

March 2, 2016

Testimony to the House Finance Committee

Co-Chairs Neuman and Thompson and members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Dr. Mary Wegner and I am the superintendent of the Sitka School District, serve as a Council Member on the Alaska State Council on the Arts, and also serve as an Advisory Council Member to the University of Alaska Southeast – Sitka Campus.

I am well aware of the realities of the dire financial situation we are currently facing. I encourage you to consider revenues to help us chart a course to financial stability, and please do not to wait to do so.

I am testifying today in support of funding for education Pre-K to university. Adequate funding for K-12 education is more than a constitutional requirement; it is a critical economic investment in Alaska. We have done our due diligence to make significant cuts to our non-personnel expenses, and we have also made cuts to our personnel. We are leveraging partnerships with other organizations to lessen our costs to provide a quality education to our students. However, we are bare bones at this point. Thank you for your support of fully funding K-12 education including the planned \$50 increase to the BSA.

The Pre-K learning opportunities are critical equalizers that help to ensure all students start school ready to learn, and adequately funding the university allows our state to grow our intellectual capital, as well as provide essential and specific career training throughout the state. Yet another economic benefit to investing in education. Additionally, without our current level of funding for the Alaska State Council on the Arts, we lose necessary matched funding from the federal government, which helps to support education and careers in the arts. There are other services, such as funding for behavioral health services and ferry service that also are critical for our ability to provide adequate education to students.

Education and support for our students, our future, is not like other expenses. Coupled with the exploration of revenues, funding education at all levels is an investment that will help us recover from our economic freefall. Thank you for commitment to education, and this opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary Wegner". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom center of the page.

Testimony before the House Finance Committee on Public Broadcasting  
By Rich McClear, Sitka, Alaska  
March 2, 2016

Good Afternoon. I'm Rich McClear, part owner of Anchorage commercial station, KLEF, and a broadcast consultant working to build news outlets in developing democracies.

The news business is in flux right now. With the development of the web and social media there are:

- more news channels but less news.
- more opinion but fewer facts.
- more pundits and fewer reporters.

KLEF used to do daily morning interviews and reported economic news. We can't any more. There just isn't the margin. In the '90s when commercial broadcasting was deregulated we struck a bargain. Public broadcasting would take up the public interest and we would support that. I am here keeping faith with that bargain.

While there are multiple news sources along the rail belt and in Juneau, outside those communities Public Broadcasting is the major source of local reporting.

This week ARPN ran a story on Angoon. The stores are empty because of the temporary withdrawal of the Marine Highway due to state budget cuts. Without public radio that story would not have been reported to the rest of the state. And the rest of the state needs to know how rural Alaska is doing if voters are to make intelligent choices. Many rural school districts are facing closing schools as enrolment declines. Knowing how other communities handled that issue helps them with their choices. Rural Alaska needs local reporting and the rest of the state needs to know what's happening in rural Alaska. Public broadcasting provides that service.

Good information is essential to democracy. That is why the World Bank, among others, fund the work I do overseas. That need is just as important in developed democracies like ours.

I once asked Senator Ted Stevens why he strongly supported public broadcasting. He said he once in Dillingham a fisherman told him how the dollar's decline was hurting his overseas business. Stevens said before KDLG he would not have heard that comment. Informed constituents made his job easier.

You have a lot of decisions to make on funding. Protecting the very foundation of democracy, an informed public, has to remain a high priority.

Thank you.  
Rich McClear  
PO Box 796 (106 Jamestown Drive)  
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**FAXED**

# SITKA LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

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## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Jamie Jackson

REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

BILL#/ SUBJECT: HB 286 HB 287

COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: 3/2/16 HFIN

I just want to say that the double O Van service has been a wonderful thing for me. I am in a wheel chair & cannot even leave my house without the Van that picks me up in my electric chair. This service gives me the freedom to get around town to pay my bills, run my errands and even do my grocery shopping which I would not be able to do otherwise. Please keep this service available for all of us!!

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: AmyZanuzoski – Executive Director of Sitka Counseling

REPRESENTING: Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services, Inc.

BILL#/SUBJECT: HB 256/HB 257

COMMITTEE & HEARING DATE: HOUSE FINANCE 3/2/2016

Over the last few years our agency has seen 300 plus clients a year with almost half of those clients having a Mental Health Diagnosis. This year alone (July 1, 2015 – present) from age 2-90, we have had 121 unduplicated clients receive 6,055 services, which averages 50 services per client. Community based services include early intervention and prevention, case management, supportive housing, mental health and substance abuse treatment, family services and recovery supports.

Historically we are the Community Behavioral Health Agency for Sitka; we have functioned for many years with state support and ability to bill Medicaid. I recently came across some old budgets from 2003 or 2004 which shows State Grant funds close to \$2 million dollars, when we had a staff of 16 and 47 unduplicated clients annually (per AKAIMS data). Today we have 45 FTE staff and 3 AmeriCorps, and State grant funds in the amount of \$1.1 million dollars; with an operating budget of \$2.9 million dollars. We are serving more clients and employing more staff with less state support. With these cuts it will reduce the local capacity to serve Alaskans who are addicted, low income and with a Mental Health Diagnosis within our community.

On another note Medicaid expansion and Medicaid Rate Review will help our agency to continue to provide services to our clients. We have seen a handful of clients become eligible for Medicaid. This has taken the burden (off the clients) from getting large bills they don't understand and can't afford to pay for the services they need to function in daily life. Most clients benefit from daily interactions from case managers and direct service providers. These are the real HEROES who work countless/tireless hours to provide the care and services which are needed to keep a Mental Health and/or recovering client functioning in daily life.

