve Account totaled about \$5.8 billion as of Dec. 31, 1998.

More recently, Gov. Tony Knowles has proposed to transfer some \$4 billion from the Fund's Earnings Reserve Account into the Constitutional Budget Reserve to help create a sustainable, balanced budget.

As Trustees for the Fund, it is not our role to comment on the merits of the Governor's proposal or any other plan to use Fund earnings. Fund earnings are subject to legislative disposition. Indeed, the legislation that created the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation (APFC) wisely separated the investment decisions from the political decisions. It is our job to ensure that the Fund is safely invested for the benefit of present and future Alaskans and to help provide the information Alaskans need to decide the future of their Fund.

It is in this latter role that we are pleased to present the sixth Trustees Paper, "The Role of the Permanent Fund in Alaska's Future: The *Principles & Interests* Project." This non-political, year-long project was organized by the Alaska Humanities Forum, with assistance from Alaska and outside businesses and supporters from all over the state. Through a two-day conference in Anchorage and 100 community forums in every corner of the state, *Principles & Interests* engaged many Alaskans in a spirited discussion of the Fund's purpose and potential.

The *Principles & Interests* project provided extremely valuable dialogue and set the stage for the current discussions on Alaska's most important asset. While it is very apparent that Alaskans have yet to reach consensus on the future of their Fund, exercises like *Principles & Interests* help define our choices and frame the discussion we need to engage in to determine the future of the Fund.

Eric Wohlforth

Chair, Board of Trustees

Byron I. Mallott

Executive Director, APFC

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE ALASKA HUMANITIES FORUM'S PRINCIPLES & INTERESTS PERMANENT FUND PROJECT

by Eric Wohlforth, Chair, Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation Board of Trustees

The Permanent Fund affects all Alaskans, and yet there has not been enough consideration of its purposes and objectives or the possible roles it could play in our lives. This was amply demonstrated during the six-month *Principles & Interests* project sponsored by the Alaska Humanities Forum, assisted by dozens of other groups, organizations, individuals and businesses from around the state. The question is: What will spark Alaskans to engage in the type of dialogue needed to reach consensus on the purpose of the Fund and the best use(s) of its earnings.

Support for the dividend program is very strong. In fact, it is so strong that some Alaskans feel that discussion of the existing Permanent Fund arrangement is "out of bounds." This point of view may be related to other phenomena observed during the project. One facilitator said the depth of antipathy and distrust of the state legislature shown during the town meeting portion of the project was disturbing. Another said the participants in the town meetings showed deep distrust of elected officials.

Andrew Hacker, who delivered the keynote speech during the conference portion of the project, reminded us of what James Madison said: that the important faculty which will dominate the country is the faculty to acquire property. The public dialogue refueled the fear that the dividend will be adversely affected by public discussion of the future of the Fund. Limited attendance at the 100 or so town meetings and vehemently emotional statements in support of the status quo at the meetings may be part of the



Eric Wohlforth
Chair, Alaska
Permanent Fund
Corporation
Board of Trustees

Eric E. Wohlforth was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation in 1995, reappointed in 1998 and elected Chair in 1997.

Wohlforth has served as an attorney, senior partner and member of the law firm Wohlforth, Vassar, Johnson & Brecht (and predecessors) from 1966 to 1970 and 1973 to present. He developed Alaska's first public finance law practice, and has been lead bond attorney for public agency issuers such as Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, Alaska Energy Authority and Alaska Municipal Bond Bank Authority. Over a 26-year period he has formulated authorizing legislation and security documentation in issuances of more than \$12 billion of debt.

Wohlforth served as State of Alaska Commissioner of Revenue from 1970 to 1972 and was a member of the State Investment Advisory Committee from 1973 to 1980.

same phenomenon – fear of change in a very satisfactory institutional arrangement. There was, however, widespread support for increased state spending to meet public needs, most often identified as the needs of the University of Alaska, or K-12 education. Yet no consensus emerged for any alternative program.

There was support for a renewed state income tax, but it was not overwhelming. There was support as well for the options that involved creation of separate funds for various purposes – creating a community dividend and spending some Fund income. But none of the options spelled out in the *Principles & Interests* brochure given to people attending the meetings was specifically endorsed in the form presented.

Judging from comments heard at the town meetings, there were hopeful signs of an altruistic attitude. One of the facilitators noted a consistent concern for the well-being of people – mostly rural Alaskans – who depend on the dividend for their livelihood. There was frequently expressed a sense of urgency about the need to spend some of the money to meet pressing needs in the state.

In my view, the *Principles & Interests* project was a necessary and successful part of an ongoing public process in Alaska, an effort that should be repeated on a regular basis. People attending the town meetings expressed their appreciation for the chance to express their values and their views and to hear others do the same. The need for dialogue is especially strong at this juncture in the history

of Alaska when major decisions (or lack of decisions) about the use of public wealth could have such a profound effect on the future of the state.

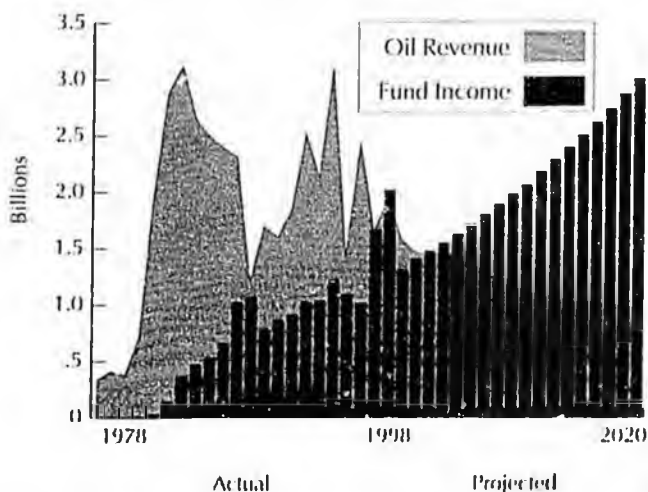
Background

The Alaska Permanent Fund, created in 1976 to receive a portion of the state's oil royalties, had, by January 1997, increased in market value to approximately \$22 billion. The growth in the preceding two years had been very rapid. The Fund stood at \$15 billion in January 1995. In addition, the total income from the Fund had increased to nearly equal the rest of the state's income. A large portion of the income was paid out annually in dividends to each resident. The rapid increase in common stock valuations as well as the consistent legislative practice of adding undistributed income to the principal, was increasing the amount of this annual dividend to each resident. In 1997, the dividend was \$1,296. In 1998 it was \$1,540.88.

Notwithstanding the success of the Permanent Fund, the Alaska legislative leadership deemed that there existed a fiscal gap and budgets have been held nearly flat for the last several years. Oil production from the North Slope fields was dropping, and in 1998 the price of Alaska crude

PERMANENT FUND STATUTORY NET INCOME AND STATE OIL REVENUE

(Excludes unrealized gains and losses on investments)



This graph shows the relationship between unrestricted state oil revenues and actual Fund earnings. The projections for the years 1999-2020 are based on Department of Revenue's mid-case forecast for future oil prices, and the APFC's forecast for future Fund earnings.



Participants at an Anchorage town hall meeting consider the six options explained in a special brochure on the future of the Fund.

plunged to historic low levels. Although the state was said to be running a large annual surplus if Permanent Fund income were taken into consideration, without this income the state was in deficit. A 1995 non-partisan, legislatively-sponsored committee effort to study the state's fiscal picture – the Long Range Fiscal Planning Commission – suggested a cap on dividends and a modest set of excise taxes. No action was taken. In the meantime, the Permanent Fund doubled in size. By 1997 the time seemed ripe for a new dialogue on the state's fiscal future. This was the background of the *Principles & Interests* project.

Planning

On the occasion of the Fund's 20th anniversary, a steering committee representing a broad constituency of Alaskans proposed that a conference be held to study and discuss the Alaska Permanent Fund, its founding and evolving principles, and its purposes and objectives. The conference would be held under the aegis of the Alaska Humanities Forum.

It was determined that the conference would start with panel discussions on the Fund's history, its mechanics and Alaska's fiscal structure, and continue with panels structured around questions looking to the future. Months of planning and discussion pointed to a two-day conference, town meetings across the state and a statewide call-in

program. A budget of \$270,000 was established. Approximately half was ultimately donated by local businesses and individuals and half by Permanent Fund investment managers.

The November 21 and 22, 1997, Conference

Milestones and Management

The first morning of the two-day conference in November 1997 was devoted to details of the establishment of the Fund, the origin of the dividend program and the evolution of investment policy. It included a session on Permanent Fund management issues by outside investment advisors and managers.

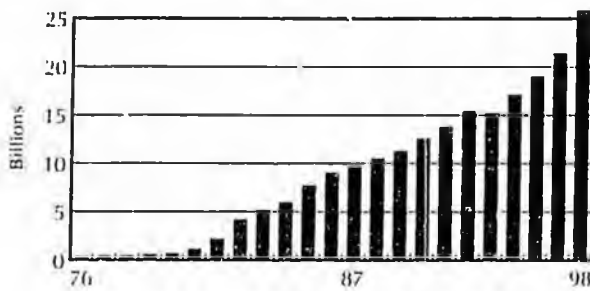
Present at the Creation: *Personal Reflections on the Birth of the Permanent Fund*

The afternoon meeting featured a fascinating session on how the Fund evolved and included former Gov. Jay Hammond (thought of widely as the creator of the Fund), his attorney general and former legislators who held important public policy positions at the time the Fund was established by constitutional amendment. These speakers gave their views of the original purpose of the Fund and how they felt it should now contribute to life in Alaska.

Former Attorney General Avrum Gross speculated about Alaska in the year 2020 with the streets swept with wind, holes in the road and mobs of uneducated people. In the center of town there would be a marble temple with an alabaster statue. The temple was the Permanent Fund headquarters and the statue depicted, presumably, Gov. Hammond. Each year the executive director of the Fund would announce the dividend and the throng of people would run to the airport. To avoid this, Gross said, it was time we started to talk about how we measured the success of the Fund when its purpose was to improve the quality of life.

Oral Freeman, another legislator present at the creation, said the Fund was created to moderate

GROWTH OF FUND
SINCE INCEPTION
(At market)



the boom/bust cycle that occurred when natural resources were extracted and then rapidly depleted. He said the Fund was doing exactly what it was intended to do. Gross talked about the fact that no one wants to revisit the dividend, but that previous governmental needs were met with current revenues and that no longer is the case. We should begin the debate on how we use income from the Fund to run government, he said. Freeman said we should never curb dividends, but instead "claw money back in taxes." Hammond advanced his unique state income tax scheme which would provide for a credit against a new state income tax in the amount of the dividend received by Alaskans. This would ensure that "outsider," non-residents paid most of the income tax. The dividend was the major theme and concern.

Perspectives on Public Wealth and Public Obligations

The next panel included comments by former Commissioner of Revenue Mary Nordale. "When I grew up, the public issue of the question of statehood was extremely important and drew people together," she said. "Since we have acquired wealth, there has been a lack of discussion of public ideas and this means we do not have an opportunity to educate newcomers." She referred to the dividend as a strange sort of veil thrown over all of public life, diluting and misdirecting our attention away from real issues.

Michael Harper, President and Chief Executive Officer of Kuskokwim Corporation stated, "There is something wrong when we have such a large Fund and, at the same time, such large and unmet needs."

Judy Bracly of the Alaska Oil & Gas Association observed that the fact that our economic system is based on public resources collides with the notion of small government.

Perspectives on the Purposes of the Fund

In a panel on "Perspectives on the Purposes of the Fund," Michael O'Connor, President of Peak Oilfield Service Co., noted that there had been a 27-percent growth in dividends over the last two years and advocated that the Fund be established as an endowment. Former State Sen. Steve Rieger, stated that the legislature should increase the Fund's permitted stock ownership percentage to 60 percent from the present 50-percent limit. Rieger said the range of options available for the Fund in 1997 is greater than it was several years ago because the Fund is so much greater now.

Former state legislator Kay Brown advanced the unique notion of creating public/private foundations to spend income from the Fund. She cited four goals: (1) preserving public wealth, (2) establishing the Fund as a form of renewable resource, (3) sharing public wealth, and (4) preserving the Alaska quality of life. She would establish six, citizen-run, tax-exempt foundations for Alaska's future. Members would be elected by the people of the state and each would have a portion of the Fund to spend for their special purposes, which would include (1) early child development, (2) education, (3) social services, (4) the environment, and (5) the arts. She noted that education spending has not kept pace with the demands of the state, that child-abuse and neglect-prevention programs are at token levels, prisons are overflowing, and there are other urgent social needs.

Former governor Walter J. Hickel said it was time to give the Permanent Fund a public purpose. He advanced his community dividend program, which would appropriate Fund income in block amounts to Alaska's municipalities.

Future Consequences: How the Fund and the Dividend Affect Alaska

Scott Goldsmith, of the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of Alaska Anchorage, led off the first Saturday morning panel, "Future Consequences: How the Fund and the Dividend Affect Alaska." He said that current Alaskans had the view that the legislature squandered the first large oil lease sale bonus of \$900 million in 1969 and, in all events, the Permanent Fund should be kept away from legislative appropriation. He noted that income from the Permanent Fund was now the equivalent of three times what the income from a sales tax would be and that it constituted the largest state program.

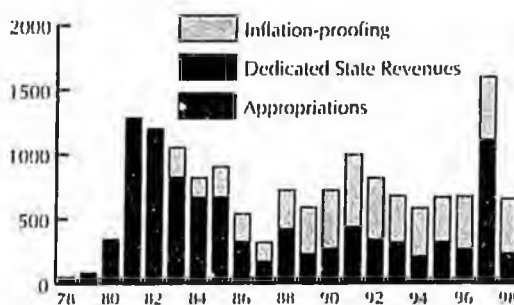
He said that it was hard, if not impossible, to interpret the impact of the dividend since it comes in a lump sum. He suggested a different way of distributing it which might be monthly and should not include minors. Goldsmith asked rhetorically that if the Fund belongs to individuals only and not to the community, why not distribute it entirely rather than having the state act in the paternalistic capacity of distributing only \$1,000 a year? He noted that 34 percent of Alaskans were under age 19, and 32 percent were between 20 and 39. He said the first category was not alive when the Permanent Fund started, and that no one under 30 today had ever paid an Alaska income tax.

Gregg Erickson, an economic consultant from Juneau, stated that the Permanent Fund affects the birth rate, since fecundity is a function of increased income. He said the Fund has brought about immigration of an estimated 40,000 people. Government services are being starved and taxation is very hard to institute when government is the richest guy on the block. He suggested the model of the other 49 states and asked: Why not let the tax process work? The state so far has had

a Hamiltonian approach to the problem and we should, instead, as Jeffersonians, privatize the Fund and distribute the money.

Gerald A. McBeath, Professor of Political Science, University of Alaska Fairbanks, said that the state was an investment banker, and that in theory public ownership should encourage equality and fraternity. In fact, it has encouraged divisiveness in Alaska. He said that when he attended the hearings for the educational endow-

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PRINCIPAL
(Since inception)



ment sponsored by Gov. Cowper, he was appalled with the mean-spiritedness. The dividend has routinized the "rent-seeking behavior of Alaskans," such that every Alaskan is now a client of the government. He noted that the Permanent Fund dividend constituency was exceedingly conservative and discouraged debate. It represented a perversion of the democratic process and discouraged deliberation.

David A. Reaume, an economic consultant from Juneau, said creation of the Fund gave us options, but now these are not good enough and we are moving dangerously close to being like Hetty Green, the wealthy miser who denied her son a needed operation. He says we give a little to each of the many, namely all the citizens of the state, to support the few - 10 or 12 investment managers of the Fund who get several million dollars a year for investing in the Index. He

suggested an educational endowment proposal would reduce general funding for education. He said that since there was no fiscal crisis, none of the proposals advanced was compelling enough to sacrifice the dividend.



Anchorage attorney Cliff John Groh dressed up like Abe Lincoln to attract people to the town meetings. Groh is a former Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Revenue.

Keynote Address: Opportunities and Obligations of Public Wealth: Leadership, Stewardship, Responsibility

In the keynote address on Saturday, Professor Andrew Hacker implied that the state needed more self-confident leadership unafraid to use shame ("Is this really how you wish the state to be?") as a weapon for change. (See Page 15 for a complete transcript of Hacker's presentation). As a people we need to build on the past rather than completely remake ourselves with each new generation.

The Future of the Permanent Fund

After Hacker's address, Lee Gorsuch, Chancellor of the University of Alaska Anchorage, did a splendid job leading a roundtable entitled "The Future of the Permanent Fund." (See page 29 for a complete transcript).

Minority business advisor Debra Call suggested an infrastructure development fund, a human resource development fund, as well as a dividend

fund. Former Attorney General John Havelock in open forum said that ultimate privatization would cause a vast influx of persons. He noted that we are involved in the community and that we collect the money as a community. He asked rhetorically why are we not doing more? The answer to him was that alternate proposals to use the Fund were insufficiently articulated to warrant a detailed response.

Archbishop Francis Hurley stated that through the dividend we set a unique national precedent by establishing personal choice with respect to public funds. This is an extraordinary thing, he said. The question is, where do we go from here? He said it was going to take a long time to work things out but that we must start. Later the archbishop said our first target must be the poorest families in the state and that the question must be "Are you interested in narrowing the gap between low-income and high-income persons?"

Mano Frey, business manager of the Laborers Union, said the dividend program will not go away and that a cap is unnecessary.

Margie Johnson, Mayor of Cordova, said basic infrastructure needs were the most important and supported Gov. Hickel's community dividend proposal.

