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Story last updated at 2:42 p.m. Thursday, January 30, 2003

Opposition to oil lease sales unanimous

by **Chris Bernard**
Staff Writer

The Homer City Council unanimously adopted a resolution Monday asking the federal govern oppose oil and gas lease sales in lower Cook Inlet until additional safeguards are in place.

The resolution, sponsored by Councilman Mike Yourkowski, is in line with the majority of the 1 given by Homer residents at a public hearing last week. (See related story, Page 1.)

"Only three testified for it," Yourkowski said. "Two of them were from the Anchor Point Chamk Commerce, believing the lease sale would bring more jobs, though the (Environmental Impac Statement) said otherwise."

Councilman John Fenske and Mayor Jack Cushing also attended the hearing.

"I want to listen anytime you get 250 citizens in a room," Cushing said. "Quite a few more pec to testify but couldn't take the late hour."

Fenske said he's worked in the oil industry, and he doesn't feel that oil workers "disregard the environment."

"I don't think this is inherently evil," he said. "We'd all be in a very tight fix if it weren't for the o

"But we find this country so compelling, we're willing to forsake income to live here," he said, he would like to see that message passed on to the oil companies.

"This is just an awfully beautiful place," he said. "If you put something in the environment that natural, it really sticks out."

Councilman Rick Ladd said that though he's not necessarily in favor of drilling in Cook Inlet, h sensitive to the fact that the oil has to come from somewhere.

"It's always somebody else's backyard," he said. However, Ladd said he could support the re

Councilwoman Rose Beck said the risk posed by drilling in the inlet was not worth the potenti

"I don't think we can afford to take a risk like this because it might create some jobs," she saic

Discussion among the council members lasted about 15 minutes. Ray Kranich came closest t supporting the leases.

"I drove down here in a car tonight," he said. "I'm going to keep on driving that sucker until the of crude comes out of the ground. I'm not going to wear my organic sandals very far."

Kranich said that every year the oil companies develop better technologies for safe drilling, but he seconded the motion to adopt the resolution.

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