



# MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



January 4, 2006

No. 06-27

## For Immediate Release

For more information, contact: Margaret Webb, Special Assistant for Communications, Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, 907-465-5673 or 907-321-6071 (Cell), or email: Margaret\_Webb@labor.state.ak.us.

### **Former Speaker Gail Phillips Will Help Alaska Hire Initiative**

(Juneau) – The Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development announced today the appointment of former Speaker of the House of Representatives Gail Phillips to the position of Employer Liaison in its Division of Business Partnerships. Phillips has served as Executive Director of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council since 2003.

In her new role, Phillips will develop and implement an employer outreach plan for the Department's Youth First Initiative. She will work with businesses throughout the state to establish student internships and summer jobs for Alaska's youth. She will also help place teachers in Alaska businesses and job training programs to help them better understand the challenges of today's workplace.

"We are preparing Alaska's young people for good jobs," said Labor Commissioner Greg O'Claray. "Gail will help create and maintain partnerships between educators and training providers, the state, business and industry, and economic development agencies. Her experience and commitment make her uniquely suited to the work ahead."

"Get ready, business community. Gail Phillips will be knocking on your door looking for opportunities for Alaska's young people," Commissioner O'Claray said.

“The assignment Gail is taking on helps to enhance my Alaska Hire campaign by working closely with industry to provide jobs for Alaska’s youth, keeping them and their paychecks here at home,” said Governor Frank H. Murkowski.

The Department’s Youth First Initiative is a major thrust of the Governor’s “Alaska Hire” campaign, preparing Alaska’s youth for Alaskan jobs. The Youth First Initiative will also strengthen career courses in Alaska’s high schools.

“I’ve taught vocational education classes to high school students in Alaska and am highly committed to the mission of preparing our students for good careers,” said Phillips. “I look forward to building the partnerships needed to prepare youth for jobs in Alaska’s high-growth industries, particularly transportation, construction, mining and energy.”

The Employer Liaison position will be located in Anchorage and funded under the \$7 million grant the state recently received as part of the President’s High Growth Job Training Initiative.

-End-