

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 4:15 PM  
**To:** Ernest Prax  
**Subject:** FW: HJR 1

FYI\*j

**From:** Gayle Trivette [<mailto:gayletriv@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 3:21 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** HJR 1

Thank you for your service to our state. I am opposed to HJR1 for the following reasons:

**Public Education is a Cornerstone of Democracy.**

- \*Public schools are governed by locally elected school boards. Individual schools have parent/teacher organizations open to All parents and school staff.
- \*Children from all backgrounds come together to learn the skills need to thrive in our diverse country and world, including how to work in groups, problem-solve and resolve conflicts with people whose life experience maybe very different from their own.
- \*Public Schools are financially and academically accountable to the governing bodies that finance them.
- \*Public Schools are mandated to provide appropriate education for All Children regardless of their needs or abilities.
- \*The Alaska Constitution mandates that the state of Alaska provide funding for all children, recognizing the responsibility of each adult generation to provide education for every member of future generations.

**Private Education offers a FALSE CHOICE.**

- \*Private schools are free to choose their own governing body whether it's an individual, sectarian group, or corporate interest.
- \*Private schools are free to choose which students they will accept or reject making it very unlikely the students will have the opportunity to work, learn and play with the diversity of people they will engage with as adults and that some parents and children will NOT have access to the school they would choose.
- \*There is not a mechanism designed to hold private schools financially and academically accountable. Developing one would be costly.

**\*Under funding public education and then accusing it of under performing is disingenuous.**

- \*Despite several years of declining real dollars in funding public education, our public schools are striving valiantly and making progress toward the goal of success for every student. With adequate funding that progress would be faster, benefiting our state economically and socially.

**I urge you to vote NO on JHR 1, support inflation proof funding for PUBLIC Education, and move on to other important state business.**

**Thank you for your public service to all Alaskans.**

Gayle Trivette  
Juneau, AK

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 4:15 PM  
**To:** Ernest Prax  
**Subject:** FW: HJR1

FYI\*j

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**From:** thetaylors [<mailto:thetaylors@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 3:41 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** HJR1

Representative Keller,

I am a concerned parent who lives in Representative Le Doux's district. I support this resolution because I believe we need to eliminate the "Blaine" language in our constitution. Please vote in favor of HJR1 and give Alaskans the opportunity to vote on this issue.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie Taylor  
1001 Bentree Circle  
Anchorage, AK 99504  
907-333-1297



This email is free from viruses and malware because avast! Antivirus protection is active.

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 3:00 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: Please, use my email as testimony in the hearing of HJR1

FYI\*J

**From:** John & Evie [<mailto:jamstreit2007@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 5:21 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** Please, use my email as testimony in the hearing of HJR1

Dear Rep. Keller,

I am in favor of passing SJR9/HJR1 so that we the people can vote--to uphold what I believe was the original intent of our constitution. Please pass SJR9/HJR1 so that the people can vote to uphold the original intent of our constitution. There are many exciting possibilities for innovation in education. The founders of our state recognized that future generations needed the flexibility to respond to these possibilities in a way that would benefit all students. Our Alaska Supreme Court has taken away this flexibility. SJR9/HJR1 would restore it. Please let the people vote on this amendment.

Sincerely,  
Eva Streit  
Anchorage, AK

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 3:00 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: money for education

FYI\*j

**From:** kimbrough mauney [<mailto:kimbroughred@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 12:02 AM  
**To:** Rep. Bob Lynn  
**Subject:** money for education

Thank you all for your hard work in Juneau! I appreciate your thoughtful decision making when it comes to spending money on education. I am currently getting my State Teaching Certification in the MatSu Borough District, and I have hopes to someday have a hand in creating more charter school options, especially for high schoolers. I am also a spiritual person who thinks it is great for people to practice religion of whatever choosing. Thanks to Rep. Feige's newsletter, I learned that BSA has gone up significantly over the past few years. This is a good thing; I prefer to see that number rise than what we spend on military operations. I am NOT ok with spending state money on education that is sponsored by or linked to religious organizations. Please continue to keep State and Religion separate! As for private schools, they too should fund themselves.

