

Alaska State Legislature

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Representative Pete Kott Speaker of the House *House District 17*

May 14, 2004

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you all for yet another successful session. As legislators we made every effort to work for the best interest of Alaska. We look back on long hours, tough negotiations and late nights, and we have much to show for it. Once again, I am thankful for the honor of representing you as Speaker of the House.

When this session began, my priorities were education, developing our resources, and laying a foundation for fiscal stability in our state. I believe we made great strides in these areas and have begun a trend that will continue in future sessions.

This legislature passed the largest increase in per pupil funding of education in our state's history. Because we added to the foundation formula, we have ensured that future generations will continue to receive this level of funding and local school districts will be able to make future plans in a more efficient and effective manner. We should be proud, and Alaska should be proud that we were able to come together in a bipartisan effort for the interests of our state.

We also took great steps in ensuring that the most vulnerable Alaskans are taken care of. We passed SeniorCare legislation to fill the gap in prescription drug coverage, we passed numerous crime bills to protect the rights of crime victims in our state, and we made significant changes to the state's child support system so that parents and children treated fairly. Kids deserve to be supported by both parents. We took measures this session to make that happen.

During this session, the state received several applications for stranded gas under the standard gas act. This is a first step in developing a natural gas line, and ensuring that this much anticipated project comes to fruition.

We in the House, and as a legislature, came together in the spirit of cooperation, while representing diverse people and places in Alaska. In spite of those divergent viewpoints, we worked through our philosophical differences for the best interest of Alaska.

Best wishes for your summer,

Pete Kott
Speaker of the House