Senior Sales Tax Exemption
Task Force

Minority Report
of Dr. Joe Sonneman

to

Assembly of the
City & Borough of Juneau

April 25, 2006

With Evaluation Chart of Different Options,
Including “Leave It As Is”

and 1-page Addendum
Senior Sales Tax Exemption [SSTX] Task Force

MINORITY REPORT of Dr. Joe Sonneman, Ph.D., J.D., Esq., JCOA Sec’y

RECOMMENDATION: Leave the Senior Sales Tax Exemption alone, as is, unchanged.

PRINCIPLE REASONS:

a. HOT POTATO, NOT WORTH IT: This is a political hot potato, the public wants it left alone, and the money involved, even if the money should double over the next 20-30 years, is just not worth the flack you get.

b. JUNEAU COMMISSION ON AGING: You created the Juneau Commission on Aging in part to coordinate Senior inputs, the JCOA by unanimous resolution petitioned you to leave SSTX alone, so, listen to the group you created to advise you on such subjects, and leave SSTX alone.

c. GROUPS & RESOLUTIONS: Other groups, including the Pioneers of Alaska, Igloo 6; the Greater Juneau Democratic District Committee, and others, also sent you resolutions asking you to leave SSTX alone; still other groups said the same by letter.

d. INDIVIDUALS: Over 800 individual citizens signed a petition asking you to leave SSTX alone, and to abandon the change process. Many of the approximately? 200? who testified said the same.

e. CHANGE & UNFAIRNESS: To change the political rules of the game of life is always unfair to someone, and that unfairness can’t be justified by pointing to ‘greater fairness’ elsewhere.

f. FINANCE DEPT. INCONSISTENT IN ITS PROJECTIONS, WRONG IN ITS THINKING The Finance Department [Mr. Duncan] admits it cannot forecast CBJ income streams out more than about 2-3 years with any degree of certainty, yet tends to rely on 20-year projections of national assumptions about Senior population growth as if State and CBJ actions will have no effect on the number of Seniors in Juneau. That’s wrong thinking. Seniors can choose where to locate or relocate. Arizona and Florida [among others] actively recruit Seniors. Youth already leave Juneau to find jobs elsewhere; if Seniors leave also, who will be left to pay bills?

g. FINANCE DEPT. FIXATION The Finance Department is fixated on the supposed “loss” to CBJ of sales tax revenue via the exemption, and wrongly ignores the substantial contribution to the Juneau economy which Juneau Seniors contribute via their Social Security, Medicaid/Medicare, pension, and health insurance payments.

h. SENIORS ENLARGE THE JUNEAU ECONOMY: Economists know that the size
of an economy limits what is possible, so more is possible in Juneau with Seniors, than without Seniors. The Alaska Commission on Aging heard testimony that Alaska Seniors average about $31,000 in payments/income. CBJ is willing to give tax breaks to some businesses to attract them [helping Home Depot or Wal-Mart with nearby roads, etc.], so CBJ should be willing to continue SSTX as way of ensuring Juneau’s economy is larger—because of more Seniors—than it would be without those Seniors.

i. CBJ NOT SHORT OF MONEY CBJ is not short of money. Assessments rose about 25% this year, and rose so much last year that CBJ actually cut the millage rate, having run a surplus. The City Manager on KINY said he was proposing a ‘status quo’ budget. There is no financial need that justifies ending SSTX.

j. DEMOCRACY, NOT “LEADERSHIP” Kindly do not delude yourselves into thinking that going against the popular will is “leadership.” This is a democracy, not an autocracy. The people want SSTX. The KINY poll showed that over 80% want SSTX preserved as is, unchanged.

k. A GOOD IDEA & A BAD ONE: Several good suggestions came out of the public hearing process—one of the best was, to switch to some kind of photo identification with bar code, so that the card can just be ‘swiped’ at most stores’ scanners, speeding up the exemption process and simplifying things for merchants. No merchants appeared, complaining of difficulties, despite one Task Force member’s strange idea that Seniors took time in line to sign the form. That idea is strange, because people who pay by check or credit card also take extra time and surely there is no proposal to end those practices.