The public system in our state works, thanks in part because it includes Charter schools and 'school within a school'. These alternative, yet still public/state funded, learning environments are necessary part of the public system, meeting the needs of various groups, and I'm very thankful that our state supports them.

Please continue to support public schools, including charters, with state funding. Again, religious and private schools know what they got into when they started- grant writing galore :) !

~Kimbrough Mauney, Anchorage and Wasilla, AK

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:58 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: State of the State Speech

FYI\*j

**From:** Pastor Guenther [<mailto:pastorguenther@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 6:16 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** Fwd: State of the State Speech

Representative Keller,

I just wanted to send you a quick email to let you know that I believe that school choice is an issue that is crucial to the future of our educational system, our children, and our state. It's an issue I believe in so strongly that I'll back it with my vote and I know that the same is true of many of the members of our church. I'm not sure where you stand on the issue, but I'm convinced that creating a "free market" in education will improve the system all around and will have a rich payoff in a few short decades. Though I'm a pastor, I don't even say this from a religious perspective, but believe that competition among the schools will make for a better education all around. Right now I believe the government has a sort of monopoly on education. Competition will make the public schools better, provide for better jobs, and a better citizenry. I'm thoroughly convinced that it will create more jobs, boost the economy, and keep kids off the streets and out of trouble. School choice will only make the great state of Alaska better. Please, let me know where you stand on this crucial issue and do all you can to help get rid of the Blaine amendment and create a free market in education. Thank you for your time! Your service to our state is greatly appreciated no matter which side you fall on! I will be praying for you and for all the important work you do.

Sincerely,  
Pastor Rob Guenther

**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
47585 Ciechanski Road, Kenai, AK 99611  
[www.GraceLutheranKenai.com](http://www.GraceLutheranKenai.com)  
[pastorguenther@gmail.com](mailto:pastorguenther@gmail.com)  
(907) 690-1660

Read sermons online: [www.GraceLutheranKenai.com/Sermons](http://www.GraceLutheranKenai.com/Sermons)  
Listen to sermons online [www.GraceLutheranKenai.com/Podcast](http://www.GraceLutheranKenai.com/Podcast)  
Watch services online [www.GraceLutheranKenai.com/Webcast](http://www.GraceLutheranKenai.com/Webcast)

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:58 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: HJR1

FYI\*J

**From:** John Fleming [<mailto:akflemings@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 6:51 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** HJR1

Dear Representative Keller,

I have been in Anchorage since 1963 and even taught in Anchorage public schools. I support HJR 1 because I believe that parents should determine where their children should be educated. I support the proposed amendment to the state constitution which would make this freedom of education possible. I urge to pass this resolution out of your Judiciary Committee. John & Diane Fleming, 4701 Cambridge way, Anchorage, AK 99503 907-230-7783

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 3:02 PM  
**To:** Ernest Prax  
**Subject:** FW: Please vote YES on HJR1

FYI\*]

**From:** [highflytim@gmail.com](mailto:highflytim@gmail.com) [mailto:[highflytim@gmail.com](mailto:highflytim@gmail.com)] **On Behalf Of** Robert Timmins  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 3:46 PM  
**Subject:** Please vote YES on HJR1

Dear Representative,

As a parent of 4 ASD school students we are DESPERATE for choice outside of the only public school district we have. PLEASE allow us to vote and let us take control of our destiny and the opportunities for our students! We once had this choice, but due to the BLAINE amendment and judicial activism, choice was eliminated to the detriment of all concerned.

As **originally written** and ratified by Alaska voters, our state constitution allows the Legislature to use public funds to benefit students even when this indirectly benefits private or religious schools. The minutes of the Constitutional Convention show that the delegates voted to uphold this type of funding by an almost two to one margin. Yet the Alaska Supreme Court has consistently ruled that our constitution forbids this kind of indirect funding. SJR9/HJR1 would remove an unnecessary clause in our constitution that has been misinterpreted by the courts. Please pass SJR9/HJR1 so that the **people can vote** to uphold the original intent of our constitution.

There are many exciting possibilities for **innovation in education**. The founders of our state recognized that future generations needed the flexibility to respond to these possibilities in a way that **would benefit all students**. Our Alaska Supreme Court has taken away this flexibility. **SJR9/ HJR1 would restore it**. Please **let the people vote** on this amendment.

