



## Alaska State Legislature Senate Majority News

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### **Senate Asks House to Reconsider Education Package *Funding Bill Could Go To Conference Committee***

**(Juneau)**—The Senate today formally requested the House to rescind its action on Senate Bill 283, which was amended March 8 to increase education funding and included almost \$10 million in discretionary capital projects.

“We are respectfully asking the House to rescind from its amendments and go back to a clean ‘sweep’ bill,” said Senate President Gene Therriault (R-North Pole). “If they decide not to, it will trigger a Conference Committee to work out the differences. If they do rescind, Senate Bill 35 could become the vehicle for the education package.”

Sponsored by Bethel Democrat Lyman Hoffman, Senate Bill 283 unanimously passed the Senate Feb. 16 as a bill to restore money that was transferred into the Constitutional Budget Reserve on June 30, 2003, under a constitutional provision requiring that sub-accounts of the general fund be “swept” into the Budget Reserve at the end of each fiscal year.

Members of the Senate Leadership signed on as co-sponsors of the measure when it was introduced January 28, 2004, after they received a commitment from Senate Minority leaders that the bill would remain “clean.”

Senate Bill 35 is currently in the Senate Finance Committee, where it was amended to increase K-12 and university funding by \$98 million and includes \$7.4 million for the Department of Education’s top major maintenance projects.

“We believe education-related capital projects are more appropriate for an education package,” Therriault said. “In Allakaket, for example, instead of \$200,000 in the House bill for heavy equipment, the Senate proposes \$603,000 to replace or repair water and sewer facilities and aging boilers, and to renovate restrooms in a school built in 1979.”

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