l. MANY SAY: DON’T CHANGE: Many of those who testified at public hearings wanted you to leave SSTX alone.

m. REJECT GRANDFATHERING Some at public hearings said they could accept “grandfather” plans of one kind or another, but Alaska Seniors have already seen “grandfather” plans used against them. The State did so with Longevity Bonus, first grandfathering in some, then, later, ending the Bonus even for the “grandfathers.” The University similarly restricted—though it has not yet ended—the Senior Tuition Waiver program. You yourselves considered and rejected a plan that, like Longevity Bonus, would have grandfathered in some and then ended SSTX entirely. Many Seniors, given these experiences, now realize that “Grandfather” programs have “divide and conquer” effects [and, perhaps, intent?]?

n. FEW RICH SENIORS, MANY POOR ONES Though there are some rich Seniors, few Alaskans Seniors are millionaires. Juneau Commission on Aging far more frequently sees and hears from and knows of impecunious Seniors, especially those in Senior housing, those who are ill [and illness tends to increase with age] and those on fixed incomes [because inflation continues in reality, no matter what the “official” statistics may say].

o. DEPRESSION ERA NOT YET OVER It is not yet time—if ever it will be time—to gradually shift to a needs-based plan. In my experiences with Seniors (at AARP, where I was 2
years VP and 2 years President in Juneau) or at JCOA (about 2 years), or at Pioneers of Alaska (I am now President of Men’s Igloo 6), I’ve learned that for many Seniors, especially people whose formative years were during the Great Depression of the 1930s, “needs based” programs, or programs involving “means testing,” are akin to “welfare,” and many of them worked like heck to stay off of welfare. In the modern age, most people in need are ready to accept government’s helping hand or social safety net, but not so for the Depression-era Seniors. But as time goes on, fewer Depression-era Seniors remain. In perhaps 15-20 years, then it may be time to gradually introduce a needs-based system. Not now.

p. FLAWED HOUSING ARGUMENTS The arguments in favor of change are flawed. The major argument seems to be, ‘it’s just not fair: why should all those rich Seniors get multiple tax breaks when there are poor young people who can’t even afford housing”? First, housing costs are high nationally—not just in Juneau; I know, because I travel and ask questions. High housing costs are a result of low interest rates for too long a time, which induced too many to buy and build houses, followed by Katrina, which kept costs of building materials [and tradespeople] high. The City Manager on KINY mistakenly thinks that the housing market is separable, and that CBJ releasing more land—even at Lena Point—would NOT help the low-income housing market. That, I respectfully suggest, is a mistake in thinking, because, when people in middle-income homes sell and move to high-income homes, that frees up their old homes, and when people in low-income homes move into the now-vacated middle-income homes, that opens up the low-income housing market also. So, insofar as unaffordable housing IS a Juneau-origin problem, CBJ can and should solve that problem DIRECTLY, i.e., by selling off more CBJ land for residential purposes, and NOT by going in a round-about manner, i.e., by cutting or ending the SSTX for Seniors. Second, as already noted, while there are some few rich Seniors, there are many more impoverished Seniors, and a review of Senior statistics would bear this out. Few Seniors have incomes which rise as rapidly as does the cost of living/inflation, so Seniors generally become worse off with time, while young people generally become better off with time, as they win promotions and move to higher-paying jobs as they gain experience or take schooling.

q. NEEDS-BASED? NOT YET!! There are plenty of poor Seniors, so some people—even the Juneau Empire editors—are tempted to call for needs-based programs. I’ve already addressed that. Seniors want Senior benefits to be a reward of being a Senior, not a reward of being poor. But I agree, this attitude is changing—but, has not yet fully changed. Give it time. Second, government programs tend to be too draconian, offering help only to the very poorest of the poor. That’s inappropriate. When, in the next 20 years, you gradually shift to needs-based programs, there should be multiple levels of aid, for multiple different income levels: the lower in poverty, the more aid. What NOT to do is shown by the State’s ‘substitute’ for Longevity Bonus—only one minuscule assistance program for only one very low income/wealth level. One dollar above that and you get nothing? No, that’s wrong. Have a very long sliding scale, so transitions are gentle, not abrupt. But it’s not yet time for any such plan.