Thank you for doing the right thing for our kids and families!!

Sincerely,

Robert Timmins

District 14 Chairman ARP, Eagle River, AK

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"Our *Constitution* was made only for a *moral and religious people*. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." - *John Adams*

"[I hope] to see the time when education, and by its means, morality, sobriety, enterprise and industry, shall become much more general than at present." A. Lincoln

"So that the record of history is absolutely crystal clear that there is no alternative way, so far discovered, of **improving the lot of the ordinary people** that can hold a candle to the productive activities that are unleashed by a **free enterprise** system." Milton Friedman



## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 3:02 PM  
**To:** Ernest Prax  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Constitutional Amendment

FYI\*]

**From:** Barbara Thurston [mailto:barbara@thurstons.us]

**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 12:11 PM

**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Andy Josephson; Rep. Benjamin Nageak; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Bob Herron; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Charisse Millett; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Dan Saddler; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Doug Isaacson; Rep. Eric Feige; Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Harriet Drummond; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Kurt Olson; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Lora Reinbold; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Max Gruenberg; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Pete Higgins; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Shelley Hughes; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Wes Keller

**Subject:** Proposed Constitutional Amendment

To members of the Alaska House of Representatives:

I am writing to express my concern about SJR9 and HJR1, the proposals to amend the Constitution to allow for public money to go to private, parochial, or for-profit schools.

While the concept of "allowing parents to choose their children's school" sounds appealing, I fear that such a move would significantly harm Alaska's ability to develop the well-educated workforce that we need to be competitive in the 21st century.

Public schools in Alaska are subject to many requirements, and have extremely high expectations put on them. Public schools are subject to a number of state and federal requirements, including special education rules, teacher tenure and retirement benefit laws, requirements that teachers be "highly qualified", and testing requirements, all of which were put in place in an attempt to make sure that schools were accountable to the public for the education provided to children. Public schools are also required to provide an education for every child in the community who attends that school, regardless of that child's learning abilities, behavior issues, or home life.

Private schools are not currently subject to any of these requirements. They can accept or deny admission to any child they wish, and select teachers based on any criteria they choose. This often allows them to appear to be more "successful" than public schools simply because of the students they enroll - it's not hard to have a high graduation rate if you only enroll academically strong and motivated students, whose families are heavily involved in their education.

I think it's likely that if SJR9 or HJR1 passes, and a bill is proposed to allow funding for private schools, that an attempt will be made to discourage schools receiving public funds from discriminating against students with particular needs. I don't, however, believe it's realistic to expect that this will result in private schools actually having an enrolled population similar to the neighborhood public schools. The child with special needs who moves mid-year from a village into an urban area because of a family crisis is unlikely to be welcomed into the local private school. The same is true for a child who is emotionally disturbed, or whose parents work odd hours and aren't able to provide transportation to a school across

town, or the student who has limited proficiency in English.

Simply put, some students are more expensive to educate than others. One can't assume that the funding for a local school district can be allocated evenly among the students, and "travel" with the student to whatever school that student attends. In addition to the costs of helping students with special needs or circumstances, there are overhead costs for a local school district (building maintenance, etc) that do not decrease with a modest decrease in enrollment.

Allowing funding to "travel" with a student would undoubtedly be a benefit for private schools and the students currently attending them, and would likely spur the creation of for-profit schools specializing in educating lower-cost students. It would also, however, make it much more difficult for our local public school districts to provide an appropriate education for all students, including those whose situation makes them more expensive to educate, or whose families are unable to navigate the new choices that might be available.

It's important to remember that Alaska already offers a significant amount of choice within our public schools. The larger populated areas (and some smaller ones) offer multiple choices of Charter Schools, all of which provide choices to families while maintaining the high expectations and oversight that apply to all public schools.