Thelma Buchholdt, a former legislator, in commenting on attendees, said she saw no new faces. She wished to see more Alaska workers and said the Fund should be used for basic rural resource needs as well as for education. She suggested that community councils be consulted.

Henry Springer, executive director of the Associated General Contractors, associated himself with the Long Range Fiscal Planning Commission which, in its final report, suggested modest user fees and excise tax increases. He was comfortable using half of the income for the state budget. He noted that the state has no capital budget, but that it was simply a tag onto to the federal government's matching funds. The federal-

ly mandated six-year capital improvement fund is a sham that changes with each legislature, he said. He added that half of the Fund should be put in an education fund.

Thomas Williams, former Commissioner of Revenue, said that limiting the dividend would be the dumbest tax and the only one that would affect only Alaskans.

Jay Hammond said that the essential question was how we addressed our spending needs: whether by the dividend or the income tax.

Several supported the income tax. Jerome Komisar, president of the University of Alaska, said we needed to determine the role of government first; then we should come to consider taxation issues. Thomas McCabe, a private citizen, said the appropriation process will never become completely honest until the income tax is reimposed.

Conference Evaluations

Conference evaluations offered thoughts on various topics. Some suggested we find a way to involve younger people in the process. One person said “. . . there was remarkable consensus on the need for an income tax to fund urgent public purposes, especially education, but where were the Republicans, fundamentalists and transients? We the old guard with common values are no longer politically dominant Alaskans.”

Most comments were in support of the notion of expanded and enriched public dialogue on the future of the state. One person said he heard some good ideas and many appalling ones and that his personal understanding and perspectives were enlarged. With respect to consensus, one attendee said it is very powerful when so many people have all the same sets of opinions and ideas. It moves us closer to consensus.

Statewide Meetings

One hundred professionally facilitated discussions were held in 41 communities and schools

around the state. These meetings were publicized through advertising, flyers and word of mouth. The project concluded with a two-hour, statewide radio call-in program in June 1998.

The meetings were held in March and April. On May 3, 1998, an *Anchorage Daily News* editorial rated them a success. The paper editorialized that Alaskans were beginning to wonder whether we are doing harm by doing nothing with Fund earnings. There was talk of using money for education, health and infrastructure. The editorial stated that the process of the debates served a good purpose and offered a venue where ideas mingle and clash, sometimes with passion and without rancor. The editorial concluded that although thrift is vital, thrift doesn't mean hoarding, and that the theme of community participation was strong.



Facilitator Thea Agnew, right, talks with participants at the Senior Center meeting.

At the start of each meeting attendees were shown a short factual video about the Fund and were given a substantial explanatory brochure on the Fund entitled, "Background Notes for Public Conversation," which listed six options for the Fund. These were: Option 1, "Leave it Alone"; Option 2, "Create Separate Funds"; Option 3, "Create a Community Dividend"; Option 4, "Spend Some of the Income"; Option 5, "Invest it in Alaska"; and Option 6, "Privatize it." The pros and cons of each option were spelled out in detail.

It is important to remember that conclusions from these meetings do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Alaskans in general but merely those who participated in the discussions.

Gary Holthaus, a facilitator of meetings in Barrow, Nome, Kotzebue and Unalakleet in northern Alaska, and Juneau, Ketchikan, Sitka and Haines and other communities in the Southeast, reported that although there were disagreements, "there was a surprising unanimity over the run of the meetings: Most people want to spend some of the earnings now; no one wants to stop the dividends though most people would agree to a cap at some level; more people than the polls have indicated said they would like to see an income tax restored."

He noted that most of the people came to the meetings generally advocating options 2, 3 or 4, which were to create separate funds for special purposes, create a community dividend or spend some of the income. He said, "Perhaps the most disturbing discovery for me was hearing the depth of the antipathy and distrust toward the legislature. There is an edge to it now which I think threatens the survival of republican processes of government." He found great antipathy between the Bush and urban Alaska.

"What makes these conversations worthwhile is seeing the movement in people's thought as the evening progresses." In Unalakleet the adults were clear that the state operating budget had been cut so far that it seriously threatened the state's infrastructure and institutions. In Juneau, education was a big issue and there was a general feeling that the current effort to revise the foundation formula (Alaska's system of distributing state school aid) was a misguided and unfair attack on rural Alaska.

"At the second Juneau meeting some of the participants said the real questions lay in the realm of values. 'The issue isn't the Permanent Fund,' one man said, 'it's the future of Alaska. We are at a crossroads here; we have an opportunity no other state has; we can paint our own rosy

future.' One man in Juneau said our politics have become toxic: 'We don't talk about what we can do to make things better anymore, we just talk about who we can throw over the side.'

"At the Wrangell meeting the attendees were unaware that the budget had been cut in recent years and indeed found that hard to believe. This strange phenomenon occurred elsewhere in the state. At Wrangell, the public voice was 'leave it alone; don't give government a chance at it.'

"The second Wrangell meeting opened with a lot of suspicion of the forum and its motives, which apparently relaxed as the meeting proceeded.

"The first meeting in Ketchikan found even those who wanted no change in existing practice willing to spend more for education. In the next Juneau meeting the paradox of the perceived need to use some of the earnings to meet the state's needs and yet not permit the legislature to determine how to spend it was clear. At the end of a Haines meeting the vast majority of participants, all but about 3 of 15, felt we should be spending some of the earnings to meet current needs.

"At the second Haines meeting the problem of how to spend a community dividend was solved by a suggestion that each person be given a \$1,000 dividend and then a further \$1,000 dividend, which then would be required to be given back to the state for some specific purpose. Each person could specify: 'mine goes to education,' or 'mine goes to child abuse,' or 'mine goes to roads.' There was a lot of interest in this unconventional idea and someone quickly suggested that the state should compile a list of state agencies and non-profits that would be eligible to receive such funds."

In Anchorage a ground rule was suggested that any spending program has to "bring the state together rather than drive it further apart."

At a meeting at Bear Valley School in Anchorage someone said, "I've been out of the

state for awhile, then back about a year and a half. I look around and I see a dysfunctional place. Nothing seems to be working anywhere. The university, schools and other state institutions are being crippled, etc. There are only a couple of things doing well. I remember a time when it wasn't that way. Now we have all the money, we could create whatever we wanted up here, and we're just floundering around ... We should be the city on the hill, a beacon to the rest of the country ... the world, ... and we're not. What's lacking is political vision and moral vision."

Detailed reports for other Alaska communities were submitted. At Dillingham there was unanimous support for an income tax, current use of Permanent Fund earnings and a cap on the dividend.

In Delta Junction there was a suggestion of individual checkoffs for an educational endowment. Here the notion of a tax was considered in the context of: Let's not do it at the expense of creating a local borough (i.e., any local government) in this part of Alaska where there is no local government.

At the first Fairbanks meeting there was a perception that state institutions are in a condition of emergency and need immediate help – mainly the university. The second value was that the Fund was a nest egg that should benefit future generations as well as current generations. At the second Fairbanks meeting it was stated that "the real question isn't, 'Is the Permanent Fund big enough?', but 'Big enough for what?'"

In Kenai the main theme was the need to invest more in our educational institutions. One person noted the inade-

Community Forums were held in the following locations

Community	Date	Location
Anchorage	April 1	Loussac Library
	April 1	Kaladi Brothers
	April 2	Spenard Recreation Center
	April 6	Cyano's Bookstore Cafe
	April 7	UAA Campus Center
	April 7	Borders Books and Music
	April 8	Kaladi Brothers
	April 9	Abbott Loop Community Church
	April 10	Eagle River Elementary School
	April 13	Fairview Recreation Center
	April 14	Anchorage Chamber of Commerce
	April 15	Chugiak Elementary School
	April 16	Bear Valley Elementary School
	April 17	Girdwood Elementary School
	April 20	Sand Lake Elementary School
	April 21	Qupquliaq Cafe
	April 22	Baha'i Center
	April 23	Muldoon Elementary School
	April 24	St. Mary's Episcopal Church
	April 25	Mears Middle School
	April 27	Mountainview Elementary School
	April 28	Anchorage Senior Center
	April 29	Anchorage Museum
	April 30	Qupquliaq Cafe
Aniak	April 17	Aniak High School
Barrow	March 4, 5	City Council Chambers
Bethel	April 14, 15	Cultural Center
Cordova	April 23, 24	Library Meeting Room
Delta Junction	March 17	Community Center
Dillingham	April 20, 21	Museum
Fairbanks	March 18	Girl Scout Building
	March 21	431 Gold Dust Lane
	March 23	Borough Assembly Chambers
	March 24	UAF Wood Center
	March 26	Brice Center
	March 27	Borough Assembly Chambers
	March 30	Brice Center
	March 31	Laborers Union Hall
Ft. Yukon	March 25	Native Village Building
Gaigena	March 20	Community Hall
Girdwood	April 17	Girdwood Elementary School
Haines	April 8, 9	Haines Borough Library
Healy	April 6	Community Center
Homer	March 2	South Peninsula Hospital
	March 3	City Council Chambers
Juneau	March 16	State Capitol
	March 17	Alaska State Museum
	March 25, 30	Centennial Hall
	March 31	Auke Lake Campus
Kasilof	March 5	Tustemena School
Kenai	March 12	Visitors & Convention Bureau
Ketchikan	March 21, 23, 24	Ted Ferry Civic Center
Kodiak	April 27, 28, 29	Kodiak Auditorium
Kotzebue	March 12, 13	Borough Assembly Chambers
Nenana	April 3	Nenana School
Nikiski	March 6	Nikiski Senior Center
Nome	March 9, 11	Elementary School Library
North Pole	March 28	North Pole City Hall
	April 1, 2	North Pole City Hall
Palmer	April 15, 16	Matanuska Telephone Association
Petersburg	March 19, 20	Mountain View Manor
Ruby	March 19	Teen Center
St. Mary's	April 16	City Hall
Sitka	April 2, 3, 4	Sheldon Jackson College
Seward	March 9, 10	AVTEC
Skagway	April 6, 7	Skagway School
Soldotna	March 4	Borough Assembly Chambers
Talkeetna	April 7	Three Rivers Tesoro
Togiak	April 22	Senior Center
Tok	March 16	Tok School Library
Unalakleet	March 10	Elementary School
Unalaska	April 27, 28	Senior Center
Valdez	April 21, 22	City Council Chambers
Wasilla	April 9, 13	Senior Center
	April 14	Colony Middle School
	April 17	Wasilla City Hall
Willow	April 8	Willow Community Council Library
Wrangell	March 18	Wrangell Middle School Commons

quacies of Alaska universities, that it takes an average of five to six years to complete a four-year degree because of a lack of course availability and the infrequency of course offerings.

While facilitating meetings in Southeast Alaska between March 16 and March 25, Gary Holthaus reported:

"Seated in close circles and armed with the same 'video knowledge,' people began to talk, bringing their own knowledge and emotions to bear on the subject. The first to speak were often those who had come with a fear that the dividend would be taken away from them. Conversations about children or schools or infrastructure generally came next. ...

"There seemed to be slightly more (albeit reluctant) willingness to cap the dividends than to institute an income tax. On the couple of occasions when the Hammond proposal was discussed to any extent, there was a bit more acceptance of the possibility of an income tax – to capture some of the large amounts of money that leave the state and at the same time to protect low-income Alaskans. ...

"The 25 percent remaining in the earnings reserve after dividends and inflation-proofing often became a focal point as people tried to reconcile the need for money for both individual and public purposes.

"I was surprised and dismayed by the overwhelming number of people who expressed disappointment and frustration with our elected officials. There was a strong perception that the legislature was full of profligate spenders. Even when people could see the graph on page 13 of the booklet – which shows declining capital and operating expenditures for more than 10 years – many stuck by their idea that spending was increasing every year. Even when the video explained that the legislature returned most of the interest earnings to the Permanent Fund there were people who remained convinced that it was somehow being squandered, somewhere, on something unnecessary."

The final meetings in Anchorage were the best-attended of all the meetings: 27 at Q Cafe on April 21; 44 at St. Mary's Church on April 24; 33 at the Senior Center on April 28; 40 at the Museum on April 29; and 22 at the Q Cafe again on April 30 – the last meeting.

The museum meeting had 37 of the 40 participants raise their hands in support of a state income tax, either reinstated before or alongside any spending of Fund earnings.

The Senior Center meeting found many people in support of a state income tax "... believing that such a tax would actually help to make government accountable to their constituents." The need for legislative accountability was a strong theme at this meeting, along with some passionate opposition to state taxation.

I attended and promoted the large St. Mary's church meeting, where support for spending some income now for public purposes and support for simply letting the Fund grow were equally divided. At the end there was "more support for spending than saving." There was distrust of the legislature expressed as well as "a moral concern that the government was failing to adequately care for those who needed help most."

The "wrap-up" call-in radio show on June 11, 1998

On June 11, 1998, a two-hour statewide public radio call-in show was scheduled as a summary of and reflection on the March and April meetings. Interestingly, the legislature, which adjourned in early May, had decided for the first time in many years to not appropriate "undistributed" or excess income to principal.

At the radio call-in show, town meeting facilitator Mia Oxley spoke of the themes that emerged from the March and April meetings, the first being a desire to continue the dividend program. The second theme revolved around inadequately addressed and unmet public needs – in particular, education. A third was what people see as waste

and mismanagement in state programs and government programs in general. A fourth theme was deep distrust of elected officials and their process of spending money – though there were “hopeful” people who expressed a faith in that process. Finally, she said there was support for reinstating an income tax.

He said public needs were a higher priority than an income tax. “I don’t think I should demand of state government that I always receive that check,” he said.

A panel guest said that the recent legislative decision to not appropriate undistributed income

“We are no longer going to have the luxury of exporting our tax burden to the oil industry.”

The call-in speakers personalized the issues. One said that he was “offended” by any statement urging spending of Fund income. Another equally vehement call-in said that the amount of income had grown so large that it was time to spend a small portion of it. He said that the choice was not cutting dividends or imposing an income tax. We could, he said, use only 10 percent of Fund income, undesignated income for urgent state needs.

One caller was a state senator who had been a leader in appropriating the Fund’s undesignated income to principal. He pointed out that most of the state’s income (85 percent) was oil royalties and taxes, which would be gone in 15 or 20 years. This fact argued for not spending any portion of Fund income. Local taxation was suggested as a means of providing for state needs. “We are no longer going to have the luxury of exporting our tax burden to the oil industry,” the senator said. “This political generation has spent two-thirds to three-fourths (\$60 billion to \$80 billion) of the combined wealth of the richest oil field in American history and we are passing some of it on to our kids,” he said.

In speaking of the next generation, a later call-in speaker pointed out that at the current reduced level of education funding, the next generation would be ill-equipped to make any expenditure decisions. A Petersburg speaker did not favor an income tax, but the use of Fund income instead.

to principal may be an expression of discomfort with the fact that we have reached the point where Fund income should be used to pay for urgent state needs.



Participants at a town hall meeting fill out a survey on their personal vision for the Fund.

Principles & Interests Conference Program

Friday, November 21, 1997

- **Welcome, Launching the Principles & Interests Project**

*Steve Lindbeck, Executive Director,
Alaska Humanities Forum*

Purpose and goals of the project and conference, structure of the project, roles of participants and attendees, social, economic, political and historical trends in Alaska since statehood, where Alaskans are today

- **Milestones and Management: What Every Stakeholder Should Know**

MODERATOR: Esther Wunnicke, former Alaska Commissioner of Natural Resources

SPEAKERS: Byron Mallott, Executive Director, Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation; John Whitehead, Professor of History, University of Alaska Fairbanks; Clark Gruening, Vice Chair, Alaska Permanent Fund Board of Trustees and former Chair, House Special Committee on the Alaska Permanent Fund; Wilson L. Condon, Alaska Commissioner of Revenue and Permanent Fund Trustee; and Cliff John Groh, Anchorage attorney and former Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Revenue

Context within which the Permanent Fund emerged, establishment of the Fund, past proposals for use of the Fund, origin of the dividend program, the revenue outlook for Alaska, evolution of the Fund's investment policy, role of stakeholders, decision-making process of Fund management, sources and uses of Fund dollars, determination of income available for distribution, inflation-proofing and earnings reserve and the Fund's relationship to other public assets

- **Permanent Fund Management Issues**

MODERATOR: Cheryl Frasca, former Budget Division Director, State of Alaska Office of Management and Budget

SPEAKERS: Eric Wohlforth, Chair, Alaska

Permanent Fund Corporation Board of Trustees and former Alaska Commissioner of Revenue; Dave Rose, Chairman, Alaska Permanent Capital Management and former Executive Director, Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation; Michael J. O'Leary, Jr., CFA, Executive Vice-President, Callan Associates; Robert Maynard, Executive Director, Public Employees Retirement System of Idaho and former Deputy Director, Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation; and Melody L. McDonald, Certified Investment Management Analyst

Investment choices and considerations, asset allocation issues, defining the Fund's corpus and risks to the integrity of the Fund

- **Present at the Creation: Personal Reflections on the Birth of the Permanent Fund**

*MODERATOR: Mike Doogan, Columnist,
Anchorage Daily News*

SPEAKERS: Jay Hammond, former Governor of Alaska; Avrum R. Gross, former Alaska Attorney General; Hugh Malone, former Speaker, Alaska House of Representatives and former Alaska Commissioner of Revenue; Tom Fink, former Anchorage Mayor and former Speaker, Alaska House of Representatives; and Oral Freeman, former Legislator and former Chair, Permanent Fund Board of Trustees

Prominent Alaskans' reflections on the Fund's creation and evolution and predictions and recommendations for the Fund's future

- **Perspectives on Public Wealth and Public Obligations**

MODERATOR: Andrew Hacker, author of "Money: Who Has How Much and Why"

SPEAKERS: Edward Rasmuson, Chairman of the Board, National Bank of Alaska; Thomas R. Stauffer, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University; Judy Brady, Executive Director, Alaska Oil & Gas Association and former Alaska

Principles & Interests Conference Program

Commissioner of Natural Resources; Mary Nordale, attorney and former Alaska Commissioner of Revenue; and Michael C. Harper, President and CEO, Kuskokwim Corporation, former Deputy Commissioner, Department of Community and Regional Affairs

Who owns the Alaska Permanent Fund, obligations of wealth, implications of public ownership, looking at Alaska from the Outside in and how the rest of the world sees us

- **Perspectives on the Purposes of the Permanent Fund**

MODERATOR: Brian Rogers, consultant and former Legislator

SPEAKERS: Donald Gordon, Professor, Clemson University, and former adviser to the Alaska Legislature; Michael R. O'Connor, President, Peak Oilfield Service Co.; Walt Parker, member, Arctic Research Commission; Steve Rieger, former Legislator; Kay Brown, former Legislator and former Director, Alaska Division of Oil & Gas; and Walter J. Hickel, former Governor of Alaska

Purpose of the Fund, vision for the purpose of the Fund and what the vision means for working Alaskans, future generations, the least fortunate Alaskans, the social fabric, personal freedom, the economy and long-term Alaskans vs. temporary Alaskans

Saturday, November 22, 1997

- **Future Consequences: How the Fund and the Dividend Affect Alaska**

MODERATOR: Eleanor Andrews, President and CEO, The Andrews Group and former Commissioner of Administration

SPEAKERS: Scott Goldsmith, Professor of Economics, University of Alaska Anchorage, Institute of Social and Economic Research; Gregg Erickson, Economic Consultant; Andrew Hacker, author of "Money: Who Has How Much and Why;" Arvin Dull, Bank Manger, First National

Bank in Bethel; Gerald A. McBeath, Professor of Political Science, University of Alaska Fairbanks; David Reaume, Economic Consultant; and Debra Call, Alaska Native Program Manager, Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.