r. OTHER VIEWS OF EQUITY/FAIRNESS And of course, when proponents of change speak of ‘fairness’, they NEVER consider fairness to people now 50-65 years old, they NEVER consider fairness to people who may have paid sales taxes for 40 years and built up
Juneau, they NEVER consider fairness to the 7th generation, when THOSE people become Seniors, will THEY be treated as well as those born before 1940 or 1942? So that’s a most inequitable view of “equity,” a most unfair view of ‘fairness’. I like to use the example from “Catch-22” in this regard: there, you could go home after you flew 35 missions, but, by the time you flew 30 missions, they’d raised the number to 50. And so on. Fair? Not hardly. Nor is it fair to people now 50-65, some of whom may have worked on their retirement plans for 20-30 years, to switch the rules. Nor will it ever be fair to switch the rules. That’s more than saying “people just resist change.” That’s saying, it’s UNFAIR to change the rules of life, UNFAIR to break the social ‘contract.’

s. GOVERNMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE GOVERNMENT? Nor is it ‘just’ unfair. Lincoln spoke about “government of the people, by the people and FOR the people.” The reason ending SSTX is being proposed is so as to benefit the CBJ government itself, not, to benefit the People. Be more like Lincoln, and think about doing things for the People, such as, keeping SSTX as is, unchanged. Government will find a way of financing what’s needed, or of cutting back what’s not needed. Many people testified that CBJ never seems to cut, only to add, and of those, many comments mentioned Eaglecrest as something CBJ should sell to private industry.

t. CHAIRMAN’S INCONSISTENCIES The Task Force Chair has inconsistently followed an unsigned and wrong memo. The memo, being unsigned, deserves but little respect. Yet the Task Force Chair insist upon following it … for a while. Now, he wants the Task Force to come up with a single recommendation for the Assembly to accept, when the memo itself says to evaluate ALL options. Evaluation is different from recommendation. The Task Force Chair wrongfully disregards the memo and input from the Committee. I repeated took issue with the memo, because I’d made known to the mayor, who appointed me, that I had my [CJOA] position on this issue, and I was assured I’d not have to give this up. But the memo says, regardless of feelings of Task Force members, they are only to evaluate options. Well, okay, I enclose a table evaluating options … but now the Chair wants recommendations, which the mayor specifically said would not be required. So I will not recommend ANY change, but point out to you the Chair’s inconsistencies.

u. EQUITY IN SPENDING TOO I did also, when speaking with the mayor before accepting appointment, make the point that “equity” must also include equity in SPENDING, not just in taxing. The mayor’s forgotten that part of the conversation; he’s busy, no doubt, but I remember it clearly. Does CBJ spend on the young? Sure, all those schools, school buses, etc. Does CBJ spend as much on Seniors? What was that about fairness and equity again? Hello?

v. POPULATION PREDICTIONS UNRELIABLE: Juneau Commission on Aging member Bob Thibodeau reports an earlier prediction that Juneau would have a great many more Seniors than in fact turned out to be true. Given this false alarm, do not place particularly great credence in the 20-30 year Senior population explosion predictions now flourished either.

w. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS: Many others have raised the issue of administrative
costs to alternative plans. Decision-making, too, has a cost that should be fairly counted. Keeping SSTX as is imposes no additional administrative nor decision-making costs. Other plans do incur one or both of these costs, often, on a repetitive basis.

y. TAX & BENEFIT SHIFTING  Although the Tax Policy Committee struck down several prior exemptions—such as, the exemption for recreational games—the Assembly also last fall granted a really big hike in the Business Personal Property Tax exemption. This dual action of cutting some exemptions but expanding others shows that there is no real need to cut exemptions. Instead, the question or issue is, WHO shall get the benefits and WHO shall be cut. The answer from your own Commission on Aging is, don’t cut the Seniors any more, they’ve already lost out on Longevity Bonus, on Senior Tuition Waiver at UA, and are threatened by national attempts against seniors on Social Security, Medicaid, and a questionable prescription drug ‘benefit’ on Medicare Part D. Leave SSTX alone. Honor Seniors, don’t harm them.

