

Alaska State Legislature

Session:
State Capitol, Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
Phone: (907) 465-3873
Fax: (907) 465-3922



Interim:
1851 Fox Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Phone: (907) 451-5501
Fax: (907) 451-4714

Senator Robin Taylor District A

For Immediate Release: Feb. 15, 2001
Contact: Sen. Robin Taylor, (907) 465-3873

Taylor Wants \$70 Million Increase in Education Funding **General Fund Spending Would Only Increase by \$26.7 Million**

(JUNEAU) – Sen. Robin Taylor (R-Wrangell) introduced legislation on Thursday that would improve the current foundation funding formula for public schools.

“We have had time to evaluate how changes made to the funding formula in 1998 impacted our public schools,” said Taylor. “Now we have an opportunity to fine-tune the formula so that the education needs of our students are met.”

Senate Bill 94 would make a number of changes to the foundation funding formula. If passed into law, the new statutes would:

- Credit 100 percent of eligible federal aid that districts receive toward the local effort required of each community
- Provide separate vocational education funding and increase it by three percent
- Change the minimum number of students in the definition of a funding community from 750 to 400
- Require all tax based communities to contribute the equivalent of a four mill tax on local properties toward education funding
- Spread funding decreases due to drops in student enrollment over three years
- Increase the base student allocation to \$4150, an increase of \$210
- Require the Department of Education to establish the cost of education for each community, and to re-establish it in even numbered years in the future
- Remove the 40 percent penalty imposed on funding for rural communities by returning them to a full 100 percent of basic need

These changes would add over \$70 million in increased funds to the state’s education budget, however there would only be a \$27.6 million increase in spending if all the changes are implemented. Speaking from the floor, Taylor said that he is willing to work with other members of the Legislature to adjust these recommended changes, but that they are all necessary.

“During my campaign, education was one of the most crucial items for my constituents, and they all wanted to know what we are going to do about it,” said Taylor. “We need to make these adjustments to our formula – there needs to be equity and fairness in education funding around the state.”