Political and social effects of public ownership of wealth, economic, political and social effects of the dividend and economic, political and social effects of other uses of Fund earnings

- **Keynote Address: Opportunities and Obligations of Public Wealth: Leadership, Stewardship, Responsibility**

SPEAKER: Andrew Hacker, author of "Money: Who Has How Much and Why"

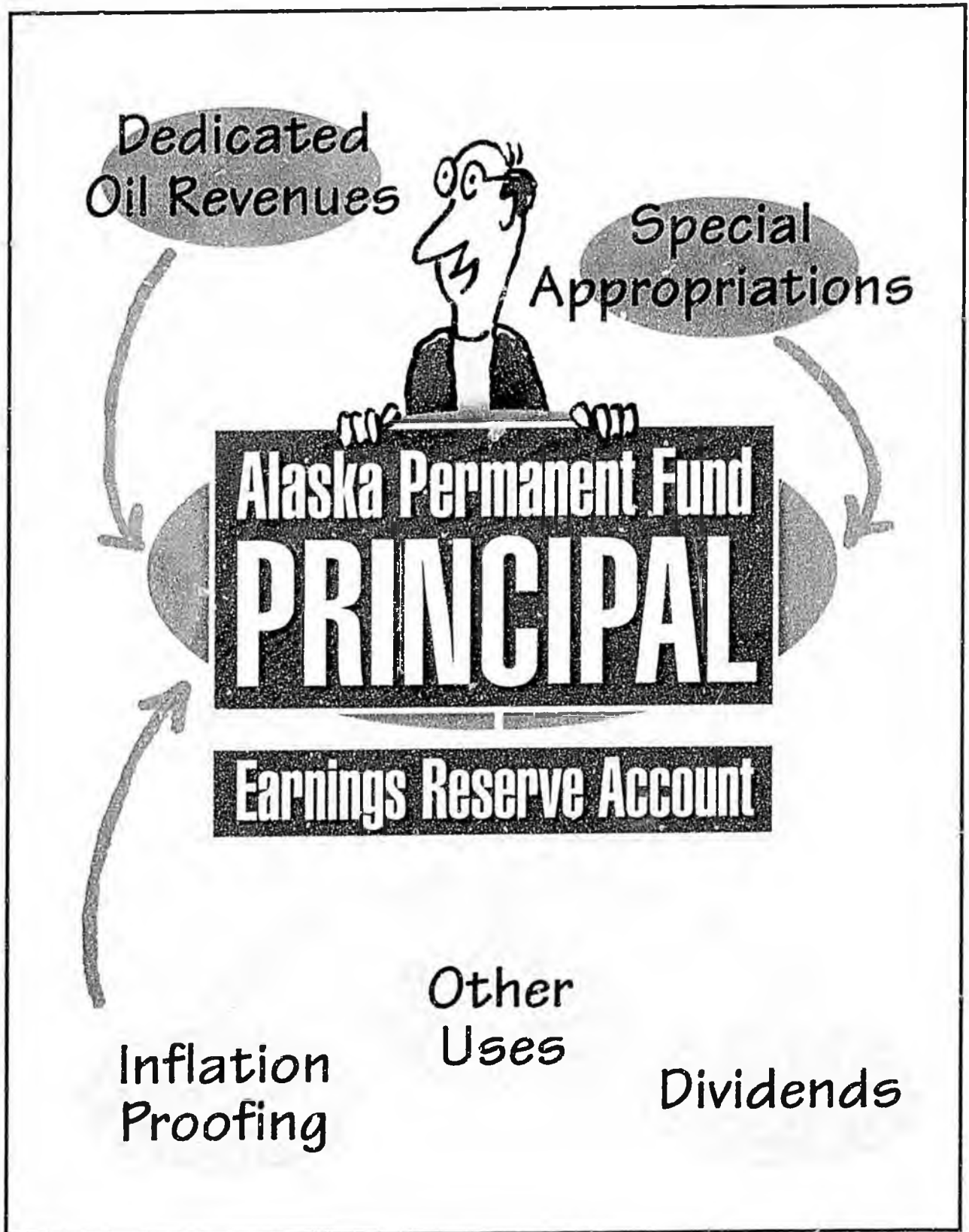
- **Roundtable Discussion: The Future of the Permanent Fund**

MODERATOR: Lee Gorsuch, Chancellor, University of Alaska Anchorage

SPEAKERS: Thelma Buchholdt, former legislator; Bill Ennis, physics teacher; Kelly Haney, Anchorage School Board member, university student; Scott Heyworth, longshoreman; Archbishop Francis T. Hurley, Archbishop of Anchorage; Mano Frey, Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer of L.I.U.N.A. Local #341; Margy Johnson, Mayor of Cordova, businesswoman; Jerome Komisar, president, University of Alaska; Jonathon Lack, attorney and legislative aide; Henry Springer, Executive Director, Associated General Contractors; Dennis Tjepelman, President and CEO, Maniilaq Association; Peg Tileston, Chairperson, Alaska Common Ground; and Tom Williams, former Commissioner of Revenue

The Fund's role in realizing our vision for Alaska, policies to adopt in addressing Fund issues, implications of adopting these policies (social, economic, political, institutional), risks and roadblocks ahead and procedure for reaching consensus on issues

HOW THE PERMANENT FUND WORKS



“OPPORTUNITIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF PUBLIC WEALTH: LEADERSHIP, STEWARDSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY”

by Keynote Speaker Andrew Hacker, author of *“Money: Who Has How Much and Why”*

I was asked to come here, well, yes, from New York City, and by the way I went to the concierge at the Hilton Hotel to find out exactly how far it is from New York to Anchorage, and he guesses 3,696 miles. So, I’ve come this distance not because I’ve been among you in Alaska, but because I have been concerned with the philosophy and values informing the public fund debate, which is public wealth and the attendant responsibilities, stewardship and questions of leadership.

Now the American emphasis, since the very beginning, has been on individualism and individuality. These values, individualism and individuality, have been quintessentially expressed in Alaska. Put very simply, people have come to this state, particularly from the Lower 48, to better themselves.

This was expressed best by our fourth president, James Madison, in the *“Federalist Papers.”* The *“Federalist Papers,”* as you know, were to outline the kind of government we were to have; they talked about the Congress, the presidency, the courts. But Madison took off a little time to talk about the kind of people who would inhabit these United States.

He said, “In this population we would encounter” (and I’m quoting Madison) “a diversity of faculties among individuals.” But he said the most important faculty, the one that is really going to dominate this country, “is the faculty for acquiring property.” Now he didn’t just mean great fortunes, but he really meant income – bettering yourself economically.



Andrew Hacker

Andrew Hacker is currently a professor of political science at Queens College of the City University of New York. Prior to that, he taught 16 years at Cornell University.

Hacker is the author of eight books. His book *“Two Nations,”* a New York Times bestseller, is considered by many to be the definitive treatment of race in the United States. It has been adopted as a textbook on hundreds of college campuses. His credits also include the acclaimed *“Money: Who Has How Much and Why.”*

Hacker is selected to lecture widely in our country to college audiences and business and professional groups. He is a prolific contributor to national publications including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *Newsweek*, *The Atlantic*, *Harper’s* and *The New York Times Review of Books*.

This has been at the forefront of most Americans’ minds. And indeed there is, let’s be frank, a competition that involves all of us. In other words, we’re all engaged in vying with one another to see who does better. Now I don’t want to put this in the crassest economic terms, but if any of you have been to a college class reunion, you find your classmates come up to you and ask, “What are you doing now?” They don’t mean that. They simply want to know, “Are you ahead of me or behind me?”



Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens introduced Andrew Hacker.

Now money is also, of course, a way of keeping score. Not just in the world outside, but for ourselves. Am I doing better? How much can I make? Can I really get to the point where I have seven figures stashed away? This becomes a competition not only among others, but with ourselves. Of course you get this at the higher realm with members of the *Forbes*' 400 who grab for the first issue each November to find out, for example, whether Ted Turner's doing better than Rupert Murdoch.

Another of our founders also set the pace. This was Alexander Hamilton, and I am a great aficionado of Alexander Hamilton. I think he deserves a lot more than the \$10 bill. In 1791 he wrote a document – still not well known – called *The Report on Manufacturers*, which he submitted to Congress and to President Washington. In it he envisaged an industrial, a competitive, a capitalist, indeed a high-tech America.

He pointed out that people would work in this country, work hard, often at more than one job in order to “multiply their acquisitions and their enjoyments.” And I think this is true. If I were to be asked, “What is the first American vocation?

What's the activity that really sums us all up, that we pursue most vigorously?” I think I would have to say – shopping.

This is the number one right guaranteed to us. If you go to a sample of Americans and say, “Look you've got two rights. One is the right to vote, the other is the right to shop. One of them won't be taken away. Which will you keep?” To ask the question answers itself. And, indeed, our quintessential institution is the great American shopping mall. Now I realize the one you have on Fifth Avenue near here is not quite like the Mall of America outside the Minneapolis Airport, but we're working on it.

Hamilton was the inventor of supply-side economics. Now, by supply-side economics, I don't mean that Laffer curve on a cocktail napkin, but rather that we depend on suppliers to array us with goods on the shelves, on the racks, to tempt us. And we then begin to feel the need for them. In other words, we as consumers are not very imaginative. If I had asked you, “Hey! Name a few things that haven't yet been created that you would like to have,” you'd draw a blank. But you do have a shopping list in your head, just as I do, of things that are currently on the shelves that you want. The list changes all the time. The suppliers at one point, for example, invented the Barbie doll. Now, you know, 8-year-olds didn't think they wanted a Barbie doll, but once it was there they certainly did. You could point to, oh, say McDonald's Big Mac; you could point to the sports utility vehicle. Once these things are put out there, we want them. Indeed, our wants appear to be endless.

I really believe that figures like James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, Alexis de Tocqueville – the French visitor – that we're standing on their shoulders. They assist and aid our thought, particularly in understanding today.

So I want to cite Tocqueville, who visited this country during the Jacksonian period – 1830 to 1835 – and wrote a straightforward book called

"*Democracy in America*," which even today helps explain ourselves as no other volume does. Tocqueville said that as he arrived in the United States, what he saw was an inordinate love of material gratification.

"What Tocqueville saw was how we express our identity through purchasing."

Now what could he mean by that? Does he mean filling up our houses with overstuffed furniture? Does he mean greed, that we need more and more?

Not really. What Tocqueville saw was how we express our identity through purchasing. And, by the way, material does not have to mean hard stuff that you touch. It can also mean opera tickets; it can mean foreign travel; it can mean a variety of experiences of the sort that Hamilton called enjoyments.

For example, Judy Brady, a member of the panel I was on yesterday, talked of Alaskans as unique individuals. Well, let me suggest to you one way that we express our uniqueness. In a class of mine at Queens College, where I teach in New York, I sometimes illustrate this by asking students in the class, "Do you have a music collection?"

Music collection, what do I mean by that? Well, recordings. You know, CDs, cassettes, perhaps some LPs stashed under the bed. And the student says, "Yes, I have."

"Well," I ask, "How many items are in it?" Well, she doesn't quite know, so I say, "Give me an estimate."

"Well," she'll say, "110."

I say, Actually you have 117. Now, let's look at your collection of 117 recordings. Hey, it could

be punk rock, it could have some Beethoven, Hip Hop, you know, it could have spirituals, whatever you like. But you know your collection of 117 recordings. And, by the way, you bought all these. This doesn't count gifts. Gifts are a whole other story. When a person gives you a gift, do you

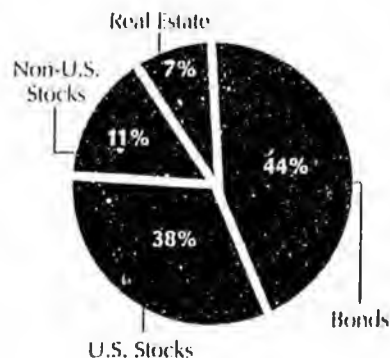
know what a gift is? I've finally worked it out. When a person gives you a gift like, say, a book or a recording, what they're saying is, "I'm not satisfied with the way you are, you need this."

Anyway, these are not gifts, you bought these for yourself. But, you know, that collection of 117 recordings – hey, I could say the same thing about books, but I'm sticking to music – that collection is unique. No other person in the world has the same 117 making up their music collection that you do.

Now this is the way we put together pieces of our identity, through our purchasing. We're not philosophers; we're not moralists; but we depend on this great American shopping mall for just that.

PERMANENT FUND'S
ASSET ALLOCATION

(June 30, 1998)



As for the question, will we ever have enough money? This depends. You know, if you ask people how much they're making, maybe they'll tell you. And then ask, "How much more would you like?" People generally want, say, if they have \$40,000 a year, they say, "If I had \$60,000, it would be fine." Well, that's great, but you know what happens once they get the 60. Well, maybe some of us stop. Maybe some of us don't need that extra dollar.

What we do, of course, is make a practice of so hobbling government that they make a mess of whatever they undertake. We see this, for example, with anything from child abuse prevention agencies to examples I've heard here about fish and game enforcement.

Of course the American presumption has been that individuals know best what to do with their money. Of course, we're anti-taxes, but we also

"Most of the Declaration of Independence is not about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but a bill of particulars against the British government and all the grief they caused us."

I have a very wealthy friend, he's my oldest friend. His father died and left him \$15 million and my friend lives on his dividends. One day he says to me, "You know, Andrew, I can't live in New York City." And I say, "Why?" "Well," he says, "You know I'm trying to collect art. But do you know what a Matisse costs nowadays?" I try not to feel too sorry for him.

Now, a corollary of this individualism and individuality is, of course – and we have heard this theme throughout the conference and doubtless will hear it until it adjourns – a mistrust of government. This, too, has been an American tradition. If you look at the Declaration of Independence – independence from England – most of it is not about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but is, rather, a bill of particulars about the British government and all the grief they caused us, with the particulars itemized.

The same thing is true today. You know, all of us trust UPS over the postal service without question. And in fact it's a challenge: Can you think of three government agencies at any level of government that you think are doing a very good job? It isn't easy, is it? Personally I think the Internal Revenue Service is doing a very good job. But not many people agree with that.

defend spending our money as we choose and the freedom to be frivolous. Now this is the great American presumption that really infects all of us. We want our own money, and as I suggested earlier today, even those of us who are above the national median, above the state median, well above it, still take the check and deposit it when it comes. That tells us a lot about ourselves.

Yesterday, one speaker said she didn't ask for the check. She just felt any perspective she might have on life in Alaska would be, I won't say corrupted, but touched and affected if she asked for it. But the vast majority, even those with six-figure incomes, take the check. And if I were living here I would take it as well.

The question is, "What happens to us when we do that?"

With respect to public wealth, this is a key question, and I want to address it. I could start with an agenda of how income from the Permanent Fund could be, let's say, distributed to education. But I've been in education too much to be sanguine about how the money would be spent.

One suggestion I've heard was to give a laptop to every student. Or there should be more guid-

ance counselors or more special education or more bilingual education. The only thing I can see from my long career in teaching that would really make an effect in improving the quality of education is to have a ceiling on pupil-teacher ratio in the classroom of 15 to one. Twenty to one won't do it. Eighteen to one won't do it. You've got to get to 15 to one. And you can imagine what that would cost.

Another consideration is that fewer and fewer people are having children. We have many people who are postponing marriage, not having kids at all. We have a higher proportion of the population who are now in what I call the "late post-children phase." Their children are finished with school, college, and they don't have that much of an interest – and I use "interest" in the serious sense – in the education of other people's children.

