

SITKA LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME:

Tim J Fulton

REPRESENTING:

SITKA School Board.

BILL#/ SUBJECT:

SDR 9

COMMITTEE &

HEARING DATE:

Senate Finance. 2-03-2014
(FAX 465-3476)

I am writing to state my objection to SDR 9.
As a long-time Alaskan and a member of the Sitka School
Board, I do not see evidence that using public funds for
private education will benefit all our students' education. What
I do see is that it may help a select few students while
potentially profiting private education enterprises.

Legislators argue that Alaskan graduation rates
need to improve and that our test scores are too low.
There is no evidence that the result of this bill will be
improvements in those areas. In Sitka, there is a huge
achievement gap between those who qualify as low income
and those who do not. Of the low income group, 65% of
those are Alaska Native students. How does this bill
benefit them? How does this bill address the inequality gap
in a meaningful, practical way? In fact if legislators
do their research, they will find many examples of
voucher programs instituted elsewhere merely benefiting
a very small proportion of students.

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While the bill comes with a possible "incentive"
increasing the BSA funding to Sitka, I cannot support
it in good conscience. All students throughout this
state deserve the same opportunities for education,
but that is not what this bill provides. It is not going
to help students who are struggling, but it will benefit
those who are already likely to graduate prepared
for career or college.

I strongly encourage you to think about Alaska's
children, all of them and find a valid means of helping
them be successful. I believe the best use of public
funds is the improvement of public schools, not the
funding of private education.

Thank you for your service.

