

Work together for all

Gov. Jay Hammond last week sent to the chairman of the House Finance Committee Hammond's plan for distribution of a \$5 million emergency contingency fund to help pay for some programs which lost money because of federal budget cuts.

This \$5 million is supposed to cover an estimated \$80 million in revenues lost to the state because of the Ronald Reagan federal cutbacks.

What we find more disturbing than those two figures is the way in which Hammond sent his proposal to the legislative arm of the government.

The House and Senate both have staff aides working like frantic moles trying to make sense of two massive budget slashing measures which affect virtually every aspect of life in this state. Those cuts will cause problems for state residents which range from minor irritations to major and possibly life-threatening situations.

And the persons best able to make some sense to these cuts as they affect the widely divergent areas in the state are the representatives of those areas. The governor is one man. His staff is limited.

But the governor's staff didn't consult the persons directed to work on these cuts for the Legislature.

We do not question the quality of the plan other than to point out that it is a band-aid when major surgery is needed.

What we do find disturbing is the fact that Hammond, as he has done so many times before, went off on his own and didn't work with the other arm of the government which is concerned about the people of this state. Hammond has no patent on concern about the constituency. Nor does his staff. Nor does the Legislature.

The governor didn't consult the Legislature on any areas of need before he went ahead with his plan. Instead, he sent the plan for them to "consult" with. Surely everyone recognizes that the more information available about this situation, the better armed the state is to handle it.

So, the governor lost some much-needed information from people who worked very hard.

And the only persons who are really hurt by this little power grab are the citizens of Alaska.