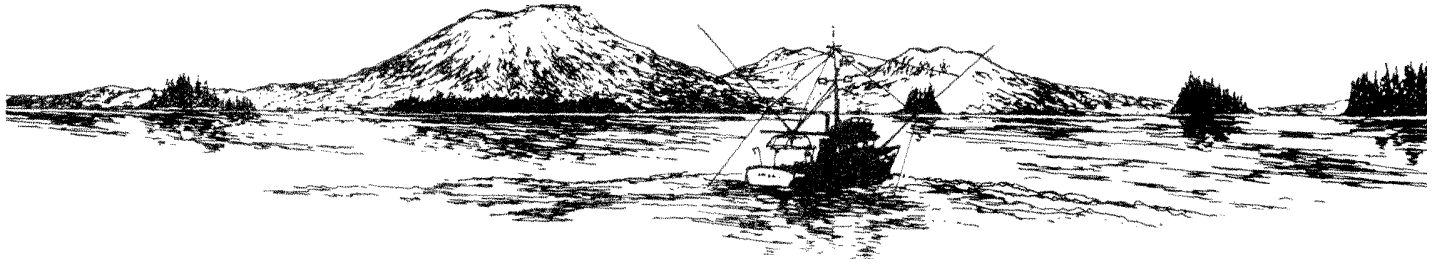


SITKA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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April 1, 2011

Representative Peggy Wilson
State Capitol Room 408
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Representative Wilson,

The Sitka School District has actively worked to support reauthorization of the federal Secure Rural Schools and Communities Act (SRSCA) of 2000. To that end, the Sitka School District is a member of the National Forest Counties and Schools Coalition (NFCSC), and I, Lon Garrison am a member of their Board of Directors representing the Alaskan education sector. We as a local school board, feel it is imperative that the US Congress and the President abide by the compact forged in 1908 when the federal government acquired lands for public use and committed 25% of the revenue from those lands to support local communities and schools.

Sitka, along with most Southeast communities resides in the heart of the largest national forest in the nation, the Tongass National Forest, and yet does not receive any of the 25% revenue from these public lands because resource development, especially timber, is no longer viable. Without the ability to develop, extract and sell these resources, communities such as Sitka must rely on the federal government to provide an alternate source of revenue to support our local infrastructure and schools. Thus Secure Rural Schools funding is imperative to us.

Working with the NFCSC board and their associated Partnership for Rural America campaign, have been able to get the Obama administration to budget for a five year reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Act, with the 2012 year funded at \$328 million and ramping down to zero over five years. While not funded at the level we had hoped, this is a start. Unfortunately, Title I funds for schools and roads declines quickly while money for Title II (resource development funds) increases. The following table provides an overview of what this means to both the Sitka School District and the state as a whole:

"Educating Today's Children to Become Tomorrow's Leaders"

2012 SRSCA Reauthorization in the President's Budget

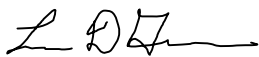
Year	Sitka Total	Title I (schools & Roads)	Title II (USFS RAC projects)	Sitka Schools Dist. Title I share	Statewide Total
2012	\$1,361,227	\$944,525	\$416,702.10	\$472,262	\$17,656,631.09
2013	\$1,266,774	\$850,072	\$416,702.10	\$425,036	\$16,431,476.72
2014	\$1,054,256	\$637,554	\$416,702.10	\$318,777	\$13,674,885.62
2015	\$894,868	\$478,166	\$416,702.10	\$239,083	\$11,607,436.79
2016	\$775,326	\$358,624	\$416,702.10	\$179,312	\$10,056,849.18
totals	\$5,352,452	\$3,268,941	\$2,083,511	\$1,634,471	\$69,427,279

As you can see, SRSCA provides significant funds for education and infrastructure to our community that we would otherwise not receive. For the State of Alaska, over a 5 year period this will mean over \$69 million to forested communities. The Sitka School Board has expended significant funds, time and effort on our own behalf and on behalf of all forested communities in this state to persuade the federal government to live up to the compact of 1908.

As a board, we urge legislative support for passage of House Joint Resolution No. 24 urging the US Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Act of 2000. The time is of the essence as the House of Representatives will be putting forth their FY2012 budget on April 5, 2011. We hopefully will be part of that budget, but we truly need the support of everyone to make it happen.

We thank you for your efforts to raise the awareness of this issue and to give us a chance to educate our state and local governments. This is important funding that for some communities is critically important.

With warm regards,



Lon D. Garrison
President, Sitka School Board

"Educating Today's Children to Become Tomorrow's Leaders"