



# Alaska State Legislature House and Senate Democrats

WEB: <http://www.akdemocrats.org>  
CONTACT: Jordan Marshall, Press Secretary  
PHONE: (907) 465-3842 or 321-3682  
FAX: (907) 465-5125  
EMAIL: [press@akdemocrats.org](mailto:press@akdemocrats.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • April 7, 2004**

## *Senate Democrats Lose Vote to Protect PFD*

### *Spending limit should also protect Permanent Fund Dividend and Education*

JUNEAU – In what may prove to be the singular opportunity for Alaska Senators to support constitutional protection for the Permanent Fund Dividend program this session, Senate Democrats today moved to amend SJR3, the constitutional spending limit, to include constitutional protection for dividends.

“The best spending limit is to keep lawmakers out of the Permanent Fund Dividend,” said Senator Georgianna Lincoln (D-Rampart). “Democrats are steadfast in opposition to raids on the PFD.”

“A vote for this amendment is a win-win vote,” said Senate Democratic Whip Kim Elton (D-Juneau), sponsor of a floor amendment that makes the spending cap contingent upon protecting PFDs. “This amendment accomplishes one of the four goals of the Conference of Alaskans by bootstrapping their recommendation to constitutionally protect PFDs to a Republican spending cap that actually allows more spending than the appropriations over the last four years.”

“The Senate has an opportunity to provide constitutional protection for the Permanent Fund Dividend,” said Senate Democratic Leader Johnny Ellis (D-Anchorage). “I call upon my colleagues to muster the courage to do what is best for the Alaskan people.”

Democratic Senators also moved an amendment to exempt K-12 and University education funding from SJR3.

“I can’t in good conscience say education is a priority and cap future spending,” said Senator Gretchen Guess (D-Anchorage), sponsor of the K-12 amendment, “Future legislatures need the flexibility to meet the needs of our classrooms and the University.”

The Democratic amendments failed to muster enough support from the Republican majority to pass.

###

## ***Putting Alaskans First • Moving Alaska Forward 2004***

Sen. Bettye Davis, Sen. Johnny Ellis, Sen. Kim Elton, Sen. Lyman Hoffman, Sen. Hollis French, Sen. Gretchen Guess, Sen. Georgianna Lincoln, Sen. Donny Olson, Rep. Ethan Berkowitz, Rep. Sharon Cissna, Rep. Harry Crawford, Rep. Eric Croft, Rep. Les Gara, Rep. Max Gruenberg, Rep. David Guttenberg, Rep. Reggie Joule, Rep. Mary Kapsner, Rep. Beth Kerttula, Rep. Albert Kookesh, Rep. Carl Moses