

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

News From The House Majority

web site: <http://www.akrepublicans.org>

State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801
Actuality line: 1-800-478-6540



J. D. Wallace
House Majority Press Secretary
(907) 465-5369

For Immediate Release: May 21, 2003

Session Ends on Time **House Majority Holds the Line on General Fund Spending**

(Juneau) – The Alaska State Legislature adjourned before midnight on Wednesday; therefore, it will not need an extended session or special session. House Speaker Pete Kott (R-Eagle River) said the House of Representatives finished the session on a successful note.

“We came to Juneau, did the people’s work, and completed our task in the 121 days that we were given,” Kott said. “We passed a budget with significant efficiencies that holds the line on spending.”

By a vote of 28 to nine, the Alaska House of Representatives approved House Bill 75, which appropriates \$2.299 billion in general funds for the operating budget for Fiscal Year 2004. The final amount is \$18 million more than what Governor Murkowski proposed, and little more than an \$8 million dollar increase to the operating budget plan for Fiscal Year 2003, which is the current Fiscal Year.

As the legislature worked to reduce state spending, it provided increases to the following areas:

- \$6.6 million increase for the University of Alaska
- \$24.1 million increase for the Department of Health and Social Services
- \$13.3 million increase for Department of Natural Resources.

“Fiscal responsibility is the first step to financial success for Alaska,” House Finance Co-Chair Rep. John Harris (R-Valdez) said. “We’re showing Alaskans that the legislature can be frugal, and that we will make the most of the funding that we have before we seek additional revenue.”

“We have a goal: cut the draw on the Constitutional Budget Reserve,” House Finance Co-Chair Rep. Bill Williams (R-Saxman) said. “This year, we will actually draw less from the CBR than the previous year. That’s a feat in these fiscally challenging times.”

###