

Groundswell Growing for “Revolution”

By: Rep. Vic Kohring, April 14, 2002

This spring, while enduring the chaotic, anti-freedom atmosphere in Juneau, I was compelled to think of where we could further cut wasteful spending in the government bureaucracy. After years of spending more than we take in, liberal newspapers have convinced many that we have cut to the bone and now need taxes. This is a prime example of the Big Lie. Granted, we have cut in a few areas, but we've added back in a lot more elsewhere. Reducing the rate at which the state expands its tentacles is not a true cut.

Last month, I proposed a 10-point spending reduction plan and compared it to a revolution. It was printed in newspapers throughout the state, and the reaction was amazing. The e-mails, phone calls, letters and faxes began to pour into my office, and still are. To date, I have received over 200 e-mails alone on this issue, and all but a dozen agreed the emphasis should be cutting, not taxing.

Major spending cuts, adequately funding basic essentials like roads, schools and troopers, and no new taxes, is the theme. Much of the media has spoken the Big Lie so often that many people are starting to believe it. But they are wrong. Our state operating budget has actually **grown** over the years when you include oil dollars with federal tax money. The net result is bigger government now than ever in our state's history, one that spends over three hundred million dollars more than just two years ago.

I have long maintained we can remove many of the non-Constitutional functions our state does, like merge state government departments into a smaller, core group of agencies, achieving efficiencies so we truly live within our means. My budget plan would cut \$500 million the first year and \$100 million in each of the next five years, totaling one billion dollars from state and federal sources.

It would place a moratorium on new taxes, prohibit spending the Permanent Fund, cap spending and contract out numerous services, like road maintenance and DMV functions. It would remove half of the four thousand-plus laws enacted since statehood and eliminate thousands of the regulations government agencies have created over the years.

The plan would move the capital to the Atwood Building in Anchorage and reduce unneeded state bureaucracy by 25% in the course of the move. The Legislature would meet every other year for 60 days instead of yearly for 120. Tax dollars would be eliminated to organizations on the dole, including tourism, fisheries, agriculture, public TV and radio, and the arts, the Governor's mansion would be closed and welfare would be cut by 50%.

This effort is going to take a mighty political will, coupled with the knowledge that our existing government ought to be made small, lean and efficient. After all, the intent was never for us to live in a state controlled by a big government that holds a whip over us. Our country's Founding

Fathers envisioned a *limited* government, which can be achieved in place of the bloated Leviathan we now have.

To the establishment and liberal media, my approach is outrageous and radical. So many hard-working Alaskans have written me, however, who agree that it's these big government advocates who are in the real minority, not them. We as freedom loving Alaskans are the majority.

But *they* pretend to be the majority, because they have the loudest voices and buy ink by the barrel. To counter this, we must prove them wrong. If we wish to reclaim our state, if we wish to live in an atmosphere where freedom is the norm instead of government control, then we must demand it.

Alaskans from Fairbanks to Homer and from Anchorage to Ketchikan have said they want government reduced. We must carry the revolution forward by raising our voices and our pens. I ask that you encourage friends, neighbors, family and co-workers to insist that Juneau pay attention to us and get spending under control. I intend to hold true to my 10-point budget plan. No compromises.

But I can't do it alone.

I appeal for your help in demanding smaller government and stand by ready to work with you. Call, write or e-mail me and I will send you my budget plan so you can help me get the word out. It's also available on my legislative web site. Ask everyone you know to get involved and contact their representative. Let us form a massive pressure group with the end goal of taking our state back.

I'm repeating my call for a revolution. I love Alaska as you do and want future generations to live in a free and prosperous land. It can be done if enough of us band together.

Please join me in this glorious fight. We can win it!

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