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SENATOR BERT K. STEDMAN *CO-CHAIR SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE*

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Stedman Disappointed by Palin Capital Budget Vetoes

Priority Infrastructure Projects Suffer Statewide

(Sitka) – Senator Bert Stedman (R-Sitka) expressed surprise today over with the size and extent of Governor Palin’s vetoes within the FY08 capital budget.

“I’m disappointed that the Governor chose to cut so many priority community projects across the state” said Stedman. “The Legislature’s capital budget was reasonable, thoughtful and well within the state’s financial means to support”.

At \$1.7 billion, the FY08 capital budget was \$1.0 billion (37%) less in total funds and \$159 million (23%) less in state general funds than the FY07 budget. The Legislature also put \$1.1 billion into additional savings vehicles during this session’s budgetary process.

Stedman, who is the Senate Finance Co-Chair responsible for drafting the capital budget, said “The Governor gave no indication that she didn’t intend to honor the Legislature’s prerogative to award small discretionary capital grants. This has always been an integral part of the appropriation process and a principal means by which many worthwhile community projects get funded.”

Stedman indicated that this year’s budget process was as methodical and deliberate as it has ever been and was surprised that it is being characterized otherwise. He said, “The public was involved at every step of the way. Many of the projects the Governor vetoed today were at the top of the priority lists my office received directly from local City Councils and Borough Assemblies”.

“I’m personally disappointed that the Governor cut \$5.0 million from the statewide Municipal Harbor Facilities Grant program that we’ve worked 3 years to develop. The program matches state dollars one-for-one and is just the sort of cost sharing program the Governor says she supports” concluded Stedman.

Senate District A includes the Southeast communities of Ketchikan, Sitka, Wrangell, Petersburg, Pelican, Elfin Cove, Port Alexander, Saxman, Meyers Chuck, Thorne Bay, Coffman Cove and Hollis.

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