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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** March 1, 2006

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## **Holm Leads Admin Budget Subcommittee Into Proposed New Fiscal Year**

(JUNEAU) – Today, the House Finance budget subcommittee for the Dept. of Administration passed a proposed departmental budget of \$256.5 million for FY07. Representative Jim Holm (R- Fairbanks), chairman of the subcommittee, indicated six components to the proposal that deserve special attention.

“First, I’m pleased to report to the full Finance Committee of the House of Representatives a budget recommendation that is about \$2.3 million below the targeted spending level for FY07. However, I’m just as pleased to report recommending improved funding for several programs within the Department,” Holm said. He continued with, “We’ve received a lot of good information from and testimony by the department, and I’m confident that this budget proposal will help to bring balance to the perceived needs of the department and an amount that’s financially sustainable.”

The subcommittee proposal includes an increment of \$125,000 for Public Broadcasting that will help improve the delivery and performance of public television and radio, particularly for rural Alaska. “There are some wonderful services provided through Public Broadcasting that shouldn’t be jeopardized,” Holm said.

The proposal also includes funds for Alaska’s Independent Blind through the AIRRES program. This program is in place to assist the blind with current affairs by reading and audio-digitizing such things as news and journal articles over the Internet. “We recognized the value of this program last year and awarded AIRRES an additional \$25,000 above and beyond what they were asking. We’re providing \$25,000 again this year to help build upon that effort. I think this will really help them realize the goals they’ve been working on for 10 years.”

Other recommended funding increases include \$1.5 million for the Public Defender Agency (PDA) and Office of Public Advocacy (OPA), \$6.4 million in a combined state and federal matching grant to complete the installation of the statewide Alaska Land Mobile Radio program, and \$350,000 in receipts for the Department of Motor Vehicles to encourage retention of Customer Service Representatives.

The subcommittee makes initial recommendations for funding levels that are forwarded to the full Finance Committee for adoption.

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