

July 3, 2001

Anchorage Daily News
Steve Lindbeck, Editorial Page Editor
1001 Northway Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517

Dear Sir:

Tuesday's page one story detailing a week-old rollover accident involving a legislative van conveyed at least one serious misrepresentation of the facts – that the van was not insured. In fact, the van was self-insured by the state, which the state risk manager made very clear in his interview with reporter Richard Mauer.

The State of Alaska owns and operates thousands of vehicles, and found years ago that it is more cost-effective to provide its own insurance for single-car accidents in which no other vehicle or person is hurt. That is, it saves the state money to simply pay for such damage out of pocket than to buy collision coverage for every state employee who might use a state vehicle.

Thankfully, no one was seriously injured in last week's accident. But if anyone had been, the state provides self-insurance for the first \$2 million of liability for injuries to any person or vehicle hurt in an accident involving a state vehicle. And just to be on the safe side, the state carries an additional \$75 million in extra liability insurance with Lloyds of London and other underwriters.

To sum up: Like all state vehicles, the van was indeed insured, as were its driver, its occupants, and any other motorists with which it shared the road. Like all branches of state government, the Legislature takes very seriously its obligation to conduct public business responsibly.

Sincerely,

Dan Saddler
House Majority Press Secretary
716 W. Fourth Ave., Suite 540
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 269-0167