



Alaska State Legislature House and Senate Democrats

www.akdemocrats.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • March 12, 2001

CONTACT: Julia O'Malley • (907) 465-3842, Fax: 465-5125

Toll-free: (888) 465-4919, Julia_OMalley@legis.state.ak.us

Actualities: (907) 465-5001

GOP MAJORITY PREFERS STATUS QUO ON EDUCATION

No Republican support for Head Start, pupil transfer or school
accountability measures

JUNEAU--Saying that Alaska's educational system is not functioning but refusing to seek additional funding solutions, the Republican-controlled House Finance Committee rejected programs for school accountability, full funding for pupil transportation, and support for the nationally-successful Head Start program.

"We cannot blame anyone but ourselves when failure occurs in our schools," said Representative Eric Croft (D-Anchorage). "What the majority thinks we are saving now will cost us immeasurably in the future."

As schools face the responsibility of making sure all students can read, write and compute at high academic levels in order to qualify for graduation, the Education Funding Task Force suggests that education funding should be increased to pay for school reform efforts.

"We are staring at the high school graduation qualifying exam being used to withhold diplomas in the year 2002. Now is the time to improve education if we can," said Representative John Davies (D-Fairbanks).

"We can't hide behind a state law that has inadequately funded schools. We make the laws," Croft said. "As lawmakers, it's our responsibility to give schools the resources they need to make sure our kids succeed."

###

Moving Alaska Forward • Jobs and Families 2001

Sen. Bettye Davis, Sen. Johnny Ellis, Sen. Kim Elton, Sen. Lyman Hoffman, Sen. Georgianna Lincoln, Sen. Donny Olson, Rep. Ethan Berkowitz, Rep. Sharon Cissna, Rep. Harry Crawford, Rep. Eric Croft, Rep. John Davies, Rep. Gretchen Guess, Rep. Joe Hayes, Rep. Reggie Joule, Rep. Mary Kapsner, Rep. Beth Kerttula, Rep. Al Kookesh, Rep. Carl Moses