

Stevens Reacts To Palin's Vetoes

Tuesday, 27 May 2008

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Casey Kelly/KMXT

Governor

Sarah Palin Friday vetoed 268-million dollars from the nearly 3-billion dollar state capitol budget passed by lawmakers last month. A number of local items were among the cuts and at least one lawmaker is upset with the governor. KMXT's Casey Kelly has more.

The

governor had promised the vetoes, saying lawmakers failed to build a fiscally prudent plan. But District R State Senator Gary Stevens of Kodiak disagrees. He says he was "frustrated" and "perplexed" by the cuts Palin made to local projects.

(Stevens

1 :29s "and...in fact, by the governor.")

The

largest local item to fall victim to Palin's veto pen was 4-million dollars for a Kodiak schools' seismic mitigation project. She also cut an additional 175-thousand for an earthquake-proofing project specific to Peterson Elementary School. Stevens says he doesn't understand the governor's rationale for cutting those projects.

(Stevens

2 :41s "and...it's real important to us.")

Palin slashed funding for two local transportation items: 150-thousand dollars for an island-wide comprehensive transportation plan and another 100-thousand dollars for a Kodiak Island regional ferry feasibility study. Stevens says those projects are important for reducing the cost of living in Kodiak's villages.

(Stevens 3 :18s “…move ahead on that.”)

The governor also vetoed 50-thousand dollars for a new bulldozer in Ahkiok. But in three other cases, she cut in half the original amount allocated by lawmakers. The largest of those projects was 250-thousand dollars from a 500-thousand dollar appropriation for the City of Kodiak’s Cruise Ship/Pier II master plan. She also slashed 32,500 dollars of a 65-thousand dollar allocation for park renovation and multi-use sports field in Old Harbor and 25-thousand dollars from a 50-thousand dollar project for new playground equipment in Karluk.

Stevens says he understands Palin’s request for fiscal responsibility, but he has questions about some of her spending priorities.

(Stevens 4 1:07 “…just as important as hers.”)

And Stevens says he for one wouldn’t be opposed to overriding the governor’s vetoes.

(Stevens 5 :26s “…to override her veto.”)

Two more projects from House District 36 were cut by Palin. The communities of Nondalton and Pedro Bay each lost 50-thousand dollars in funding for new fuel trucks.

I’m Casey Kelly.

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