

Adams would like to see debt-free state by 1992

Al Adams would like to see Alaska free of any form of debts by the year 1992.

The chairman of the state House Finance Committee said recently that, although oil revenues are holding steady now, he doesn't trust the state's dependence on oil income and would like to see Alaska become the first state in the union to not owe a red cent to anyone.

Adams is in a position to be more aware of fluctuating oil revenues than many others. As Finance Committee chairman, he dealt with the reality of falling oil revenues and last year was given the tricky job of trying to make those revenues match the amount of money being requested for state programs and building projects.

His job as finance committee chairman established a first for the "freshman" Democrat. With only five months experience in the House, he was named chairman of a committee that usually never sees a new legislator as a member much less as chairman.

Adams said he wants to see the state become debt-free be-

cause he doesn't believe our resource bounty will last. "In the future, we won't have as much money as we have today. We have paid a total debt over the years of about \$1.3 billion. I would like to see the debt retired and if we need to sell bonds for projects we shouldn't. We should pay cash up front.

Adams estimates the state now pays about \$144 million per year in interest on state loans. The state revenue over the past year was \$2.3 billion.

Adams has his record as legislator to base his re-election campaign on although he says he is finding most voter questions center on the capitol move and subsistence repeal proposition - two issues he can't control.

He is strongly opposed to the subsistence repeal proposition for understandable reasons and also opposes the capitol move as too great an expense for a state that still needs water and sewer improvements in all areas.

"I feel the (capitol move) cost factor is too much. There are water, sewer, airport and o-



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ther projects that need doing before that. I still see basic needs everywhere. Anchorage itself still has many needs... it will need about \$100 to \$125 million worth of water delivery improvements in the near future... We can better spend the money to take care of needs," says Adams.

Once subsistence and the capitol move are out of the way, Adams thinks the biggest legislative headache for the coming year will be how the state deals with the problems created by the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling on the permanent fund program.

The court rules that length of state residency can't be determine eligibility for state programs...in that case the Permanent Fund distribution.

However, length of residence is now used as a basis for

other programs such as the longevity bonus program, veterans loans, student loans and old age programs. "This will have a springboard effect on those programs that will have to be addressed," he said.

Adams says the Legislature also will have to deal with resource development in the state, the state take-over of the Alaska Railroad and other transportation matters.

He defends his two-year record from opponent June Nelson's attacks by asking for specifics. Nelson has criticized Adams because she says he hasn't gotten enough programs for the Kotzebue area.

Adams answers that by saying "I think she is making a mistake in that. In the district they have received 90 percent of all programs that were allocated. We can only put programs and projects into the budget. We can't make him (Gov. Hammond) sign the budget.

"We brought a good amount of projects out into the region -- ITV, Learn Alaska network project and others," he said, referring to his efforts and those of Sen. Frank Ferguson who is

running unopposed for Senator this year.

Adams says he has no idea if he will retain his committee chairmanship if he is re-elected. "It always changes each year," he said.

He does not fear a massive power shift to the Anchorage delegation this year despite the fears voiced by many people who have watched Anchorage votes sweep Tom Fink into the Republican nomination for governor.

The Bush lost one district seat in the recent state district reapportionment. That seat went to Anchorage but Adams said the Anchorage delegation will be worked with as it has in the past.

Adams supports Democratic Gubernatorial candidate Bill Sheffield and predicts Fink will have problems if he wins and the subsistence law is repealed and the capitol moved.

Sheffield "understands rural needs," said Adams who doesn't believe that Fink does.

If the subsistence law is repealed, Adams said he will work to bring a solution agreeable to everyone to the House within two years.