As far as health is concerned, of course we're concerned with that. But, again, the American way comes to the fore, doesn't it? And we don't have the highest infant survival rate in the world, do we? We're about ninth in infant survival. Even Portugal is very close to us now. One of the reasons for this is when we spend money on health we don't spend it on health, really, we spend it on medicines, hospitals and technology. As we know, countries that are far less wealthy than we have much better health and disease prevention because of the way people handle themselves and



Sen. Ted Stevens and former Gov. Jay Hammond listen to Hacker's address.

their lives. We are very reckless with ourselves and then we ask for the medical system to patch us up. And I'm not just talking about cigarettes, it's the whole thing, including such disparate elements as diet and the reckless way people drive their cars.

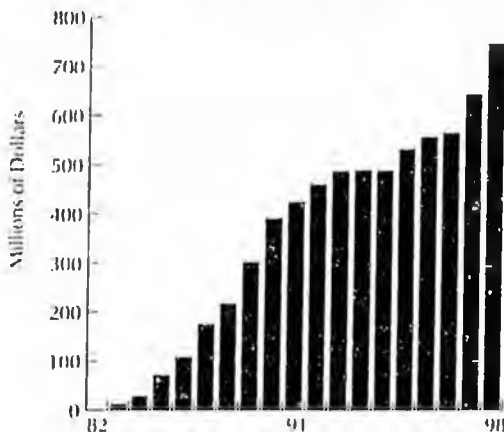
Now Alexis de Tocqueville was from a wealthy French family, an aristocrat, and he knew about the virtues and values of aristocratic rule. He said in his book on democracy in America, "The question is not how to reconstitute an aristocratic society, but how to make its values proceed out of the democratic state of society in which God has placed us."

He wrote about the effects of these values. He said, "They give a certain elevation to the human mind, to refine the habits, embellish the manners and cultivate the arts, promote the love of poetry, beauty and glory."

Now, even on Alaska's tundra there is poetry, beauty and glory. We have one life to live and the best in our lives, this is Tocqueville talking, is the aristocratic virtue of beauty, truth, learning about ourselves and expressing it through art, through music, through poetry, through dance.

Now, I'm not coming here to say Alaska should become the arts center of the world. But without those values, you begin to ask, "Are we making the most of our potentialities and our capacities?" This, I believe is what Avrum Gross

INCOME PAID OUT FOR DIVIDENDS



meant when he talked about the quality of life yesterday, and what Danny Boldun, who is quoted in the *Juneau Report*, meant when he said, "Keep our civilization civilized."

Now, what kind of leadership, what kind of stewardship approaches, emphasizes and maintains that kind of value? Well, there are various models for this, and I'm going to be very specific and focus on three ways in which this has been done.

There is first the aristocratic mode or model, if you like. For example, I hope that everybody in this room before you end your years here will have visited the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. If you haven't, you're a diminished person. I don't care whether your thing is football or hockey or anything else, this – the Uffizi – has shown what humanity can do. Now, the Uffizi Gallery and the whole art, the whole spirit of Florence were really built by the Medici family, aristocrats who were very wealthy, very powerful. But they knew they had responsibilities – that aristocracy has responsibilities. Power has it, privilege has it, and they devoted themselves to making Florence the art center of the Western world. Florence, by the way, is not a huge city – no bigger than Anchorage. But this can be done and was done.



Andrew Hacker details his thoughts about personal responsibility.

Another model is, shall we say, private business wealth. Again, if you're to be a full person, you must spend some time at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. As a single museum, it's the greatest museum in the world. It goes beyond European art to Egyptian art, Indian art – the entire world. The Metropolitan Museum was built by robber barons. Yes, the very same men who exploited the rest of us through their trusts and the rest. But after they made their millions – today that would be billions – they gave it back to the people in the form of the Metropolitan Museum. One of the finest collections in that museum was funded by a man who cornered the sugar market, drove up the price throughout the country, so that we all had to pay more for sugar. But, hey, he gave it back.

A third example of stewardship here is what I would call the state. But I don't mean the state in the sense of that government that we are constantly attacking.

Take, for example, the Louvre. You see, I'm using three museums here, Uffizi, the Metropolitan, the Louvre, the latter being the great museum in Paris. True, it was founded by the monarchy, but after the French Revolution when the monarchy was overthrown, France as a nation said, "This is our heritage, this is our gift to the world." And all the way through – whether it was Napoleon, whether it was Charles de Gaulle, whether it's today – France says the taxpayers will support the Louvre because it shows France at its best.

Now the question is how far any of these models are applicable in the United States. Well, it's an uphill struggle, but let's see how far we can move in that direction. Here I turn to another of my philosophers, and this is Edmund Burke. Edmund Burke is the foremost philosopher of conservatism. There's nobody who comes near him. As you know, he was an Anglo-Irish member of Parliament. He was, for many years, a great critic of the French Revolution. He felt it was destructive. But he was a great supporter of our American Revolution. He wrote not just on conservatism but

on society and how we should build and sustain a society. I'm going to read just a passage from Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*.

He started by saying society is indeed a contract. Well, we've had a lot of social contract theorists, such as Thomas Hobbes or John Locke, who said, yes, people get together and set up a government. No, no, Burke said, it's more than that. He said society is indeed a contract, but the state ought not to be compared as nothing better

them. And it also, and this is what Burke says, it diminishes us to feel that history just belongs with us. This is why I quote Edmund Burke, rather than simply saying, "Here's Andrew Hacker, he knows all the answers."

And of course, there's our obligation to those who are yet to be born. But that obligation is also to other people's children, not just to our own. Burke was very firm on this. This is where we're having real difficulties in the United States. People

"Our contract is a partnership of all science, a partnership in all art, a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection."

than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco, or some other such low concern.

Now our contract, he said, is a partnership of all science, a partnership in all art, a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are alive, but between those who are living, those who are dead and those who are yet to be born. Now really, I read this several times a year to each of my classes – a partnership between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are yet to be born.

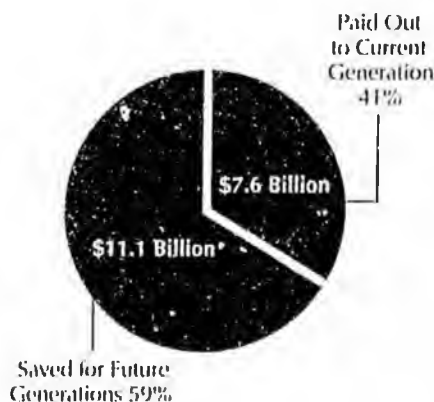
Now, let's just take a look at this conference. Let's ask, "What is our contractual obligation to dead people – to people who built Alaska and are no longer here?" Burke would say it's not so much that you've got an obligation to dead people, but it does tell me something about you if you don't feel an obligation to people who came before you.

Now I've been here as a visitor long enough to be told that people arrive here every day and believe Alaska's history begins the day they arrive. That's a bit sad, because there's no sense of what was built, what was put here before

may feel an obligation to their own children, but not to others. And how do you begin to tell people you feel that obligation? Well, once again, what we have to say is: "What kind of person are you if you don't feel an obligation to children, to the next generation?"

Consider this example: It's summertime. You see a recreational vehicle in front of you, a Winnebago, and you've probably seen the bumper sticker that says, "We're spending our children's inheritance." At that point, if I were a firearms person, I would want to take a gun out

USE OF FUND INCOME
(Since inception)



and do a few things to their tires. No, no more than that. Because imagine what kind of person says, with glee, "We're spending our children's inheritance?" Because they're not just talking about their own children, you know. Imagine what kind of parents they were to raise children that they now reject. But they're also talking about

Now before I came here – because one of my avocations is statistics – I looked up a few figures about the two nations in Alaska. I would suggest to you that if one is to think about a better Alaska, there is a lot of unfinished business to be done on this score and in this area.

***"If you want to think about a better Alaska,
there is a lot of unfinished business to be done."***

everybody's children. Well, I think a king of France once said: After us the deluge.

As the senator pointed out in introducing me, I wrote a book several years ago entitled *"Two Nations,"* and it was about race in America. And yes, I'm pleased to say it was a bestseller, and used very widely throughout the country. The two nations were black and white. The subtitle was, "Separate, Hostile, Unequal." That book, though, does not apply in Alaska, and I didn't expect it to, because if Alaska has two nations, they are not black and white. I know you have people of African origin here, but the dominant roots in Alaska, and I'll say races for the moment, are of course Caucasian Alaskans and Native Alaskans. And I use "Native," of course, in the serious sense of indigenous people. And of course, as I know and you know, you have the highest, largest indigenous population of any state and indeed the largest proportion of population that is indigenous. As was pointed out very well, the Native Alaskan population are not transients. They were here before those of us who are Caucasian came and, I dare say, will be here after us.

Now, as far as public wealth and stewardship are concerned, I was rather interested to see that people talked about sanitation, they talked about infrastructure, talked about education, health. But nobody cast this in racial terms. I wonder why. If I were to redo my work on race up here, I would certainly keep the Two Nations title.

Of the Alaskan population age 25 and over – this is from the last census – this is the proportion of Caucasians and Native Alaskans who have graduate degrees. Now as we know nowadays, a plain old B.A. doesn't get you very far. Those of you who have children certainly want your kids to have more than a B.A. Well, 10 percent of the Caucasians have graduate degrees, 1 percent of the Natives. If we take just plain B.A.s, 17 percent versus 3 percent. And of course a very high proportion of these Caucasians have brought their degrees up here with them.

So what we have is a rather strong imbalance. If there is to be any thought of equity in the future, the question is: Can we get it to 27-27? Because that's what my goal was in writing about black and white in America, where there are similar disparities. I would presume something similar is here.

Now I understand, of course, that much of the indigenous population lives in subsistence settlements where this kind of education may not be a model. At the same time I also know that the indigenous population is growing and that, increasingly, members of that population are coming to cities like Anchorage and Fairbanks and elsewhere, where they're going to be tested on how much of this kind of qualification they have. So the question is one of imbalance.

Now let's talk families headed by mothers. Fourteen percent of Caucasian families in Alaska

are headed by mothers; 30 percent – almost a third – of the Native American families are headed only by the mother. Now I'm not being moralistic about this, but with such a family, with only the mother's income or earnings, those kids are not going to have the kind of chance that they would have with a two-parent family.

One has to ask: Why is the rate so high? Is this a Native Alaskan tradition? I daresay not. There's been something going on here which has caused fathers, husbands, men not to commit themselves

Another consideration, if somebody's in prison, they can't support their family. I haven't put the figures down, but again, I got these from the Justice Department. When you look at those people who have been convicted of crimes, but are now either on probation or parole, the Caucasians have a much greater chance of being out on parole or getting probation than do Native Alaskans. Here, too, I leave it to you – this is your country, your turf – to answer these questions.

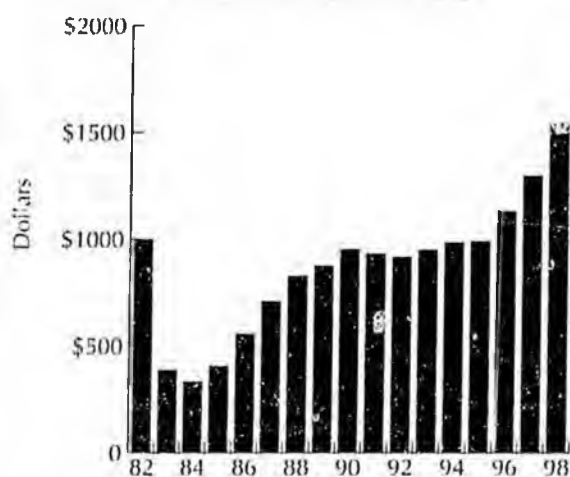
What I'm indicating here is that just in terms of equity, Native Alaskans were here first. Others – I won't say interlopers – came afterward. In many ways, the kinds of imbalances we have here were formed, created by people like ourselves, Caucasians, coming in here. Now, I'm not going to try to lay a guilt trip on everyone in this, but what I would simply say is that in terms of public wealth, this is unfinished business.

To sum up, I'm going to quote from Tocqueville again. When he finished his volume on "*Democracy in America*," he was really rather upset with the individualism, the individuality, the kind of democracy he saw. He said he wanted this country, which he thought had great potential, to develop a sense of public wealth, of stewardship, of leadership.

But he said we can't expect average people to be philosophers. Well, I'm going to quote him here. So he spoke of the principle of self-interest rightly understood. Self-interest rightly understood. He said it produces no great acts of self-sacrifice, but suggests daily small acts of self-denial. By itself, it cannot suffice to make a man virtuous, but it disciplines a number of persons in habits of regularity, temperance, moderation, foresight, self-command. And it does not lead them straight to virtue by the will – but it gradually draws them in that direction by their habits.

He goes on to say: "I am not afraid to say that the principle of self-interest rightly understood appears to me to be the best suited of all philosophical theories to the wants of men, the people

DIVIDEND AMOUNTS



to families to a very high degree. Well, here, too, we're not saying that pouring in money into it is going to help in any great degree. But the question is, this is an imbalance that needs, in terms of equity, to be remedied.

Parallel to this are the figures that I got from the Department of Health and Human Services on AFDC, the welfare population. Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The welfare population is essentially 49 percent Caucasian, 40 percent Native Alaskan and the rest other groups. OK. Correcting for population, the odds are 4.7, almost 5 times greater that a Native Alaskan family will be on welfare than a Caucasian. Now welfare was not invented by indigenous peoples; it's something here which makes up for an imbalance that obviously arrived after the Caucasians came in.

of our time. And I regard it as their chief remaining security against themselves." Now what could he mean by "self-interest rightly understood?" Well, I could say it in a rather obvious sense. Self-interest rightly understood is yes, you're looking for your self-interest, but not just directly. For

the gain can be something other than pocketing a \$1,300 check. The positions Alaskans take on the dividend are ultimately less economic than moral. Their views convey to others and themselves the manner of people they are. But how they conceive their self-interest also provides

"The positions Alaskans take on the dividend are ultimately less economic than moral. Their views convey to others and themselves the manner of people they are. But how they conceive their self-interest also provides Alaskans with an opportunity to show how they wish to be measured in the chronicles of history."

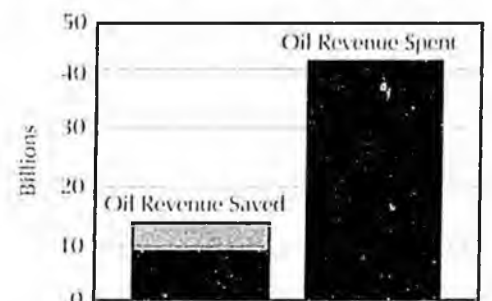
example, when we line up, when we get in line, it's a nuisance. But we do, and we wait, because it's in our self-interest to do so. Any other system we'd probably lose by.

So Tocqueville realized, as I said, that we should not expect average citizens to be philosophers, nor should they be exhorted to make serious sacrifices, especially when they see so many people doing better than themselves. I alluded to this earlier. Half the population of the state has incomes below the \$51,000 median. And most of those \$51,000 families are two-earners, which may mean \$20,000 for one, \$20,000 for the other. No, we're not talking about that affluent a population.

Tocqueville's self-interest rightly understood does allow individuals to ask: How do I gain? But

Alaskans, as it does others, with an opportunity to show how they wish to be measured in the chronicles of history.

SAVINGS VS. SPENDING
State Oil Revenue (1977-1998: \$55.63 Billion)



Oil Revenue Saved in Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund ■
Oil Revenue Deposited into Permanent Fund ■
Oil Revenue Appropriated ■

ALASKA'S NEST EGG

by Thomas Stauffer, from the December 1997 "Financial Times – Energy Economist"

Alaska has been prudent and saved the money from its oil revenues. But with oil receipts falling, some politicians are eyeing the Fund as a way of making up the budget shortfall.

"Dear Lord – send us another windfall, and we promise not to piss it away the next time." This plaintive cry was found on a T-shirt, appropriately sold in a hoar-frost encrusted trading post in Deadhorse, Alaska, then the desolate community serving the North Slope oil fields. The Lord did answer, the Prudhoe Bay oil fields did become a new oil bonanza, and Alaskans did keep their promise – much of the new oil wealth was not squandered. Instead the state has squirreled away a nest egg of almost \$30 billion, saved out of the North Slope windfalls.

Last month was the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the "Alaska Permanent Fund" – known, unofficially, as "Alaska, Inc." The "Fund," analogous to a mutual fund, received a large share of the state's oil receipts and has invested those moneys each year, accumulating as of September 1997, a total of \$23.6 billion from unilateral transfers, compulsory contributions from current oil revenues, reinvested profits and capital gains. The institution was crafted expressly to protect oil revenues from being dissipated by the "idiots" – the then governor's description of the state legislature – and to preserve those one-time windfalls for the future.

Oil-producing states elsewhere in the world have saved part of their oil revenues – if only because there were limits to the rate at which even governments could fritter away money – but



Dr. Thomas Stauffer

Dr. Thomas Stauffer is an international oil and finance consultant based in Washington, D.C. His specialties include oil and gas taxation, valuation in international law, geopolitics of the Middle East and comparative energy economics.

Stauffer has been a consultant in the Executive Office of the President, the anti-trust unit of the Federal Trade Commission and the International Energy Agency (Paris). His private sector clients include major US and foreign oil companies, as well as the oil or finance ministries of oil-producing countries in the Middle East and Europe.

Educated first as an engineer at M.I.T. and the University of Munich, Stauffer later received an M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies and a Ph.D. in Economics from Harvard. Until recently he taught economics at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University.