A Constitutional change like this would also be inconsistent with other services provided in Alaska. There are a number of situations in which the state or local government provides a service. While citizens may take advantage of that service or not, they are not given the option of taking their "share" of the cost of that service and using it to pay for a private alternative. For example, while many businesses choose to hire security guards, we don't let them use their "share" of the funding that would otherwise go to the local police department or state troopers to help pay for those guards. People who are frustrated with the quality of the snow plowing on their road and choose to plow it themselves don't get a refund of their "share" of the road maintenance funds. Similarly, public schools are a service that is provided by the state and local government to the people of Alaska. Any child in Alaska may attend the public schools and use that service, but they should not be entitled to a "share" of the neighborhood public school's cost to use to pay for a private education.

A constitutional change of this magnitude is significant, and should not be approved without due consideration. I have heard several legislators say things like "I don't personally support it, but I do think that people should have the right to vote on this". Alaska was designed as a representative democracy for a reason - so that legislators, who have spent the time researching an issue can use their best judgement when placing their vote. This issue is too important to bypass the judgement of individual legislators and turn into a contest to see which "side" can do a better job of getting voters to the polls.

I urge you to vote "no" on SJR9 and/or HJR1 when it appears before you.

Thank you.

Barbara Thurston  
Juneau, AK  
(907) 789-2991

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Jim Pound  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:57 PM  
**To:** Ernest Prax  
**Subject:** FW: Regarding HJR1

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:57 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: Regarding HJR1

FYI\*j

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Richard Steele [<mailto:steeler@me.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 7:37 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** Regarding HJR1

Dear Representative Keller,

I am upset and dismayed by HJR1. I am opposed to using public money for private and parochial schools. My children graduated from public schools and are now in the University of Alaska. Last year I visited Egypt and saw the difficulties that occur when government mixes with religion. No matter what you say, this is what is being put forth for fast tracking. I do not want to see public schools hurt even further than the legislature's years of flat funding have created.

Richard A. Steele  
1507 2nd St.  
Douglas, Alaska 99824

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:56 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: HJR1 Testimony

FYI\*j

**From:** Bill Hutchison [<mailto:billhutchison3@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 8:52 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** HJR1 Testimony

Dear Rep. Keller,  
I would like to testify as below, in **favor** of  
**HJR1**.

I believe that it is very simple, that education funding should go with and to the student, not any institution. Depending on where the parents and student want the student to attend, the funds should be disbursed monthly for home schooled or charter schooled students, or annually if the student will be attending public school. A public school choice should limit the ability of the student to choose a different institution during the school year. Home school, or charter school will enable the student to change schools at an end of month boundary, with the new choice determining where remaining payments or balance of funds go.

I believe it is the student and the student's parents who are being, or should be the ones funded until graduation from 12th grade. If that had been available to my wife and I, and our kids, my wife would have continued to home school

our son and daughter. It is a choice that many additional parents will probably make after passing HJR1.

Sincerely,  
William (Bill) H. Hutchison III  
Anchorage 99504  
907-337-6001

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Politically Correct is Objectively Wrong.  
substitute Insane for Objectively Wrong.  
Gun Control: Best achieved using both hands.  
Income Inequality? I'll compete for that!

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:55 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: HJR1

FYI\*j

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Carolyn Vermette [<mailto:cinvermette@me.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 9:10 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** HJR1

Dear Representative Keller:

I am writing to respectfully request that you submit my email to be used as testimony to support HJR1 in order to allow parents the opportunity to choose for their children the best education possible. Our children our of future!

I have two children currently attending Grace Lutheran School in Kenai, AK. We are extremely pleased with the Christ-centered education and loving instruction that my sons are receiving at the school, which would not be possible at their local public school. While I grew up in a family of public school teachers and have nothing but respect and admiration for teachers, both public and private, my husband and I felt that our sons would thrive in a private religious school setting. I feel that all parents should have the opportunity to decide the best available school for their child regardless of race, economic status or place of residency.

In short, please support the HJR1 constitutional amendments and give the voters the voice to vote on School Choice. Thank you for your time and efforts.

Regards,  
Carolyn Vermette

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:55 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: Please support SJR9

FYI\*j

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [akhotrod6874@yahoo.com](mailto:akhotrod6874@yahoo.com) [<mailto:akhotrod6874@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 10:07 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** Please support SJR9

James Armstrong  
P. O. Box 445  
Willow, AK 99688

February 18, 2014

The Honorable Wes Keller  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Keller,

I'm writing to urge you to vote for HJR 1, the referendum which gives us Alaskans the right to vote to fix our Constitution. We need to get rid of the flawed Blaine Amendment, which prevents Alaska from implementing parental choice and educational freedom if we so choose.

