

Letter to Chilkat Valley News

From: Representative Albert Kookesh

I noticed that I was misquoted in your newspaper and wanted the chance to set the record straight on my views on a State Income tax.

At the Southeast Conference in Haines in September 2003, the Chief of Staff Jim Clark informed the delegates that the Governor of Alaska, Frank Murkowski was not going to discuss a State income tax. I told the Southeast Conference delegates that all broad-based taxes should be included in the discussion to solve our state fiscal problem. I do not support a State sales tax simply because many of the communities in my district have that income as their only source of revenue. The Governor and the majority in the house and senate took away the Revenue Sharing and Municipal Aid for Alaskan communities last session and to add a payment from the communities to the State through a State Sales tax would add insult to injury.

I fully support the discussion of a State Income tax for Alaska and would vote for such a tax on the floor of the House. I believe that a State income Tax is only a part of the solution to this State's fiscal problem. For the Governor to not at least allow the discussion on the income tax, is unfair to Alaskans. If we don't include a broad-based tax in a fiscal plan, then the plan would be for the Governor to propose taking solely from the permanent fund. We must have a balance. Today, I signed a Bi-Partisan, Bush Caucus letter telling the Governor of Alaska that we support a solution to the fiscal problem of Alaska--this session-- by adopting a fiscal plan for the State of Alaska which would include a State Income Tax. None of the Representatives in the House Bush caucus (Republican and Democrats) supports a Statewide Sales Tax.

Thank you for allowing me to correctly state my position on a broad based tax for Alaska.

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