Alaska's providential Fund is unique in key respects. First, the capital is safe from encroachment by the government – a constitutional amendment is needed to touch the assets. Second, the investments are transparent – each Alaskan gets a detailed breakdown of what is invested and what is earned. Third, and most important, each Alaskan collects an annual dividend from "Alaska, Inc." Every man, woman and child documentably resident in the state, shares equally in the annual income from the Fund. This year \$750 million was disbursed in dividends, some \$1,300 per capita. Fourth, the funds were prudently invested

almost entirely outside of Alaska, rather than in unremunerative vanity infrastructural projects.

Permanent benefits from oil or mineral wealth are elusive. Dead cities such as Jerome, Ariz., or an opera house filled with weeds and trees rather than spectators, as in Manaus, Brazil, are monuments to the transience of resource-based booms. Alaska, almost miraculously, resisted such temptations. It did use part of its revenues, like other states, to bloat a bureaucracy and fund a spectrum of welfare measures, as well as to build infrastructure.



The 1969 Prudhoe Bay lease sale netted the state more than \$900 million, almost nine times the preceding year's state budget.

Savings

But a large fraction was salted away for the rainy day when the oil boom, too, like its predecessors, might cease. The legislature in repeated acts of self-denial mandated that a fraction of each year's oil receipts be allocated, irreversibly, into the Permanent Fund. Even more astounding were further acts of statesmanship by the "idiots" who decreed that budget surpluses also be poured into the Permanent Fund. A total of about \$12 billion was diverted from the current account into the Fund over the years, safe from the clutches of the "pols."

The state legislature has continued to stoke the Fund, adding about \$1 billion this year, even though state revenues have shrunk and even though these repeated acts of self-denial mean that funds at the disposal of politicians are commensurably reduced. Each year some \$300 million is automatically deducted from oil receipts before they can be touched by state politicians.

Alaska's frugality is greater than might appear. It has saved more out of less, compared with OPEC producers. Its output is now 1.4 million-barrels-per-day, almost twice that of Qatar or equal to that of Libya. But its earnings per barrel are much less than that of governments in the Middle East. Alaska gleans severance taxes of circa \$1.30 per barrel, plus some royalties from state lands, income taxes on the companies' allocated wellhead income and a tax on the trans-Alaska pipeline system profits. But the total state government take is modest – it averages out to only \$3.90 per barrel, less than 25 percent of the estimated export value. The "take" by OPEC producers is typically four times higher per barrel, but they have saved relatively much less.

Wise

The state's saving is also proving wise. The rain clouds are gathering and the feared rainy day is near. Oil production is fading away. The giant Prudhoe Bay field is beyond its peak – down to 750,000 barrels-per-day from over 2 million barrels-per-day – and restrictions on new exploration, imposed from Washington, have limited the discovery of replacement reserves. Alaska's overall production this year has drifted down to 1.3 million barrels-per-day.

There have been some new developments. Companies brought on the Kuparuk field, producing 250,000 barrels-per-day, and several smaller fields discovered 15-20 years ago – Point McIntyre, Milne Point and Endicott – have been developed. These aggregate to another 275,000 barrels-per-day. But the decline has only been stemmed, not reversed, and the prospects are bleak. A straggle of small fields – Badami,

Northstar, Alpine and others – will add almost 200,000 barrels-per-day in new production through 2002-4, but they together barely balance out the decline in Prudhoe Bay output.

Prospective revenues are doubly threatened. Total production is falling – several fields awaiting development are small and cannot offset other, aging reservoirs. But revenues per barrel are projected to decline as well, because the new fields have higher costs and lower well flow rates.

This wellhead tax is geared to well flow rates, governed by the uniquely bizarre formula – the “Economic Limit Factor” – so that the yields from the newer fields, with less prolific wells, fall off much faster than the physical decline in production. Thus both per-barrel severance taxes and total production are falling, compounding the future shortfall in cash revenue to the state.

Fund in the spotlight

The budget crunch has turned the spotlight onto the Fund and, more particularly, on what to do with the Fund’s income. The Republicans, newly empowered in the state, have cut spending, tracked lower revenues, but deficits are projected to get worse. There is now a debate about whether dividends, now paid out directly to the populace, should be shifted, at least in part, to the state budget. Politicians are asking what is the best strategy for using this invaluable resource: Should the state continue the dividends and let each Alaskan decide his spending priorities – the libertarian option? Or should some of the income be reallocated to the general budget to offset falling direct state revenues? Although the Fund’s capital is sacrosanct, the legislature does have the right to dispose of the income.

Hitherto, the Fund’s income year has been broken into three parts – first, an amount equal to the annual inflation rate, measured by the CPI (consumer price index), is deducted and reinvested in order to “inflation-proof” the corpus of the fund. This is mandated by law and protects the Fund from the “inflation delusion,” so that its capital is truly



New developments like Endicott have helped stem the decline from Prudhoe.

preserved. Second, roughly half of the earnings are paid out as the annual dividend of “Alaska, Inc.”

The dividend was created to give to every Alaskan a personal stake in the integrity of the Fund. The trick worked. Efforts to nibble at the capital have been political suicide. Recently a candidate for state senate was eviscerated when an opponent only hinted that she was even considering attacking the capital.

Third, what’s left remains in the “earnings reserve.” There, too, the legislature has tied its own hands and transferred that surplus into the Fund’s principal.

Fierce support

Alaskans fiercely support preserving the “permanence” of the Permanent Fund, partly because of bitter recollections of prior booms – and the busts which followed – and partly out of deep distrust of government. License plates carry the boast that Alaska is the “Last Frontier,” living closer to nature and its vagaries than Americans in the “lower 48.” Most Alaskans are close to libertarians at heart, if not neo-anarchists. Politically the frontier spirit is reflected in a marked swing in the political complexion of the state – once strongly Democratic, today it is Republicans who have won the overwhelming majority.

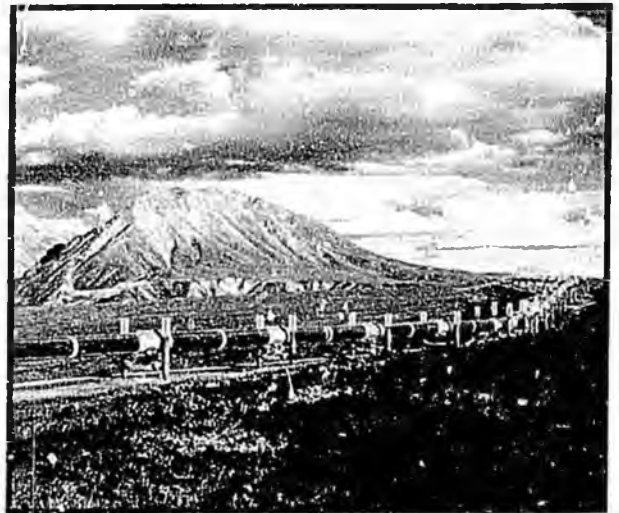
Alaska’s economy has been a roller coaster ride for almost a century. The gold boom was fol-

loved by another tied to US military spending – Alaska was an icy buffer against the Russians during the Cold War. That was followed by the next boom – due to the \$1 billion in lease payments received in 1969-70, which was quickly spent without enduring benefit. Then came the boom when tens of thousands of out-of-state workers poured in to build the trans-Alaska pipeline; then another boom when oil prices peaked in the early 1980s. The ensuing bust after 1985, when oil prices collapsed, destroyed local real estate markets, bankrupted a number of the banks and sent many of the “carpet-baggers” back home. It is still a bitter memory, not just part of local lore. The multi-billion-dollar cleanup after the Exxon Valdez spill created its own mini-boom, but that was all too brief.

This time, however, there is a cushion for the future, but it may be needed all too soon. In the last year, and for the first time, the total income of the Fund was equal to total oil revenues. Past revenues saved now yield as much cash as the take from current production. But while the Fund’s revenues are destined to grow, oil revenues – barring a miraculous surge in oil prices – can only continue to fall. Therefore the share directly flowing to the state government, rather than the independently managed Permanent Fund, is falling, leaving the state ever more pressed for cash.

Philosophical debate

Alaska is not poor, the debate now is less over cash and more over policy and political philosophy. The money is there – the question is what role should the government have in determining how it shall be spent, and by whom. The Permanent Fund holds \$24 billion, and the state also has other funds tucked away. The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, a state entity which has accumulated large retained profits in spite of a program of subsidized loans to Alaskans, has almost \$2 billion in equity. The Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund holds another \$3.2 billion. The state, unique among government entities in North America, has no debt, while holding almost \$30 billion in earning financial assets.



The volume of oil flowing through the trans-Alaska pipeline is expected to continue to decline.

Alaskans therefore enjoy the luxury of choice. Some argue that state spending should be cut further, eliminating the revenue gap. Others argue that part of the dividend should revert to the government, which then can in its wisdom spend on behalf of the people. Still others argue that the state’s personal income tax – eliminated completely in the salad days when oil prices were high and state revenues five times higher in real terms – should be revived.

The income tax route is appealing – it hits high income families most; one-third would be paid by non-resident or seasonal workers and all would be deductible against Federal tax liabilities, so that the hated enemy within the Beltway would in substance pay part of the bill. Cutting the dividend also has political consequences – the check, now \$6,500 per family of five, is vitally important to rural Alaskans, especially the Eskimo and Indian peoples, for whom it is frequently the largest source of cash income.

PRINCIPLES & INTERESTS ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: THE FUTURE OF THE PERMANENT FUND

MODERATOR: Lee Gorsuch, Chancellor, University of Alaska Anchorage

There are many things that have gone on in the past 20 years that are of phenomenal significance to us. We're no longer simply exploring the moon, we're actually unraveling the mysteries of the universe. We're no longer simply advancing in biology. We're actually discovering the genetic code that is the secret to many disabilities and long-term illnesses. We now have the capacity to clone species from a single cell. The communications revolution is connecting the entire world. We have the technical capacity to talk to anyone in the world, real time. There are innovations taking place in technology, which is increasingly smaller, cheaper and smarter than anything we possibly imagined, and which eliminates the necessity for that back-breaking, hard labor and brawn.

There are many fascinating things going on in the world that affect us here in Alaska – world phenomena that are extremely important for us, that will determine the future of the world, the



Moderator Lee Gorsuch led 13 Alaskans, representing diverse cultures, regions and occupations, in a discussion about the Fund's role in realizing a vision for Alaska.



**Lee Gorsuch, Chancellor,
University of Alaska
Anchorage**

Lee Gorsuch is chancellor of the University of Alaska Anchorage. In this capacity, he oversees the Anchorage and extended college campuses serving approximately 20,000 students. He is a frequent advisor to federal, state and local governments on a host of public policy issues.

nation, and the state of Alaska. As Dr. Hacker indicated, we've got some trouble signs on the horizon. He shared a few with us. I'll just reiterate a few more – and many of you are familiar with these.

Over the past few years we've gone from a net in-migration to a net out-migration. That means we have more people leaving Alaska than coming into Alaska. The people coming in are less skilled than the people who are leaving. This poses some fairly significant long-term issues for us. Although we've had some steady employment growth, it's been very modest, and it's been in sort of the semi-skilled, unskilled categories, and as a consequence Alaska's per capita personal income has been falling. Whereas we were number one in the mid-1980s, we're at number 19 now and are falling rapidly. I have no doubt by the turn of the century we'll be in the lower half of the lower 48 states in earned personal income.

In the areas of education we have some very significant problems. A very small percentage of

our high school graduates go on to college and, of those who do, the majority go to colleges outside of the state of Alaska. We are not educating our own. Just by contrast, in the state of Minnesota, 80 percent of the high school graduates go on to some form of post-secondary education.

Now these are the phenomena that are occurring in the world at large, exciting things that are happening, and yet here in Alaska we see some troubling signs.

The question I think all of us have is whether

this Permanent Fund is a property of the state of Alaska, as is the rest of our 104 million acre entitlement. The only thing that distinguishes this Fund from the natural resources and minerals is that it has a very high economic rent. It's enormously valuable. As I believe Scott Goldsmith indicated this morning, the thing that made it different was that instead of harvesting the trees and spending the trees to support education, health and social services and public safety, the rents were so large we put them into a special savings fund. But it's the same sustainable source of revenue that we had when we used those other sus-

Participants in the Roundtable Discussion

Andy Kwon is the president of MC Corporation and has been instrumental in the Korean-American Citizens League of Alaska.

Dr. Jerome Konisar served several years as President of the University of Alaska system. Originally from New York, he was formerly a professor of economics.

Bill Ennis, an outstanding physics teacher at East High School, was named the 1996 BP Teacher of the Year for Anchorage. His award notes he not only imparts ideas and information to his students effectively, but also animates the students' curiosity and learning.

Peg Tileston has lived in Alaska since 1972. She is chair of Alaska Common Ground, a trustee for the Alaska Conservation Foundation, a board member of the Alaska Center for the Environment, a board member of Oil Watch Alaska and a member of the Governor's Oil and Gas Policy Council.

Kelly Haney was born and raised in Alaska, and is a 1995 graduate of Dimond High School in Anchorage. She is studying for a degree in science and technology at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Haney was the youngest person ever elected to the Anchorage School Board.

Scott Heyworth was born and raised in Alaska. He serves as chair

of the Ship Creek Enhancement Advisory Citizens Task Force, assists with Abused Women's Aid in Crisis Intervention Helpline and the Alaska Institute for Creative Studies, and is a board member of Easter Seals. Mr. Heyworth helped form the Anchorage Bucs Baseball team in 1981. He has been a longshoreman with Sea-Land/T.O.T.E. for 27 years.

Archbishop Francis T. Hurley, the Catholic Archbishop of Anchorage, was honored as the 1997 Alaskan of the Year. He was instrumental in the establishment of many important social services, such as Brother Francis Shelter, Clare House, Covenant House, McAuley Manor and new churches.

Mano Frey has been the business manager and secretary-treasurer of L.I.U.N.A. Local #341 since 1981. He was recognized by the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce in 1985 for his community service. Mr. Frey serves on the boards of several civic groups, including Commonwealth North and the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce.

Margy Johnson has dedicated herself to improving Cordova's economy. She served two terms as mayor of Cordova, and is the owner of Reluctant Fishermen hotel. She has also been involved for more than 20 years with the Alaska Visitors Association.

Thelma Buchholdt is a long-time Alaskan. She served in the Alaska

legislature and helped to establish the Alaskan-Asian cultural center in Anchorage. She is a proud mother and wife who is very active in the Filipino community.

Henry Springer is executive director of the Associated General Contractors, Alaska chapter. He was with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities for 23 years as a surveyor, a Division Director and as Deputy Commissioner. From 1987 until 1989 Mr. Springer served in the Alaska State House of Representatives, representing western Alaska.

Tom Williams, in his capacity as Alaska Commissioner of Revenue, was on the original Board of Trustees of the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation. He credits one of his major accomplishments the hiring of Dave Rose. Mr. Williams is Alaska tax counsel for BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc.

Dennis Tjepelman is a lifelong Alaska resident from Kotzebue. He has long been involved in Alaska Native affairs. In 1975 he helped create the regional non-profit corporation, Manilaq Association, of which he is currently president and chief executive officer.

Jonathon Lack is an Anchorage attorney who also has extensive experience serving as a legislative aide on the state and federal level.

tainable revenues to support general government operations. But in this case we've treated it special just because it was so large.

It seems to me that when we look to the future of the Permanent Fund, the question is: If this is one of our major resources, how can it be used to advance our vision and our ambitions for the future?

What I'd like to do as we lead off with the panel is to break into two questions. The first question is: What is your vision? The question is for all of you in the audience as well as those of you on the panel. What is your vision for Alaska? What would you like Alaska to become?

A well-known psychologist in the early part of this century said that the question is not what the child has been or is today, but rather what the child could be. If you use that sort of metaphor for Alaska, the question is not necessarily where we've been, where we are today, but where we'd like Alaska to be. So what I'd like everybody to do is just take two or three minutes to use an adjective to describe your vision of Alaska in the future.



Panel participants included Tom Williams, left, Dennis Tiepelman and Jonathon Lack.

When Lyndon Baines Johnson was elected President of the United States, his adjectives were "a great society." George Bush, later on in his administration, said he'd like to see a kinder, gentler America. That was how he described his vision for the nation. First Lady Hillary Clinton has talked about "it takes a village." So building a village might be her vision for Alaska.

I'd like to ask each of you to take just a moment to write down what you think are three adjectives that would characterize the kind of

Alaska, or as Professor Hacker indicated, the legacy that you'd like to leave in terms of describing this state that the Alaska Native community referred to as The Great Land. I'll come back and ask half of the panel to share with the rest of the audience their three descriptive visions, and then the follow-up with a Q and A on the questions about what role, if any, would the Permanent Fund play in trying to realize the vision you have for Alaska.

For the other half of the panel, I'll come back to the question and say that if this is in fact the vision and this is the role of the Permanent Fund, how could we achieve it? What three steps would we take in order to realize this vision for Alaska and this use of the Permanent Fund, and that'll be the second set of questions.

Let me go ahead and now ask each of the panelists if they would just very briefly share with us what their adjectives were, and then we'll come back and ask whether or not the Permanent Fund would play any role in trying to realize that descriptive state of Alaska. Andy, would you start off and share with us what your adjectives were for this great state of Alaska?

Andy Kwon

What I wrote down is growing, prosperous and leading. That's my vision of Alaska.



Education was a top priority for East Anchorage High School physics teacher Bill Ennis and former Anchorage School Board member Kelly Haney.

Jerome Komisar

I had welcoming, a place where people want to live. Dynamic, a place that allows people and communities to grow and be active. I have adventurous, a place where new truths are discovered and new methods are developed.

Bill Ennis

Beautiful, progressive, familial.

Peg Tileston

Community-spirited, acceptance of diversity and differing opinions in the sense of place.

Kelly Haney

Mine are kind of boring. I have educated, productive and stable.