z. END TAX ON FOOD? The unsigned memo mentions the idea of ‘trading’ SSTX for an end to the unfair and regressive tax on food. It’s true that the sales tax on food is regressive, hitting low income people more than high income people, even if the first buy oatmeal and the latter, steak and lobster. Why? Because low income people spend a higher percentage of their income on food than do really high income people. But the interesting thing about this alleged “equity” or fairness issue is, that when the numbers came out from Finance, showing SSTX at about $1.3 million and the sales tax on food at $5-6 million, suddenly we heard no more about ending the sales tax on food.

This fact, that discussion about ending sales tax on food ended when the numbers came out, shows that discussion about SSTX is not about “fairness” and equity, but about trying to get more money for CBJ government.

It’s MONEY, pure and simple, and money for government as government, not money for People.

Well this is an old idea, that bureaucracies exist to perpetuate themselves, but rarely is this phenomena seen in so pure a form as here.

Reject that idea. Reject the whole idea of ending SSTX, but instead, continue SSTX as is, unchanged. Remember point a: the money gained is not worth the political heat incurred.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Sonneman, Member JCOA and SSTX Task Force

Note: I do not mean here to represent the views of any group of which I may or may not be a member, except that I accurately report that some groups (of which I may be a member) did pass resolutions supporting the continuation of SSTX as is, unchanged.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions/Factors</th>
<th>Options:</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>Grandfather 1/1/07</th>
<th>Rebate Apply</th>
<th>Need? Low-Inc</th>
<th>Rebate Low-Inc</th>
<th>Paymnt Refund</th>
<th>Grandf &gt;= 75</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the plan fair to now 75+ year olds? ['Fair' = equal to present benefit]</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the plan fair to those now 65+ - 75? ['Fair' = equal to present benefit]</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<td>Y?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the plan fair to 50-65 year olds, when they turn 65? ['Fair' = same treatment as those now over 65?]</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the plan fair to 20-30 year olds, when they turn 65?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>Is the plan fair to the 7th generation, when they turn 65?</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the plan equal to all +65 Seniors, NOT dividing them by age, need, year of birth, or otherwise?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N?</td>
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<td>N?</td>
<td>Z</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the plan reward being a Senior (i.e., not rewarding need, years of tax paying etc)?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>N?</td>
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<td>Does the plan continue to go forward without wasting everyone's time by requiring repeated Assembly votes?</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N?</td>
<td>N?</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Y?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the plan keep pace with inflation, so Seniors on fixed incomes aren't hurt progressively, over time?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N?</td>
<td>N?</td>
<td>N?</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Y?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the plan independent of numbers of Seniors, so Seniors are not hurt as the number of Seniors changes?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y?</td>
<td>Y?</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the plan benefit the People, as in &quot;for the people&quot;, regardless of the effect on CBJ government?</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
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<td>Does the plan keep Seniors unified, avoiding &quot;I've got mine&quot; syndrome?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the plan keep benefits the same or under the present plan?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>Z</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the plan assure Seniors that their benefits continue, without repeated Assembly votes?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Z</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the benefit NOT &quot;welfare&quot;?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
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ADDENDUM to Minority Report of Joe Sonneman, Senior Sales Tax Exemption Task Force
SSTX = Senior Sales Tax Exemption [i.e., the Exemption, not the Task Force!]

a. Probable Public Process Problems

1. LATE SUBMITTED IDEA The Task Force at my suggestion invited the public to submit new ideas on ending the Senior Sales Tax Exemption [SSTX]. The chair rightly limited the time for new ideas. The time for publicly-submitted new ideas having ended, the Task Force majority then arrived at five (5) ideas [containing no idea from Commission on Aging members]. The Task Force then put the five (5) ideas out for public hearings. I attended the first such hearing and listened to the second by phone. The public commented on the forms the Task Force majority composed, on the five (5) ideas. After two or more public hearings, and perhaps after all the public hearings, the Task Force majority [or chair?] put together a sixth (6th) concept, of grandfathering some people while raising the eligibility age to 75. The time for new ideas having closed, this sixth concept should not have been allowed: it was LATE.

