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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE HEARS KODIAK CONCERNS

Rep. Ogg Calls Meeting a Success

(KODIAK) – The State House of Representatives’ Ways and Means Committee met in Kodiak Thursday, Oct. 16, to hear the community’s concerns and opinions on Alaska’s fiscal future. With 37 people in attendance, Representative Dan Ogg (R-Kodiak) said the local meeting had the highest attendance in the state.

“There seemed to be a consensus that people are interested in an income tax and utilization of permanent fund earnings to bridge the gap in government spending,” Rep. Ogg said after the meeting. One person also expressed interest in a sales tax, while another community member expressed concern that state mental health services need more oversight.

“I’m very impressed with the amount of people who attended the meeting and the quality of the testimony the citizens of Kodiak gave,” Rep. Ogg said. “Kodiak should be proud of its contribution to this process.”

The committee also met with members of the school board, borough assembly, City Council, and Chamber of Commerce on Thursday afternoon.

“In the afternoon discussion, there was a general feeling that we’ve cut enough,” Rep. Ogg said. “Community leaders were largely opposed to a sales tax, but supportive of an income tax and/or the use of permanent fund earnings.”

The Ways and Means Committee is designed to consider methods to control state spending and propose new measures to raise additional state revenue. Committee members Rep. Max Gruenberg (D-Anchorage), Rep. Norman Rokeberg (R-Anchorage), and co-chair Mike Hawker (R-Anchorage) attended the meeting. Committee member Rep. Carl Moses (R-Unalaska) attended the meeting by teleconference.