Cordova Mayor Margy Johnson talked about community needs while former legislator Thelma Buchholdt discussed social needs.

Scott Heyworth

My first is collaborative, where the leaders – elected or not – the institutions – corporate and non-profit – and the citizens must work together. Second, compassionate. We must have a bigger heart for the less fortunate. And communicative – that we must accept the

word “diverse” and begin to know one another’s heritage, traditions and language.

Archbishop Hurley

First we must be thankful to God for the great benefit and wealth that He has given to us as a people. It does come ultimately from Him. Secondly, that we will be good stewards, as has been mentioned to us just previously; stewards that are genuinely concerned about other people. And thirdly, that we reflect a fundamental option for the poor.

Lee Gorsuch

Archbishop Hurley, let me ask you now:

Given your sense of this vision of Alaska in those powerful descriptors of the Alaska that you would like to see in the future, what role, if any, do you see the Permanent Fund playing in the realization of that vision?



Former House Speaker and Anchorage Mayor Tom Fink was present at the creation of the Fund.

Archbishop Hurley

Wherever you have money, you have the opportunity to put things into effect. If we start from the base that we are thankful for what we have, we’ll be motivated to give ourselves a good sense of direction. My primary thought here was to be thankful to God for the great gift we have. I would also like to be thankful for the people who have made this state what it is.

I use one example. When I first came here to Anchorage, one thing I discovered in my own community (and not just the Catholic community) was the number of very successful people and rather wealthy people who never forgot where they came from. I think that very critical and very important for us. So the Permanent Fund becomes a vehicle for living out our dreams, and so the question is, for me: What are the themes that keep putting us to the test? Every time I’m doing something I have to be thankful for the source of it.

Secondly, I have to be a good steward. Steward means, of its very nature, reaching out and being concerned about others, so it cannot be self-centered, which again was the main topic of our speaker today. I told him he stole most of what I wanted to say anyhow. I could put him in the pulpit tomorrow in our cathedral and he would be right on for the very things we like to hear about stewardship.

And then the fundamental option for the poor. It is my own conviction that if we are concerned about raising the level at the lower end of our

society, everybody goes up. We're never going to be free of the poor, we know that. But if that's one of the tests – in everything I'm doing, am I also concerned about the poor? – then I think the whole level's going to go up. Now, the Permanent Fund's just a vehicle for doing that. How we do that? We're looking to everyone here in these kinds of discussions to come up with practical thoughts.

Lee Gorsuch

From your perspective, is it appropriate to use the Permanent Fund to achieve some of these social purposes?

words like “cap the dividend” and maybe go into a civic donation or I think Kay Brown talked about six different non-profits or something like that – that in a collaborative way we could take this money and other pieces of this Fund that we have and reach down into other institutions or other needs or other areas of people in the social circles that need our help. I also agree with Mayor Fink about the importance of infrastructure, buildings and stuff. That's all just as important. So we need to make a broad sweep and look at the whole arena.

But coming back to my three words. If we can communicate with each other on these things,

“If the Fund is one of our major resources, how can it be used to advance our vision and our ambitions for the future?”

Lee Gorsuch, Chancellor, University of Alaska Anchorage.

Archbishop Hurley

I think the Permanent Fund can be used for anything that we have going on in our state. That's where the wisdom of the people, all the people, has to come into play. How do we take all of it and make it productive? The Permanent Fund's just a vehicle. It's a vehicle for accomplishing a lot of things, just as we have now. The dividend is a vehicle through which people can do individual things.

Lee Gorsuch

Scott Heyworth, what were your three adjectives and what role would you see the Permanent Fund play in realizing those, if any?

Scott Heyworth

They were collaborative and compassionate and communicative. I was thinking about the Permanent Fund – and I agree with Archbishop Hurley here – that as the dividend comes out each individual gets to make his or her own choices. But I've also begun to think – and I've heard a lot of the fine people talk about the idea that possibly we need to take this resource – and I heard the

collaborate together and not get in these testy fights that I see around this state all the time, which actually troubles me quite a bit, and to be more compassionate, to look at the whole, I think we can get along a lot better and move forward more quickly in this state.

Kelly Haney

My adjectives were educated, productive and stable. I don't exactly know how the Permanent Fund would play into each one of these but I think it already does. I think there's a great need for an education endowment fund, and I don't know whether that money should come from the Permanent Fund earnings or not. Possibly we need to set up one to mirror the Permanent Fund. But we have a problem in this state where we have, supposedly, a fiscal gap yet each citizen is



Former Rep. Terry Martin was one of a number of legislators who participated in the conference.

handed over \$1,000 each year. We can't appropriately fund education, we can't appropriately fund health and human resources and we can't build a jail. There's a problem that I see and I know that's quite controversial to say, but it's out there.

We need educated citizens, we need people in our high schools to go on to the University of

Alaska that I was given for this conference, I see a lot of graphs that have our budget going up and down. We're prosperous this year and we're broke this year, and I think there's something that we need – stability – and we need it fast. And possibly the Permanent Fund, which keeps growing, would be a good way to achieve that.

"We have a problem in this state where we have, supposedly, a fiscal gap yet each citizen is handed over \$1,000 each year."

Kelly Haney, Anchorage School Board

Alaska system and to come out of the University of Alaska system with the degree of their choice and stay in Alaska and work in Alaska and become productive members of this society, whether that be a teacher, whether that be a pilot, whether that be a businessman, whatever the case may be.

That ties me into the productive part of it, as I think the Permanent Fund is already doing that. I work for a small business as a travel agent and when Permanent Fund dividends come out, life is good. We really enjoy those because people use their Permanent Fund dividends and it affects our small business.

I really don't know how the Permanent Fund can help stabilize Alaska. I don't even know if that's achievable, but looking through the materi-

Lee Gorsuch

As David Reaume said earlier, one of the major accomplishments was that money that was non-recurring became recurring revenue, so just creating the Fund itself gave us options. Now of course, what we're trying to decide is what those options are and how you make discriminating choices among those options. Permanent Fund earnings have, in fact, brought a great deal of stability in the sense of a sustained stream of revenues that's not dependent entirely upon the Alaska economy. Peg, what are your thoughts on this question about the role of the Permanent Fund, given your vision for Alaska.

Peg Tileston

The third point that I had as far as vision was concerned is a negative. And that's fragmentation. We continue to be fragmented.

One of the things I think the Permanent Fund can do is exactly what we're doing right now and it is this: the Permanent Fund and discussion of it can provide a springboard for Alaskans all over the state to come together and really start talking about what it is that we care about, what it is that we have in common, where our differences are and the ability to accept and appreciate those differences and stop the diversity or the division and inability to agree to disagree about things of importance and concentrate on those areas that bring us forward as a state and move us in the



Rebecca Moore holds "Your Fund. Your Choice. Your Future," background notes for public conversations.

direction that it seems to me there is a lot more agreement on.

I think the other thing that needs to be done is to look at programs writ large, rather than as we do now in small pieces – education, the criminal justice, etc., as small pieces of the budget. And we don't have a broad sense of the programs that we have in place, what they're doing and what they should be doing. So I think that the Permanent Fund's primary purpose right now – rather than trying to think of how it can change or should change – is to be used as a mechanism to do what we're doing at this meeting and broaden it throughout the whole state so that we get some of that building of camaraderie, sense of place, sense of people, together.

Lee Gorsuch

One of the arguments in support of the dividend program is that it's very egalitarian. Everyone gets an equal share. How is it, then, that we're getting increasing divisiveness when everyone gets the same.

Peg Tileston

I think it fosters a sense of selfishness. I know a number of people who turn around and give their Permanent Fund to their favorite charity. Nevertheless, it has fostered a sense of entitlement with no responsibility connected to it. It just comes in the mail or goes into the savings account or checking account, with no real connection with what the broader needs of the state are.

Lee Gorsuch

Bill, why don't you refresh our memory on what your descriptive adjectives were and what role you see the Fund playing in trying to realize your vision for Alaska.

Bill Ennis

I wanted to preface any comment I made with the idea that as a classroom teacher I get very severe tunnel vision about the greater Alaska, and I don't think I've learned any more about anything than I have about this Permanent Fund situation,

reading the documents that were given to me. So the first thing is to bring everybody together someplace so that they have to read all these things. Most of us get tunnel vision about our job and we don't think about these other things.

I had beautiful, progressive and familial. I think that Alaska has an opportunity with the Permanent Fund as a base to become the environmental anchor of the world and the United States, and I am aware of the fact that perhaps some people might not agree with that statement here in the room, but that's okay.

Progressive, I think Alaska has an opportunity to become a true opinion leader in technology, education and natural resource use. No one else can possibly do that.

We not only have the Permanent Fund, but we have it because we are in Alaska.

Money doesn't fix everything. From a classroom perspective, I see the huge fluctuations in funding in my department at East High School, from say a high back in the '80s of \$12,000 for 12 teachers, down to

hundreds of dollars per teacher – which is a significant difference when a frog costs \$6. We've mentioned the lowering of the income and skill levels of occupations here in Anchorage and certainly if we have a more educated public, we could probably draw higher paying jobs. I know that that has happened Outside, where a community will specifically fund technical schools, colleges, etc., to educate the public and then the businesses come.

And the third was familial. I think everybody here has mentioned that we would like to reduce the controversies among the various groups. I think communication is going to require perhaps



Archbishop Francis Hurley called the Fund a vehicle for betterment while labor leader Mano Frey said Alaska was both the poorest and richest of states.

not roads, but greater electronic communication, and that is certainly a very specific task that can be handled with a few dollars here and there from the Permanent Fund.

Jerome Komisar

I used three adjectives, but I was attempting to describe one kind of place that was welcoming, dynamic and adventurous. What I was trying to do was describe the state where people want to live, where they want to work and where they want to build families.



Roundtable participants included, from left, longshoreman Scott Heyworth, Archbishop Francis Hurley, labor leader Mano Frey, Cordova Mayor Margy Johnson, former legislator Thelma Buchholdt and Henry Springer, executive director of Associated General Contractors.

I think a state like that requires certain things. One is income protection, and the dividend program does afford income protection to the poor, as the negative income tax in the old framework had a particular value.

But there are other things the state needs as well: good schools, safe streets, dependable social services and a reliable economic infrastructure. For each of those, the Permanent Fund could play a very significant role and, I think, will have to play a significant role if the state is going to be the kind of state that I believe we all want.

Andy Kwon

The three words I used were growing, prosperous and leading. I've been involved with the

school budget advisory commission, Anchorage YMCA and other things, and I've seen the tightness of funds all over the state as well as in Anchorage.

One way the Permanent Fund can help, I believe, is as follows: Imagine having a Stanford, MIT or Harvard in Anchorage. Think about the education level, think about associative business that would generate and also long-term prosperity. If we can take maybe \$200 million out of \$700 million, I'm sure we can get a lot of Nobel Prize professors and first-rate educators. They would generate a lot of enthusiasm.

I'm a product of the Anchorage School District who went Outside for school. But if we had a Harvard here, I would rather go here. This may be too simple, or seem too outrageous, but I think it can be done.

Lee Gorsuch

Andy, while you have the mike, several of the panelists earlier today said they didn't think the public would come to that position – of supporting more for education, creating the sort of prestigious university you just referred to – unless there were a crisis. Do you concur with that position? Do you think there is a crisis, or do you think there is an alternative way to try to make that argument sufficiently persuasive that the rest of the state would agree with you?

Andy Kwon

Competition is fierce. High-tech positions are paid more money. And so if you look at the long-term process, I don't think we have an option. Do we want to work at fast food joints and flip hamburgers at six bucks an hour? Or do we want to create higher-income positions so that we can compete as a state with the Lower 48, as well as internationally? If we want to do the latter, we need a Stanford or a Harvard – schools whose professors work with other companies and who create high-tech corporations. I see that as a very viable option. And if Alaskans are educated, I believe it's achievable.

Lee Gorsuch

Dr. Komisar, we're going through this crisis inside the university. It may be viewed as an internal crisis, but how do you see this question of trying to get to an enlightened self-interest, where the rest of the community sees itself as benefiting from the type of institution and programs that Andy's just described?

Jerome Komisar

I think that's the key question. How do you bring about a consensus to use the Permanent Fund to support a whole host of social services, as well as private activity? Part of the process is being handled by this meeting.

I think there has to be a structured way of getting public opinion to focus on the uses of the income of the Permanent Fund. I don't think we've come up with a solution on how to do that. We have multiple ideas on how to use the Permanent Fund. But we need to boil down the



Fund Trustee Clark Gruening, left, talks to state Sen. Loren Leman.

multitude of suggestions to really a handful, and get them out to a broad-based public referendum to begin to coalesce a feeling.

I don't see this as taking place in one election. But there would be multiple opportunities for the public to speak as to alternative uses. Finally,

these would be boiled down to one that would have a much more dynamic effect on the entire range of state needs.

Lee Gorsuch

To get back to you, Bill, since you are entrusted with many of our bright, aspiring young people, if you're having this conversation in your classroom and you suggest to them that some of their dividend money could go toward more frogs in the lab, and since they would benefit from this, what kind of response would they likely give you and what does that suggest in terms of whether or not it's a shared vision? Or have young people reached the maturity that you think is appropriate for engaging in this conversation?

Bill Ennis

Have a class, have a test. That's what teachers do.

I think if you asked my students you would certainly get some flippant answers to begin with. But I think all of them see the results of years of lower funding in education. They see the results of the perceived lack of importance of education here in Anchorage. And so I think almost across the board there would be complete support.



Anchorage Assembly Member Charles Wohliorth was instrumental in creating an Anchorage permanent fund.

I would even go so far as to say that if you asked the same question to a majority of students, perhaps in a traditional class – what we used to call general science, for example – I would think that you would get similar support. The kids know, most of them, that this is the key. They don't want minimum wage jobs. They want more than that. So I think there is support among students.

Lee Gorsuch

Kelly, you're on the school board. You've started charging fees for all types of extra-curricular activities, which creates a further difficulty – families that have resources that allow their children to participate versus those that don't. And yet obviously the school board felt this was the

classroom, and what they're going to provide to the community.

Lee Gorsuch

Peg, you've been active in Common Ground and a whole host of other activities that deal with these issues and yet I don't sense any

The dividend has fostered a sense of entitlement with no responsibility attached."

Peg Tileston, Common Ground.

only way to continue to keep dollars in the classroom. Do you share Bill's sentiment that young people and their families would actually look favorably on using the Permanent Fund to support education programs?

Kelly Haney

I really do. I've been very blessed because my parents saved all my Permanent Fund dividends



Beth Rose of the Alaska Humanities Forum taped interviews with many Alaskans who helped shape the Fund.

and the money is paying for college, moving expenses, that type of thing. And my parents are saving my sister's Permanent Fund dividends. That's for college expenses as well. But getting \$200 less a year in order to get more frogs into a science class, or in order to get a textbook that's current, or in order to fund a sports program, or in order

to fund more degree programs at the university – I think people would be very willing to pay for that.

I'm not saying give up your whole dividend or put it all towards education. But \$200, \$300 a year, for providing what students need in the classroom – that's nominal. I mean, that's nothing compared to what they're going to get out of that

groundswell. As a matter of fact, all the politicians I talked to say the reason they don't talk about taxes – when it comes to the Permanent Fund, they don't talk about doing anything other than dividends – is that the large voting electorate, at least, is saying "hands off." Do you sense that there's a change here and have you seen any indication of it, in terms of either polls or increased civic conversation?

Peg Tileston

Deliver me from polls! Probably not. I think part of the problem is how we phrase the questions. Maybe we ought to have a statewide Meyers-Briggs test, the kind featuring a series of questions that measures our skills, our temperaments and – important in this case – our priorities. I think most of the problem that we've had lies in the political rhetoric and in the way that questions have been asked.

Certainly if you ask somebody, "Do you want to give up any or all of your Permanent Fund Dividend," the answer's going to be no; it's the wrong way to ask the question. We need to start looking at positive, helpful ways of asking the questions. As an example, we've read recently about the tremendous work overload of social service workers. I know three social service workers who've left the field because they were so overloaded. That kind of thing begins to resonate with people, particularly when they see children who are not being protected, or taken care of. We need

to rephrase the questions so that we are not asking questions that get the obvious answers, but make people think – questions that promote more opportunities for people in our communities to sit



Walt Parker of the Arctic Research Commission talked about the purpose of the Fund.

down together and start examining where we want this state to go and how we want it to get there.

Lee Gorsuch

Scott, one of the counter-arguments has been that when the state was better off – in the early 1980s in particular – spending got out of control and state spending per capita

was enormous, three times the national average. It is proposed, therefore, that the way the state should deal with this issue is simply to cut the budget. That appears to have been a popular strategy; it appears to be the current political strategy.

From your perspective, how is the public to know when the budget has been cut enough because the numbers are still larger than those of other states? Our state may not be comparable in a variety of other ways, but nonetheless the perception is we're still spending more than most other states. Can it be said that we've really cut enough?

Scott Heyworth

I wouldn't know if we've really cut enough, but I know the citizens would know – when the arguments and the contention went away – that possibly the politicians had come to a place where they knew they'd cut enough. I really don't know the answer to that question, but I would like to say that the seven people on this side of the table seem to have come to a consensus on education, infrastructure, environment, social services – all in 25 minutes.

Archbishop Hurley

It's interesting that we've got so much here on education. One of the other speakers spoke about the fact that whenever there's a proposal that there be an educational trust, there's tremendous opposition because of doubts about what will happen to the money. Will they really get down to the frog in the classroom? What really is going to happen to the money? That is a major problem.