Studies on School Choice prove that competition leads to improved public schools, millions in taxpayer savings, and more freedom for parents to put their children in the school which is best suited to their child's needs.

But, regardless of how you might feel about Parental Choice, I'm asking you to vote FOR HJR1. Joint Resolution 1 merely gives me and my fellow Alaskans our right to vote to get rid of the flawed Blaine Amendment. Please don't deny us our right to vote on this important issue.

Sincerely,  
James Armstrong

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:52 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: SJR9/HJR1

FYI\*j

**From:** Roy N Syren Jr [<mailto:rjr@pmcmalaska.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 9:29 AM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** SJR9/HJR1

Rep. Wes Keller,

I'm writing in support of SJR9/HJR1. The state constitution, as originally written, allows the legislature to use public funds to benefit students even when this indirectly benefits private or religious schools. SJR9/HJR1 puts the legislature back in control of lawmaking on the issue of education and removes the State Supreme courts overriding of the legislature. Please let the people vote on SJR9/HJR1.

Sincerely Yours

Roy N. Syren Jr.

**\*\*\*Notice: Roy Jr. has changed his email address. Please use [rjr@pmcmalaska.com](mailto:rjr@pmcmalaska.com). Delete other email addresses.**

Roy Syren Jr.



8507 LaViento Drive, Anchorage, Alaska, 99515  
Phone: (907) 349-2107 Fax: (907) 349-2787  
website: [www.pmcmalaska.com](http://www.pmcmalaska.com)



**Ernest Prax**

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:51 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: HJR1 Testimony

FYI\*J

**From:** Tony Lewkowski [<mailto:tlewkowski@qci.net>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 8:09 AM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** HJR1 Testimony

Dear Representative Keller,

I and my family enthusiastically support allowing the people to vote on this important issue.

Powerful forces always stand in the way of reform; why be afraid of debate on this issue?

Respectfully,

The Lewkowski Family

Anchorage

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:51 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: HJR1

FYI\*j

**From:** Raymond Pastorino [<mailto:pastorino@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 8:12 AM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux; Rep. Charisse Millett; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Max Gruenberg  
**Subject:** HJR1

Thank you if you oppose HJR1, supporting public funds to be used to support private and religious schools. If you don't, however, already oppose the bill, I urge you to please reconsider. In a time when our schools are facing crippling cuts, where will our funding come from if this bill passes? It will just be too costly to absorb these additional costs, and unthinkable that funds will be diverted from our neighborhood schools to fund public schools. Much more research regarding private school admissions and performance must be taken into consideration. Private schools can be selective—can admit or not admit students at their discretion; and they do not have the accommodations special needs students require. They, therefore, may discriminate against special needs and low-socioeconomic students. Research states clearly that students from private schools do no better on standardized tests than students from public schools. So, instead of supporting ideas that cripple the quality of our current educational system, please support ideas such as increasing and inflation proofing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) now and for the future. This would allow for proactive planning rather than the current process of cuts and crisis management that our public schools currently endure year after year. Thank you for your commitment to working on the hard issues. This is a big one.

Alexis Pastorino

4935 Wren Drive

Juneau, AK 99801

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:48 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: SJR9 and HJR1

FYI\*j

**From:** Bucket [<mailto:akbucket@alaska.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 7:44 AM  
**To:** AK Senators; AK House  
**Subject:** SJR9 and HJR1

All,

I should like to encourage all to support the two aforementioned legislations.

Some of you responded to my prior missives concerning this issue in the negative.

Those opposed **did not clarify their opposition** – they were just against parents having a choice in their children's educational choices.

The 2012 Pearson's Report stated:

*Recent research indicates that countries with greater choice of schools have better education outcomes. Presumably, allowing parents to choose the best schools rewards higher quality and leads to overall improvement. In practice, however, finding the mechanism to make this happen is difficult. Extensive studies of voucher programmes and charter schools in the United States indicate that, while both can be beneficial, neither is a magic formula. On the other hand, for-profit private education is providing students in some of the least developed areas of the world an alternative to poor state provision and showing the potential benefits of choice and accountability. Ultimately, as in any market or quasi-market, the real value of choice comes from people having the right information to select the option that is truly superior.*

America's standing in the world on educational outcomes is abysmal – all manner of study has shown this outcome, or ask anyone hiring new graduates locally.

