

# GEORGE GUTHRIDGE, PH.D.

---

Box 883 | Dillingham, AK 99576  
(907) 843-0389 | [glguthridge@alaska.edu](mailto:glguthridge@alaska.edu) | [www.georgeguthridge.com](http://www.georgeguthridge.com)

24 March 2015  
Senator Pete Kelly, co-Chair  
Senator Anna MacKinnon, co-Chair

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members and Fellow Legislators:

I beseech you *not* to pass SB39, the proposed bill that will repeal the film tax credit for the Alaska Film Incentive Program.

**About myself:** I have been teaching high school and college for 40 years, including 33 in rural Alaska. I have taught young people in 92 percent of Alaska's communities. Unlike a lot of other professors, I am politically very conservative. I mention that because I am also a businessman. Among other ventures, I built and operated a successful hotel here in Dillingham.

I wish to speak generally and specifically about this bill:

**In general:** Speaking as a businessman, in my opinion, killing the Alaska Film Incentive Program would be a form of fiscal suicide. Shutting the door on what could potentially bring millions of dollars into the state is, in my opinion, a really *bad* idea. We have much to gain by keeping the program and much more to lose by shutting it down permanently. I agree that sections of the program need to be tweaked – but that is true of everything we do. For one, there needs to be a provision that requires a certain percentage of Alaska-hire.

**Speaking specifically:** In the 1980s I coached ten young people from the whaling community of Gambell, on St. Lawrence Island. They became the only team of Native Americans ever to win national championships, a feat they accomplished three times. To do that, they had to defeat teams from schools for the gifted from across America, on subjects – such as genetic engineering and nuclear waste disposal – that the Gambell students had never heard of before.

A book, *The Kids from Nowhere*, is available, but 99.9% of Americans know nothing about the successes of these young people . . . young people who can be role models for kids everywhere and, especially, for Native youth, among whom suicide is rampant. I have written a screenplay about the Gambell students. I wrote it for charity, and in the hope that young people can be inspired by the tremendous successes of the Gambell students – and the tremendous sacrifices they endured to achieve those successes. The screenplay has won five international awards for excellence. It *must* be filmed in Alaska if it can be filmed at all. Without an incentive program, the chance that this very important story – and others like it – ever being told to the American public is nil.

Please, *please*, do not kill the Alaska Film Incentive Program. Just put it on ice until oil prices rise.

Thank you.

*George Guthridge*