2. AGREED FACTS OR NOT? The Task Force agreed that the number of seniors is likely to rise. However, we did not specify for how long. My understanding is, the ‘baby boom’ is likely to diminish in about 20 years. Further, the age 75 option may be predicated on an allegation which the Task Force has yet to prove. In my experience with Seniors, people feel aging effects more after age 75, but I know no statistics proving that people over 75 have greater financial needs. Instead, the Alaska Commission on Aging shows that people tend to stop driving, especially after age 90, so car ownership costs go away. The Juneau Commission on Aging meets many needy Seniors under 75, as well as some over 75. Not surprisingly, we see fewer needy Seniors over 75 because there are fewer Seniors over 75.

3. INADEQUATE NOTICE & COMMENT OPPORTUNITY: The member of the public who offered the general idea [at a time AFTER the time for the close of new ideas from the public] now—I am told–disavows the version which the Task Force majority [or chair] sets out as its draft recommendation. More importantly, members of the public who attended the first two public hearings had NO opportunity to comment on an idea which did not then even exist. A sixth idea being wrongly present-ed late, the public hearings must begin all over.

b. Additional Comments on Housing Costs and Solutions

Other factors which may account for high housing costs (besides too low interest rates for too long and hurricanes driving up materials costs because of re-building efforts) include the financing of two wars (remember Afghanistan) with a tax CUT. As a result, gold—at about $360 an ounce three years ago, this last week hit $630 an ounce. Gold remaining the same, the dollar’s value shrank from 1/360th ounce of gold to 1/630th ounce of the same gold.

Among possible solutions for people needing affordable housing, besides CBJ releasing more CBJ land in any area for any type of housing, would be specific loan or loan guarantee programs, perhaps financed with bonds. Anyway, Juneau Seniors didn’t cause this situation.

c. Other Observations and Exemptions, etc.

HARMFUL TO COMMUNITY SPIRIT Many Seniors note how much volunteer time Seniors put into Juneau. The mayor discounted all that, saying that non-Seniors also put in volunteer time. Last Fall, people suggested ending the lobbyist exemption and questioned the business personal property (inventory) increases. The cruise passenger landing fee, stuck at $5 each for years, is surely overdue for an increase, even if receipts must go back primarily to help that industry—can we expand dual use?. Many say Juneau spends much on sports for non-Seniors; we spend lots on schools for youth; why cut Seniors?

This whole discussion is unfortunate to Juneau as a community, where community means “common unity”. Attacks on the Senior Sales Tax Exemption divide Juneau into different generational groups, and that harms Juneau’s common unity, or community. Too bad. This discussion hurts that community spirit. So, stop this effort to end SSTX. If necessary, let the Finance Director go, for having promoted this disharmonious discussion and for having attacked Seniors this year and last (bus passes).

We should help, not hurt, each other.

–Joe Sonneman
FACTS and FACTS TO FIND OUT
--Joe Sonneman, 2/21/06

A. Demographic trends usually CHANGE over time.

B. Presently the number of Seniors in Juneau is increasing. [but the increase may slow in 20 years]

C. The increase in Seniors in Juneau is NOT as much as previously forecast [Bob Thibodeau claims an earlier study forecast 15% Seniors here, which he notes is still NOT true].

D. CBJ overall total sales tax revenues increased, 1999-2004, assuming constant 5% rate
   D1. CBJ total sales tax revenues were: 1999 $26.85_M 2000 $26.65_M
        2001 $27.55_M 2002 $27.5_M 2003 $29.45_M 2004 $30.6_M
   D1. Total INCREASE in sales tax receipts over the period: 13.966%, or, nearly 14%
   [Source: CBJ Sales Tax Office figures of 2/17/06, Gross - Exemption = Net x 5% = Tax]

   E1. CBJ millage rate: 2004 _______ 2005 _______ 2006 _______

F. Alaska Seniors receive in income and medical payments approximately $31,000 average each [Source: Expected ISER Report of 2006, preliminary report per AK Comm’n on Aging]

G. Juneau has approximately 2200 to 2400 Seniors (over 65). [Various sources]

H. Taking “F” and “G”, Juneau Seniors contribute at least $68,200,000 to the Juneau economy. ($31,000 x 2200)

I. There is a “multiplier effect” to new money, as that money is re-spent and re-spent again.

J. The “multiplier” in Alaska is often thought to be a factor of six (6).

K. Taking H and J, the real multiplied effect of Senior spending and care in Juneau is 6 x $68.2 million, or about $409,00,000.

