

Jobs Symposium Winds Up

ANCHORAGE—The 400-some odd participants in the two-day Jobs Symposium sponsored by the Special Employment Resources and Opportunities Committee wound up their discussions with a wide variety of recommendations for legislation. Their suggestions ranged from things as basic as "simplify the forms" to various state incentive programs for Alaska purchase and Alaska hire.

Symposium participants worked in groups dealing with small business assistance, planning and research, training and employment, funding options, and several other employment-related topics.

Several groups recommended

variations on the "buy Alaska" theme as a means of stimulating Alaskan businesses; some suggested that Alaska owned and based businesses should be awarded contracts if their bids fell within 10 percent of the low bid offered by an Outside contractor, while others recommended tax incentives to industries buying goods and services from Alaskan firms.

Other groups stressed the need to find out exactly why Alaskans are unemployed and who those unemployed Alaskans are, saying that it will be impossible to address the problems and find solutions unless we answer these basic questions first.

Still other groups recommended that the State design various mechanisms for encouraging businesses in Alaska, such as expanded small business loan programs, increased venture capital, and broadened technical assistance programs.

Senator Bill Sumner, chairman of the sponsoring committee, concluded the symposium with an expression of his gratitude to all the participants. "You have worked hard and creatively for the last two days," commented the Senator. "And I guarantee you that you will see results of your efforts: our committee will write and introduce legislation based on the work you have done here."