

State income ranking drops to 7th in U.S.

Alaska's per capita income picture improved in 1988, according to the Alaska Department of Labor, but the state's ranking nationally has dropped from number one among the states to seventh this year.

State labor economist Neal Fried said the per capita income grew by 3.4 percent in 1988 to \$19,079. Fried said Alaska's personal income has risen, but it's been sluggish compared to the other states.

"Alaska's personal income grew 3.4 percent in 1988; nationwide, it grew 7.6 percent that year," he said.

Comparing the state's current income picture with prior years, Fried characterizes the picture as "lackluster." He added that between 1980 and 1985, Alaska's personal income grew 12 percent a year. During the 1970-1980 decade, it grew 14 percent a year.

In the first quarter of 1989, Alaska's personal income picture registered a 7.2 percent increase over first quarter 1988 levels, according to Fried.

Fried also noted that per capita income varied greatly throughout the state. The high was \$26,505 in the Haines Borough, and the low was \$9,075 in the Wade Hampton Census Area of Southwest Alaska.