Those that would deny parents the right to vote for our children's access to a better educational outcome **because of their special interests ties** are unfit for public office.

--

Thomas B. Wood  
Eagle River, AK 99577  
907.227.8844

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 2:42 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony in the Hearing of HJR1

FYI\*]

**From:** Michelle Turinsky [<mailto:michellet@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 1:34 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** Testimony in the Hearing of HJR1

Dear Representative Keller,

Please let this email represent my personal testimony in the hearing of HJR1. **I am opposed to changing the constitution to allow public funds to go to private or religious schools.**

My daughter attended private school kindergarten through eighth grade, so I fully understand why parents would like to have financial help in sending their children to private schools. It's our responsibility, however, to first and foremost provide a quality public education to all. Unfortunately HJR1 would take money away from schools that are already facing a financial shortfall. Please do not support HJR1 and please **INCREASE FUNDING TO THE SBA BY \$404. this year, and inflation proof the SBA for future years.** I also think that it's very important to maintain a separation of church and state, and in my opinion providing state money to private/religious institutions crosses this line.

I completely understand that our state is in financial difficulty and that oil revenues and therefore our income is in steep decline. We must make funding education a priority though—it's truly a bridge to our future! It benefits us all.

Thank you,

Michelle Turinsky  
2301 Saint Elias Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99517  
(907)276-6299

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Jim Pound  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 10:08 AM  
**To:** Ernest Prax  
**Subject:** FW: Email to be used in the testimony of HJR 1

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**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 3:19 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: Email to be used in the testimony of HJR 1

FYI\*j

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**From:** Charles & Carole Hart [<mailto:prolife@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 3:17 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** Email to be used in the testimony of HJR 1

Rep. Wes Keller,

Please use this as testimony for HJR 1.

Thank you, Carole Hart

**Please pass HJR 1 so that the people can vote to uphold the original intent of the Constitution.**

As originally written and ratified by Alaska voters, our state constitution allows the Legislature to use public funds to benefit students even when this indirectly benefits private or religious schools.

SJR9/HJR1 puts the legislature back in the driver's seat of lawmaking on this issue. **Please let the people vote on SJR9/HJR1.**

The following paragraph sums up well, for our family, the need for the passage of this law:

**We could lose some programs we like**

Currently there are a number of state programs that involve an indirect benefit for private and religious providers. Private courses taken through public homeschool programs, adult vocational training, church-affiliate preschools, college scholarships, and tutoring services are among them. The Legislature has repeatedly indicated its understanding of the original intent of Alaska's constitution in the way it structures the funding of such programs. Yet these programs could be in jeopardy if challenged in court because they are in violation of prior court decisions. SJR9/HJR1 would clear up any ambiguities threatening these programs. Please let the people vote on this amendment.

Regards,

Carole Hart

## Ernest Prax

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**From:** Jim Pound  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 10:08 AM  
**To:** Ernest Prax  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony on HJR1

**From:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 3:01 PM  
**To:** Jim Pound  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony on HJR1

FYI\*j

**From:** Kristina Johannes [<mailto:AMDG@alaska.net>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2014 2:55 PM  
**To:** Rep. Wes Keller  
**Subject:** Testimony on HJR1

Dear Representative Keller,

I support HJR1 and urge your committee to pass it so that the public can vote on this most important issue.

The legislature should have the freedom and flexibility over the issue of public funding of education that was envisioned when our constitution was written and ratified.

I also believe that over the years, Blaine amendments in state constitutions have given cover to anti-religious prejudice and have obscured the true meaning of the establishment clause in the United States Constitution. It is obvious from reading the minutes of the Alaska constitutional convention that our delegates did not intend to further any such prejudice but unfortunately the Alaska Supreme Court has interpreted it otherwise.

I believe this amendment will remedy that problem.

P

X



Kristina Johannes

Anchorage