I'd like to raise a different consideration, which could lead to something very contentious. I think we have set, through the dividend, a unique precedent in our country. We have taken money that belonged to all of us. We've handed it to the people and said, "Now it's your choice." That to me is a great precedent, particularly if there's any effort to take all or even part of that back and say, "Well now, we want to use it the way that some group will decide," usually the politicians.



Dave Rose, left, the first executive director of the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation, talks about the dividend's impact with Scott Goldsmith, professor of economics, University of Alaska Anchorage, Institute of Social and Economic Research.

I could say, as I sit here with my good friends from the University of Alaska, fine, I'm all for strengthening education, too. But may my portion go to Alaska Pacific University where I serve on the board? Could my share go to St. Elizabeth's School, or St. Mary's School? You see, we have established an element of personal choice about publicly owned funds which are commonly owned funds. I don't think that that's ever been done in the United States. A very interesting precedent.

Now, where do we go from here? We have to start poring over all the information out there and make sure everybody's in the mix. I'm talking about all these things that have been mentioned here. Every proposition that comes up is challenging and it's going to take a long time to work all this out. Let's accept that fact. But let us start getting all these ideas into the mix and then see



Former legislator Oral Freeman, left, and former attorney general Avrum Gross played critical roles in the establishment of the Fund.

what themes keep surfacing and try to respond to them. It's the kind of thing that's happening here; it's one reason why I so welcome this forum.

Mano Frey

The Permanent Fund itself was certainly a bold plan, as the Archbishop said, unique certainly within the United States and virtually the world. But once we headed down the track of the Permanent Fund Dividend program, that was something we couldn't vary from because there would be the strongest reaction among the citizens of this state to any kind of spending plan.

The Permanent Fund Dividend program cannot go away, will not go away. Frankly I don't think it's necessary to even have a cap, though it may make some sense to reduce the growth of the dividend program. If I were king, I would like to see portions of the Fund used – whether it were excess earnings or earnings of a percentage of the corpus itself – and used for specifically

identified purposes, whether it be education or infrastructure. But the uses would have to be specifically identified.

The problem that we have now is that we are both the poorest and the richest of states. We're the poorest primarily because of perception, because many of the politicians have talked about the bloated state budget for so long that people believe it. It's not a matter of reducing the state budget; it's a matter of allocating those funds that are available in a most sensible fashion, including some of the earnings of the Permanent Fund.

One point I want to make for those who were here prior to the oil line's being built. Many of you remember Gov. Bill Egan – along with a lot of other people here – discussed whether Alaska should, as a state, invest in building that oil line. Well imagine what the income stream to the state would be on a recurring basis today. The same is true with major projects like the gas line. Is that an area where, using the Permanent Fund and the leverage it would provide, investment by the state might not provide high-paying jobs? It would obviously allow a recurring income stream to the state or to the Permanent Fund. There are so many wonderful opportunities that we have that haven't been fully explored.

Margy Johnson

It occurs to me that crisis generally brings Alaskans together and nothing unifies The Great Land more quickly than anyone or any entity or government trying to take something from us. Maybe if there were the threat that we're going to lose our Permanent Fund, Alaskans would get together. We need to be together because there are critical issues facing the state today.

I have been intrigued listening to the comments for the past couple of days, particularly on the more worldly views of what to do with the Permanent Fund. I sincerely wish that I had the luxury of being worldly or being lofty. I don't. I can tell you, as mayor of Cordova, I have to worry every day about whether the toilets flush, whether

we have a sewer system that's adequate to handle the needs of our community. Do we have a water treatment facility that's adequate to handle the fish processors? The federal government in no uncertain terms has told the city of Cordova that we need a \$10 million water filter device. That's what you need. Being a good, little red-blooded Alaskan, I said we don't have the money, we don't have the bonding capacity. I have 750 taxpayers. You are welcome to my firstborn child and my second-born child, you can put me in jail, but we don't have that kind of money. What are you going to do? Simply close your fish processing plants, ma'am? So they've got a real heavy hammer over our heads.

I mean to say we need to be thinking about basic infrastructure needs. When I see the needs of the villages, when I see that the everyday needs of the citizens of Cordova just aren't being met, we need to do better as a state. We simply need to do better. And as the good professor said at lunch today, if we need to shame our citizens, maybe that's what we need to do. Maybe those in decision-making capacities should look at what we are talking about when we're talking about needs. Let me just tell you when somebody dies in Cordova, do you know what happens? It's not like in Anchorage where you just simply call a mortuary and somebody comes and picks up the body. We have to somehow find a way to get that



Eric Wohlforth, left, who now chairs the Fund's Board of Trustees, talks with former chair Marc Langland.

body to the airport. Then when it comes back, the community itself has nothing to offer the family, so the family will go out in a pickup truck, put Grandpa in, and then there's no place to put the casket because there's no, like, community building. So we put it in a gear shed or something like that.

This isn't good enough folks. This simply isn't good enough. In a state that's the richest, we need to do better. I think it's time Alaskans begin to consider the enormity of the problems out there, and also the great gifts at our disposal to make things happen. It's actually past time. I can honestly say that I totally support the idea of a community dividend. I think the merits are sound. Is it a perfect proposal? No. But we have the wisdom in Alaska to absolutely make that work. The proposal is out there, we simply have to embrace the concept and demand that it happen.

Thelma Buchholdt

What we need, probably, is more public information, more understanding about what's happening with the Permanent Fund. It's true that it has become an entitlement – used for vacation travel, home repair or bills. Which I think is wonderful, because in this way everybody gets a share of the Permanent Fund.

But what I see now is that people resent the idea that we would spend some for the improvement of roads, family care, care in the villages. Health and a clean environment are very important to all Alaskans. And those are the very things being neglected because we have to abide by the wishes of our constituents, who expect this money to arrive at their mailboxes at the end of the year.

We have to free up some of these funds to take care of, say, education. Education is very important to our families. In the Asian community, we all work one or two or three jobs to send our kids to school because we look at education as something that is going to be useful for the entire family and for our future as a family. That is very important.



Acceptance of diversity and community-spirited were adjectives Peg Tileston, right, of Alaska Common Ground, used to describe her vision of Alaska. At left is Cheryl Frasca, who heads the Fiscal Policy Council of Alaska.

We also are very concerned about our environment. We have to have a safe, clean environment. We can invest some of the Permanent Fund money to make sure that we have a continuing clean environment in Alaska.

The Fund might help people get medical care or help with the needs of neglected children. We don't have good day-care programs, not enough anyway. We're talking about the Alaskans of the future. What do we do about them?

Surely there are some people out there who are concerned, who would like to expand the use of the Permanent Fund, but they've never been asked. Maybe because they don't have the credentials, and maybe because they just have never been thought of as people with ideas. But there are people out there that we should involve. I know that my main concern is we lack communication with a great many more people than there are in this room.

Lee Gorsuch

Henry, we heard earlier this morning that we need a crisis. Joe Perkins, the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation, says, "I'm not sure

"The Permanent Fund Dividend program cannot go away, will not go away."

Mano Frey, Labor Leader.

Another thing that we have to be concerned about is respect for the diversity of cultures in Alaska. The issue of subsistence is one aspect of that. I think that people in Alaska respect the rights of our indigenous peoples here. I think those are areas where the Permanent Fund can come into the picture of educating the public about the rights of citizens, of individuals who are either in need of subsistence to promote their culture, or also to make sure that their culture remains viable through the centuries.

Archbishop Hurley talked about poverty, that there are people who are in poverty. I know health care is an issue that some of us Alaskans don't want to talk about. Many years ago I proposed that we should have health care insurance in this state and most people at the time thought it wasn't necessary. But there are some people who don't get any kind of help.

what you're waiting for. We've got boats, harbors, roads in significant disrepair; we have a one-billion-dollar deferred maintenance problem. How big a crisis do you need?" From your vantage point, how are we going to pay for this?

Henry Springer

Well, to me the Permanent Fund is not a sacred cow. It would have been suicidal, even five years ago, to talk about doing something with the Permanent Fund. But now we're reaching a point where people want to take a look at it. There's a certain paradox here. We are talking about a real fiscal gap in our state projections where we can't match up expenditures and revenues. At the same time we have a Permanent Fund of incredible magnitude just sitting there.

I think the Permanent Fund is an integral part of the state's fiscal situation and needs to be con-

sidered as such. If we have a fiscal gap, we need to do certain things to meet our long-term financial responsibility – a combination of things. We probably have to increase user fees and establish a dedicated fund for the fees. I think certain taxes – within limited applications – need to be considered. And I personally think that the earnings of the Permanent Fund should be part of the equation. Leave the principal intact, including the inflation-proofing, and take the earnings and split them – 50 percent to individual dividends and 50 percent going into the state budget.

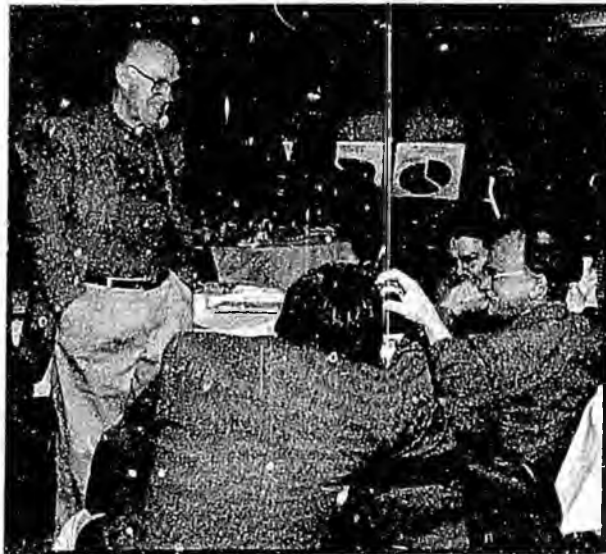
And when I talk about the state budget, I think there are real limitations to what you can cut. Forty-four percent of the operating budget is arrived at either through formulas that involve federal grants, which we can't cut, or they are dedicated funds, designated by law to some projects. There is no way you can cut the government spending in the operating budget much further, at least not to the point where you're going to close the gap.

But I want to address the capital budget. When DOT Commissioner Perkins talks, he talks about the capital budget. The state doesn't have a capital budget. Our capital budget is a hang-on that is driven by political whims. It is not based on any kind of logic or long-range planning or the setting and achieving of goals. On top of it, we don't have a state program. Our program is driven by federal aid both in the aviation and the highway components. All we're doing, basically, is trying to use the federal dollars that are available and we have to furnish the matching funds.

We have a so-called six-year plan because the Feds demand it. That six-year plan is a sham. It gets changed every time the administration or the legislature changes. I think if we want to do some good with the earnings of the Permanent Fund, we need to take 50 percent of the earnings and put it in the state budget. It could be wisely used in a long-term education fund for the very simple reason that I think education funding is the most inadequate funding.

With the deficit reductions, it's not a real reduction of government spending; it's a shifting of government spending from state to local levels.

Then put the rest of this portion of the earnings into some capital program that is established and it would create the stability which we need to create the infrastructure which we need to get a sta-



Former Anchorage Mayor Jack Roderick chats with UAA Chancellor Lee Gorsuch, right.

ble economy going. That stability factor, I think, is a really, really integral part of everything because labor, the construction industry, manufacturers, suppliers, the financial institutions – they are all keenly interested to have a clear picture of what is coming down for three to six years.

Lee Gorsuch

Tom, what we're in part hearing is revenue requirements to support general government – education, health, roads. And Henry's position is that some of the earnings of the Permanent Fund, should be used for general government purposes. You've both been a Commissioner of Revenue, and have written on the question of Alaska's long-range financial future. Is it your view that, as Henry said, some of the earnings – if not a large chunk of them – should be used as a part of the state's long-range financial requirements, or are

you of the mind that the Fund is and should be regarded as a sacred cow, if not for political reasons then for other economic reasons?

Tom Williams

The question, the way posed, invites an answer. But it's the wrong answer. The question is whether we want a Permanent Fund. Right now, we have a Permanent Fund because everybody shares in it equally. It's not invested so that my shopping mall gets a cheap loan from it and yours doesn't. It's not invested so that I get a greater share of the dividends than you do. Everybody has an equal stake in the government, and I think that's part of why the Permanent Fund has withstood the challenge to politicize its investments. People recognize that as soon as it's politicized in its investment power, all bets are off. Then we might as well divide it up 600,000 ways because you're going to have a better chance of getting a fair share that way – unless you're one of the privileged few that cuts the right deal with whoever are the Permanent Fund trustees.

I think the same thing is true with the income. That's where we have our direct stake in the Permanent Fund. Only two things affect how much we get. First, how many of us are here? And second, how well are the trustees managing it? If they manage it poorly, we'll feel it directly because we're dividing a smaller number by the population. So we have a direct stake in the performance of the Permanent Fund.

The other point I'd like to make is we're all walking around the issue that's really here, and that is we don't trust government to do the right thing with money. That's the fundamental problem. We don't trust government. Who's in favor of taxes? Well, I'm in favor of a tax if it will go to help education. I'm in favor of a tax on motor fuel if it will go to pay for street repairs and fill the potholes. I'm in favor of a tobacco tax if it'll go help cover health care costs for lung cancer patients. But if it isn't earmarked that way, do I trust the legislature to spend it wisely? Do I trust the administration to implement that wisely? I don't



Longshoreman Scott Heyworth, right, came up with collaborative, compassionate and communicative to describe his vision of the state.

think most of us in this room do. We don't trust that process.

The fact is, when we're talking about the Permanent Fund, you know what a tax is. A tax is when government takes money away from you. Now, I have a tax when I get a paycheck. Money is taken away from me before I got it. BP pays it in to the federal government. Used to be when I was commissioner we paid some to the state, too. But that's a tax. If you limit the dividend, that's a tax. And one of the questions is, why would we want to pick the dumbest possible tax we could? Who is it going to be impacted the worst? Hardly anyone in this room is below the \$51,000 median level. If we had more representation from that end of the spectrum we'd hear a lot more anecdotal evidence about their needs for that \$1,296. It's the only tax that we can create that will tax only Alaskans and it will fall heaviest on those Alaskans who can least afford to pay it. For my part, I'd a whole lot rather pay \$2,500 or \$3,000 a year in a state sales tax or state property tax or state income tax and keep the dividends and raise the money to pay for our legitimate needs of government, than to finance that on the backs of the people who are Alaskans and least able to afford it.

Lee Gorsuch

Dennis, one of Tom's points is an issue that's out there in terms of people not trusting the gov-

ernment. Obviously rural Alaska is feeling increasingly disenfranchised by the government, feeling as though some of the budget cuts that have disproportionate impacts. Where are we, in your view, in terms of trying to find financial revenues to support these essential services? Are you looking at, as a service provider, earnings of the

is not working for us. I regret to say that I am not a graduate of the University of Alaska, but I did graduate from Fort Lewis College, a liberal arts college in Durango, Colorado. At the time I got accepted to go to school, I was accepted by the University of Alaska and I was going to go there, but right at the bottom of this brochure at

"The Permanent Fund is an integral part of the state's fiscal situation and needs to be considered as such."

Henry Springer, executive director, Associated General Contractors.

Permanent Fund, sales taxes, income taxes as Tom Williams has just argued? What is your view on where the money is to come from?

Dennis Tiepelman

I would preface my remarks by saying that as an Alaska Native, as an Inupiat, education is important to me because it brings me here to this table to discuss these things that a person might consider esoteric dogma that doesn't mean anything to them. So I have to say that education has to be looked at with the Permanent Fund in mind. We need a forum to discuss the fact that education is the livelihood and maybe the savior of diversity that we've not talked about. Alaska Natives are 15 percent of the population, and at some point in time in Alaska's history, we were 100 percent. Where are we going, does anybody care, or are we such a threat that somehow the sooner we get out of the picture and become an

even smaller minority, the better off Alaska will be? I don't buy that, and I don't think most people buy that argument.

Put we do have that situation. We are surviving in spite of an educational system that

Fort Lewis College, it said, "Tuition free to American Indians and Alaska Natives." That, to me, said that I'm going to go Outside and get another perspective, knowing that I would come back and do something with the education that I was receiving.

The other argument is that in this day and age we have educational institutions out there. People talk about the fact that a BIA education was inferior. Well that education got me a college degree. I went to graduate school, but didn't stay. I regret that now, but at the time I was getting an master's in education and I said, what do I need it for? I'm going back to Alaska, nobody cares about having a Native with an master's degree. And I've regretted that.

Our university system and educational system constitute a savior as to how the future of Alaska can go. Rural Alaska is 100,000 natives. It's 15 percent of the population, but we're looked at as the devil of whatever is Alaska Native's politics from here on out. Three percent of the subsistence resources are spent by people who use it, but everybody else thinks that we're going to take it away from everybody else. So I think the Permanent Fund has to create a forum for dialogue and honest disagreements and honest differences of opinion to occur so that people do get what I consider an educated society here. Maybe enlightened is a better word, but I used my first adjective as educated, meaning that I can at least



Former Commissioner of Revenue Mary Nordale said: Alaska is not taking care of its needs. At left is Michael Harper, President, Kuskokwim Corporation.

be at the table to discuss some of these issues and try to argue my point of view and maybe make it a better place for people to understand where other people are coming from.

And finally, about Alaska's villagers – the people who look at the Permanent Fund as maybe the only source of income they'll ever see in the course of a year. When you've got a family – hus-

Catch-22 with the Permanent Fund. Many people see the Fund as this 18-carat gold ambulance that's running around Alaska that's going to solve all these problems. It's really not because, as David Reaume said earlier today, there has to be a major crisis before we go in and take the Permanent Fund, because so many Alaskans consider it a sacred cow.

“The people of Alaska see the Permanent Fund and dividend checks as some sort of savior, yet they're not willing to utilize it.”