L. Seniors have the ability to move to–or out of–Juneau.

M. Many states and cities—at least Arizona and Florida, but maybe more–try to attract Seniors. [Source: Personally know AZ & FL; AK Commn on Aging says, perhaps 20+ others].

N. Seniors and the Senior care business is in Alaska worth about $1 billion ($1,000,000,000). [Source: Expected ISER Report of 2006, preliminary report per AK Comm’n on Aging]
   N1. “Alaska Seniors are one of the largest sources of money, including their retirement incomes and medical payments, flowing into the states.” [Source: Empire, Nov. 18, p.1, citing McDowell study].

O. Seniors and the Senior care business is clean, green, and year-round. [Source: AK Cmn Ag’g]

P. Some Seniors moved out of Juneau after the State ended Longevity Bonus payments. [Source: Lorilyn Swanson, Fireweed Place manager]
Q. Taking J and F, when one Senior leaves Juneau, the Juneau economy shrinks by about $31,000 x 6, or $186,000.

R. Taking Q, when 5.4 Seniors leave Juneau, the Juneau economy will shrink by about 5.4 x $186,000, or $1,000,000.

S. The number and type of businesses that an economy can support is affected and indeed often determined by the size of the market.

T. Taking A and B together, the increase of Seniors in Juneau is unlikely to continue forever.

U. Taking B and D together, over the 1999-2004 period, CBJ sales tax revenues continued to increase by 14% even though the number of Seniors in Juneau increased during that period.

V. Most Juneau Seniors do not want any change in the Senior Sales Tax Exemption (SSTX).
   [Source: Sonneman–over 95% of Seniors at meetings sign petition for no change].

W. Over 550 Juneau Seniors have already signed petitions opposing any change to SSTX.
   [Source: Lorilyn Swanson]

X. Juneau’s sales tax on food is a regressive tax, hurting the poor more than the rich.
   [Source: many sources label sales taxes on food ‘regressive’, affecting poor most].

Y. “Exchanging” the sales tax on food for ending SSTX will probably hurt CBJ finances substantially, because taxes on food sales to 33,000 people are a much bigger number than taxes on total sales to 2,200 Seniors.

   Y1. What IS the 2004 total receipt from the CBJ sales tax on food? $5-6 milln
   Y2. What IS the 2004 total exemption from CBJ sales taxes by Seniors? $1.3 milln

Z. Many human societies honor Seniors and Elders.

AA. Honoring Seniors and Elders is a widely-practised human custom that continues every year, year after year.

AB. A rebate would be subject to the Assembly’s regular budget approval or not, each budget cycle.

AC. Taking AA and AB together, a rebate subject to Assembly approval or not each budget cycle is fundamentally inconsistent with the custom of honoring Seniors and Elders year after year, every year.

AD. The Juneau Empire November 18, 2005, p.1, reports that 21% of Seniors “can’t afford to pay for their basic needs” and “more than half of Alaska’s older citizens live near poverty.”

AE. Taking I and J, if Seniors are exempt, but non-Seniors must pay, CBJ 5% sales tax, then, of the 6 times magnitude Senior money is spent and re-spent, CBJ probably taxes 5 of those 6 times

AF. Many Seniors drive, but less so as they age, especially after 90. [Source: AK Comm’n on Aging survey found 92% of under 50s drove, 90% of 50s, 87% of 60s, 85% of 70-year olds, 74% of 80s, 38% of 90s.].

AG. Most Seniors have incomes under $4,000 a month; many have incomes lower than that [Same survey]