Jonathon Lack, attorney.

band, wife and two or three kids, and they get \$6,000-7,000, and maybe all they have is seasonal employment in the summertime, that's a tremendous boost, especially when everybody wants to take away their subsistence way of life.



Vic Fischer, former Constitutional Convention delegate and state senator, talks with Eleanor Andrews after she moderated a panel on the Fund and the dividends.

So I firmly believe that what Tom said about taxes. When we talk about taxes, who taxes, who gets it, who does it benefit. The Alaska Native has to be part of it.

Lee Gorsuch

John, before we turn to look at another aspect of this – although we're evolving quickly into an

action mode – do you have any closing thoughts on the question about the role of the Permanent Fund dividend, your vision of what you'd like to see Alaska become?

Jonathon Lack

I think I have a little different view than everybody else at the table. I see there's a kind of

What has happened is that our legislators and the people of Alaska see the Permanent Fund and Permanent Fund checks as some sort of savior, yet they're not willing to utilize it. By saying we've got all this money here, and we can solve our problems with all the money, but then refusing to use it, we're not looking at real solutions to the problems.

We don't need to go into the Permanent Fund to solve the problems of Alaska today. We can do income tax programs, we can have a seasonal sales taxes. We can do something like that in Alaska without going into and jeopardizing what we have in the Permanent Fund.

The Permanent Fund is for when the oil money runs out. We have more known oil reserves in the state of Alaska today than we've ever had in our history. To say that now is the time to take and utilize Permanent Fund money to support the state is in error. There are other options that the people of Alaska have, and as long as we keep saying the Permanent Fund is this gold-plated ambulance out there that's going to save us, we're in trouble because we're not addressing the issue and it's not going to solve the problem because people in Alaska do see the Permanent Fund and their checks as a sacred cow. If we keep relying and focusing on the Permanent Fund as a possible solution, we're never going to solve the problems.



Byron Mallott, left, Executive Director of the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation, talks with Eric Wohlforth, Chair of the Fund's Board of Trustees.

Lee Gorsuch

Tom, let me go back quickly to this question about not trusting the government. We saw this start in California, with its legislation by referendum. And Alaska in its constitution actually put on a very strong prohibition against dedicated funds. Yet what you're suggesting implicitly is that the way to restore that faith is to allow the public to dedicate it – Archbishop Hurley's suggestion that we specify where we want that money spent, either in terms of cash or perhaps a portion of the endowment. You're a former Commissioner of Revenue, why didn't we have dedicated funds and to what extent are we looking at something different from dedicated funds that would restore confidence that the money's going where people would like to see it spent?

Tom Williams

I'm not sure that I advocate having a whole bunch of dedicated funds. There are a lot of good reasons why dedicated funds were mistakes in other states. Mostly, once the fund is established, you find your needs shift to something else and you don't have the flexibility to use the money where the needs are anymore. That's the biggest problem with them.

It's a symptom. The people don't trust the political process to spend the money wisely. Just

a couple of facts. Since 1969, the petroleum industry has paid Alaska just a little under \$50 billion. Forty-eight, really. Six of those we put into the Permanent Fund directly as principal. Then we put \$900 million in, thanks to Oral Freeman, and we had another \$2.7 billion the following year that we took out of the general fund money. So that makes a total of \$3.5, \$3.6 billion that we put into the Permanent Fund out of \$42 that didn't automatically go in. Everything else that's in the Permanent Fund has been self-generated by the Permanent Fund. We can talk about \$22 billion, but in terms of what Alaska put in – nine and a half billion – that left us with about \$38 billion, \$37 billion to spend over that same period of time. With a average population of half a million people over that period, that's \$70,000 per man, woman and child.

What can you point to that you got that was worth \$70,000? That's the fundamental problem. People don't know where their \$70,000 went and they have no trust. We have to earn their trust as leaders, particularly our elected leaders. We have to earn the trust of the people. That they'll do a responsible thing if they get the money this time. Because otherwise people don't want to give it to them.

Lee Gorsuch

Mayor Johnson says she's got a \$10 million problem in her town alone, and she has 750 taxpayers. Ten million dollars divided by 750 is going to be a large sum of money. My guess is a lot of that \$32 million went for things like that. What do you say to Mayor Johnson and her \$10 million problem?

Tom Williams

I say to her that I'm willing to take one six-hundred-thousandth of it and pay it to her. Let's all step up together.

Lee Gorsuch

What steps would you take to try to realize your vision? We've heard several different conversations taking place about people's steps.

Some of them involve the Permanent Fund, and other steps did not. So I'd ask the panel members to do the same thing. Flip over on the other side of the piece of paper and just enumerate three steps that you would like to see taken that would realize your vision, irrespective of whether or not those steps were associated with the role of the Permanent Fund or not.



Cheryl Frasca, former budget director, moderated a panel on investment options that included Robert Maynard, executive director of the Public Employees Retirement System of Idaho.

Tom Williams

My first step would be to have inflation-proofing come first of all, because otherwise we're withdrawing from the Fund. Second, I'd balance our tax revenues with our spending. If that means we're going to cut dividends, that's a tax. We have to bring taxes in line.

We're spending more money. We'll be spending even more money this year. The only thing that saved us last year was the high price of oil. And the fact that we've got this constitutional budget reserve.

The third thing is I'd keep the Permanent Fund a diversified trust. It is a trust, and it should be managed as a trust. It should be diversified to avoid losses. When you're talking about a 3 or 4

percent real rate of return, if you lose a dollar, that means another dollar is tied up at 3 percent, it's going to be tied up for the next 24 years earning that dollar back. So each dollar you lose by a bad investment ties up another dollar for a quarter of a century, if your target is 3 percent. If your target's 4 percent, then that comes down somewhat, but it's still 18 years or something close to that.

The point is, at some point you have a trade off. You get a higher reward for taking a higher risk, and there's an optimum point, where overall you're doing best to take, you're at the best position. If you take any more risk than what you're doing, your losses rise faster and you're not able to catch them up.

Now on the other hand, if you're too conservative, you don't earn as much as you could. The trustees seem to be at a good point there. I think 4 might be a little high, but the point is it takes an awful long time to make back a dollar once you've lost it.

Jerome Komisar

There are really very few ways to obtain the kind of dreams we were talking about for Alaska, and they're really investments in ourselves and first investment in the young, from prenatal care through pre-school to K-12 and then on to the university. So education would be a primary investment that we would have to tackle.

The second would be how do you develop a strong economic economy, how do you diversify the economy of Alaska so that when we go to taxes, there'll be a base upon which you can apply a tax scheme. And what you need there is a very large infrastructure which is the roads, which is water, which is a sewer system, which is a whole collective of activities that government normally supplies in regions.

The third element which I think is particularly crucial in this state, is to defend the culture and the diversity of the culture of Alaska. This is absolutely a remarkable state, and when I talk

about culture I'm talking about the environment, I'm talking about the multiplicity of languages, and talking mainly, simply about the strength and goodwill and the fascination I think we all have with The Great Land.

Margy Johnson

I would just like to point out that after inflation-proofing the Permanent Fund, I want everybody to realize you can't build a community with no

We need people who are willing to think through the questions and address the answers and be willing to take the chance of not being popular, but doing the right thing.

Archbishop Hurley

I would like to say that the target audience – the first target audience – has to be about the lower level of income right now. This has been mentioned previously. If we do not take that as a

"If you limit the dividend, that's a tax. Why would we want to pick the dumbest possible tax we could?"

Tom Williams; former Commissioner of Revenue.

money. It's simply impossible. We need to give the Fund a public purpose, and then bring the government to the people. I think we have that ability in Alaska, we have the knowledge, we simply have to commit and do it.

Peg Tileston

I think we need to have leadership, leaders with courage. Willingness to take these difficult questions, and the courage to place tough questions before the people and ask for their support and expect them to follow. But we can't have leadership by polls, or leadership out of a closet.



Former Representative Glenn Hackney served in the legislature during the Fund's creation.

very high priority, to start right there, the rest of it is going to fall apart, because we're always going to be dealing with families which have to be strengthened, and if they're not strengthened then we're just going to continue to have additional problems that'll never be met. So I think it's most important. And I think I'd like to put the question this way. It's very easy to go to someone and say you are concerned about helping the poor. And almost everyone would say absolutely, I'm very pleased to help the poor. I would pose the question this way: Are you willing to tackle the question of narrowing the gap between the low income and the high income? This is one way of preserving what is the strength of our whole society in this country, a very strong middle class. And I fear very much for any kind of drift that would have that gap widening to the point that we might lose our middle class. History has shown us what has happened with that.

Thelma Buchholdt

I would like to comment on the lack of respect for legislatures today by pointing out that had it not been for a governor who led the fight for the Permanent Fund and legislators at the time, we wouldn't have the Permanent Fund. So I would contend that any kind of misgivings about public perception towards legislators has been brought about by lack of communications between con-

stituents and the legislators themselves. I do agree that there are some issues out there that can be communicated in a forum or through the news media. Some require effort, and I think can be

other people's views, not having an intellectual debate of the issues, and not respecting that there can be two right answers to a question. If we're going to address the Permanent Fund issue, if

"The challenge for Alaska and for all of us is to have our sense of paradise, to chart that course on our own and then to have the wherewithal to accomplish that goal."

Scott Heyworth, Longshoreman.

done. I do agree with Tom. We have to inflation-proof the Fund to be sure that we don't lose it, and I look for it to exist way beyond generations from now. I'm really glad of the support of Alaskans when the Permanent Fund concept was instituted in '76 and their continuing support, not just for the money that comes to their pockets once a year, but there is a support for the program, and of course for the programs that will emanate from the Fund itself. Not the capital, but whatever we get from the interest.

Jonathon Lack

I think we've got a problem much bigger than the Permanent Fund. We've got problem dealing with each other, and that is the basis of all the problems we have in Alaska. Too many times we are backbiting, making crude statements about

we're going to address an income tax, if we're going to address subsistence, we need to start working together with each other in a respectful manner. And until we have that, there are going to be no answers to any questions.

Mano Frey

Let me add just a bit to those comments, and it is what I view as probably the most pressing need from an Alaska communities' perspective. If anybody ever wants to see what life is like in rural Alaska, where you have no sewer or water, and there are communities and villages and cities where there is no sewer or water, take the time to go visit some of those communities and see what that's really like and then try to figure out a way to deal with this problem throughout the state. It's a major, major problem that affects the health and well-being of many of the citizens of this state. That'd be a first step.

Scott Heyworth

I'd just like to balance Jonathon Lack, and I couldn't agree more on the way to come at things from the intellectual side, but I really encourage us all to come from our hearts and to get into smaller groups. I heard that put out to us today, to get into smaller groups as just our neighborhoods and our communities, because I think there's a change going on in America, and I think we all should try to get ready for it. Communities and the people are coming up this way instead of the institutions coming down this way. I think we should be ready for a change. I hope we get in groups and talk about things with our head and our heart.



Mike O'Connor, president of Peak Oilfield Service Company, discusses his endowment concept with Debra Call of Alyeska Pipeline Service, Co.



The Principles & Interests project was endorsed by organizations and businesses around the state, including Commonwealth North and its then executive director, Patty Ginsburg.

Lee Gorsuch

Let me close out the panel discussion with just a few final thoughts. I think one of our enormous problems in the state is that a large portion of Alaska is not homegrown, doesn't plan to live their lives here or die here. What that means, I think, is that those who plan to move and take another job,

those who plan to retire somewhere else, those who encourage their children to pursue education in other states, creates a different set of values about how they view the current versus the future. The economists sometimes talk about discount rates, and I remember years ago we thought that the appropriate discount rate for Alaska would be maybe two years. That was sort of the life cycle of the legislature, and maybe five years given some of the population turnover. It's extremely difficult to build a state, to build institutions on the basis of simply its current value and its return. So I think one of the challenges that face us is this issue of how do we grow this great state, how do we build the institutions that can well serve its population, how do we encourage the economy in such a way that it provides for the livelihoods and needs of our citizens in our respective communities.

But I see real challenges in front of us. I hear a lot of people who make arguments in defense of the dividend program, and we certainly heard a lot of them today. I hear a lot of arguments for those who continue to oppose any use of taxation because of what they perceive to still be sort of excessive expenditures in the state. I hear a lot of people who continue to say, I refuse to pay until I see there's a crisis. And others say

that when the crisis comes it may be too late. It's hard to restore a building once the deferred maintenance has become so severe that it simply has to be replaced and knocked down and then a new one built up, rather than providing for appropriate maintenance.

I hear a lot of people talk about the fundamental lack of trust in our elected representatives. And yet a represented democracy is exactly what we have, and it has served the nation well over our lifetime as a nation. How do we restore that faith and confidence in the legislature? How do we restore that faith and confidence in our respective state agencies and service providers?

Much of the commentary today has been around trying to build better communications. I certainly hope a large community dialogue will move us toward that end. But in the end, unless we're going to radically change our form of government, it is and will continue to be a representative democracy in which our elected representatives make the decisions that are vital to how much we save, how much we spend, how much we tax, and how much we pay out from the Permanent Fund earnings.

There was an old labor leader who came to prominence in the 1920s and he would go around the country talking to laborers who were interested in the possibilities of organizing. And the question they would always ask him was whether or not they should or should not basically form the union. And I remember his quotation quite well. And he said, "If I could lead you into paradise, I would not, for if I could lead you in, someone else could lead you out."



Patrick Carnahan reviews the white papers prepared for the conference.

The challenge for Alaska and for all of us is to have our sense of paradise, to chart that course on our own, and then to have wherewithal, the means, to accomplish that goal. The vision of paradise is one that only we can fashion for ourselves.

up to all of us, to go back to our families, our communities, our civic organizations, with the express purpose of having a genuine, heart-to-heart conversation about Alaska's future, and how it's going to be financed.

"Our university system and educational system constitute a savior as to how the future of Alaska can go."

Dennis Tjepelman, President, Maniilaq Association

I think the panelists have given us some insights as to what visions they have for Alaska, and we've had some very interesting dialogue about the steps that we ought to take in trying to realize that vision. But ultimately the test is back

And invariably, the question of finance is one that simply cannot be avoided. Someone will have to pay, but at the same time we would like to think that those who pay recognize that it is an investment that yields a return in the vision we have for this great state of Alaska.

Visions for Alaska

Panelists and participants were asked to list three adjectives describing their vision for Alaska. Among the responses:

- Equitable, prosperous, community-minded
- Pre-pipeline, kindness, caring
- Developing, educating, prospering
- Center of research & science, crime-free, non-welfare state
- Compassionate, ecologically safe & sound, economically stable
- Safer, welcoming, a sense of permanence
- Educated, culturally tolerant, hospitable
- Pollution-free, literate, healthy
- Intellectual, competitive, tolerant

The word "educated," along with its variants, was the adjective most frequently listed.

Panelists and participants were also asked to list three major steps to realizing this vision. A few examples of the responses:

- Establish education as a priority, establish income tax, eliminate demagoguery
- Income tax, income tax, income tax
- Education; environment (if we continue exploiting, it will break down and destroy beyond Alaska); I agree with Archbishop Hurley: eliminate the low-income gap
- Build a Harvard (Stanford, Berkeley) here; increase university funding; decrease K-10 electives; stop drugs, alcohol abuse and enact death penalty; eliminate dividend; control immigration
- Eliminate the "gimme" attitude of our population; get more of our citizens to make a real commitment to this state as their long-term home; use the Permanent Fund earnings to support the state budget, but also reinstitute an income tax

FORUM GIVES CITIZENS A RARE CHANCE FOR THOUGHTFUL DISCUSSION

by Mike Doogan, Columnist, *Anchorage Daily News*

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People talked about the Alaska Permanent Fund Wednesday night. They talked about the Fund's income and the annual dividend. All in all, they were pretty happy with the way things have gone with the Fund. They weren't looking for big changes.

"I'm very much a believer in leaving the Permanent Fund alone," one of them said. Most of the rest nodded.

We sat in a conference room in the museum. No elected officials, just 35 or 40 citizens who cared enough to devote a couple of hours. The meeting was one of more than 100 that have been held statewide since March 1 by the Alaska Humanities Forum. The meetings are part of a project called *"Principles & Interests: The Permanent Fund and Alaska's Future."* The project is intended to let Alaskans talk about the Fund and listen to their neighbors do the same. No votes are taken or plans formulated.

"Really, our object here is to express our thoughts and opinions," said moderator Thea Agnew.

The Fund is going on 22 years old now, and it is worth \$24.5 billion. It is invested safely. The earnings pay a dividend to each Alaskan and protect the Fund from inflation. So far, the legislature has put the leftover earnings back into the Fund. Some people say it's time that stopped. They see Permanent Fund earnings as a handy source of money for their favorite form of government



Mike Doogan

Mike Doogan was born and raised in Alaska. He has worked as a journalist, an assistant to the House Special Committee on the Permanent Fund, campaign manager for gubernatorial candidate Chancy Croft, an aide to the House Finance Committee and a freelance writer.

For the past nine years, Doogan has written a three-days-a-week Metro column. His columns have been collected in "The Best of the Rest" and "Society: An Alaskan Perspective." His has received awards from the National Education Writers Association, the Society of Professional Journalists and the Alaska Press Club.

Doogan is the author of numerous magazine articles and two books of nonsense about Alaska, "How to Speak Alaskan" and "Fashion Means Your Fur Hat Is Dead."

spending: the university system, public education, social services, health insurance, construction. Each of these ideas had a supporter Wednesday night, but as a whole the group was leery of spending the earnings.

For one thing, they were not happy with the legislature. When Agnew said, "So, you trust the legislature," her answer was hoots, groans and laughter.

"At least we have a consensus on that," a woman said.