Please support Behavioral Health treatment and services so more Alaskans can get help they need to stay out of crisis and out of costly emergency or institutional care.





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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: *Michelle Bricker*  
Representing: Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services  
Bill #/Subject: HB256, HB257  
Committee & Hearing Date: Finance 3/2/16

"It's a great place to hang out and to get to know one another. Awesome environment and people, supportive staff, and I do not feel judged or discriminated against for having disorders similar to mine, or disorders completely different. I incorporate daily living skills taught, making me feel passionate about life."

"If you don't have that necessary passion, you don't have anything at all. "

"Harbor Lights has given me a better understanding of being socially independent. I have opportunities to be socially engaged rather sitting in my apartment withdrawn like a hermit crab, and am able to healthfully express my emotions, points of view, and values."

*Michelle Bricker*

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Janelle Kimberlin  
Representing: Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services  
Bill #/Subject: HB256, HB257  
Committee & Hearing Date: Finance 3/2/16

Now imagine this: You are a person with anxiety, depression and the fear of leaving your house. You receive a call from your Direct Service Provider with a reminder of the activities for the day. You give many excuses of why you don't want to go, but you really want to. With the reflections, reminders and positive feedback of previous appointments from the Direct Service Provider you decide to go to the activity. While there your case manager spends some time with you to discuss your public assistance, SSI benefits and Medicaid. You listen to your case manager but begin fearing what you are going to have to do to continue getting these necessary benefits. Your case manager reassures you that she is going to be there to assist you in every way she can. You feel relieved and grateful you have these services and support that have given you a decent quality of life.

A person returns to Sitka to live with sister after doing jail time and being on probation for 2 years for hitting a nurse at Alaska Psychiatric Institute. The person's sister has a baby and continues using meth and heroin around her baby. The person couldn't take it anymore but with the starting of our services the client was encouraged to call OCS and report drug use by sister. This relationship was destroyed, and the client has no parents, family or friends in Sitka. For the past 10 years, This Client has had a diagnosis of Paranoid Schizophrenia through supported services we were able to assist him with housing subsidies, collaborate with his payee for consistent allowances, advocate with Alaska housing to understand his disability and his needs and offer him hot meals, fruits, vegetable and bread donations and check in with him 5 days a week. With these services the client is able to live in a least restricted environment and without them he would be institutionalized or incarcerated.

With a cut to the behavioral health budget it will directly impact rehabilitation programs for people experiencing severe mental illness. The purpose of the program is to provide a safe place for clients to come where they are free from stigma; receive assistance with identifying and obtaining resources; and to

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#### WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Shanthee Acker  
Representing: Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services  
Bill #/Subject: HB256, HB257  
Committee & Hearing Date: Finance 3/2/16

I am a Direct Service Provider at the Harbor Lights program here in Sitka. I am the one that engages directly with these severely mentally ill clients on a daily basis attempting to teach and model skills so that they can have an opportunity to live their life in a healthy and fulfilling way. I see first-hand the struggles and extra hardships they experience that you and I should be so lucky we don't have to face. And if you do, then you will resonate and understand my point as why I strongly support the services being offered to this population.

These clients suffer from various disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder, fetal alcohol syndrome, traumatic brain injury, depression, anxiety (the list goes on.) All of these disorders are implemented in more people than you realize. I am certain that every single one of you have experienced mental illness to some degree or know someone close to you that is currently suffering and feeling hopeless because of the extra challenges that they are faced with every single day of their lives, and are unable to receive the help and guidance to live the life that everyone else gets the opportunity of living.

And if you think you do not know anyone with mental illness, perhaps you should start asking questions...and be prepared to have your mind blown. You need to get an idea of what it is like to live life in their shoes. More people need these services that are offered that you realize.

The staff at this agency all understands the importance of our roles as we are a lot of our client's only means of support. I have countless stories of how I have assisted my clients in finding ways to learn how to manage their difficulties a bit easier, and how they have shared amazing experiences where they have overcome longtime hurdles due to the persistence and support from our staff believing in our companies vision. And these clients are the ones to notice it and graciously thank us. But to sum up basically what I do as a Direct Service Provider and what I have come to realize, is I am someone who knows their potential of doing great things not only for themselves, but for their loved ones and society in general. They are learning how to healthfully cope, manage and accept these challenges and evolve in becoming a better person rather than wasting away.

Life is tough as it is. Go ahead and imagine what it would be like for YOU to be at the bottom of the pits, feeling hopeless, confused, and embarrassed for something that you did not ask to be

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Danielle Rider  
Representing: Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services  
Bill #/Subject: HB256, HB257  
Committee & Hearing Date: Finance 3/2/16

As a Direct Service Provider (DSP) of Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services we work hands on with a variety of different Clients ranging from severe Bipolar, Post-Traumatic Stress and personality disorders. All of the Clients that we work with require extra support to get through their day to day lives. Without the supports of Sitka Counseling DSPs many of our Clients would never leave their homes and would eventually be institutionalized with 24hour care. With the help of Sitka Counseling our Clients are able to get help with all aspects of their lives from leaving their homes to do simple household errands like shopping to maintaining a safe home environment. We are also able to assist our Clients with integrating into the public by teaching them necessary social skills and ways to cope with their mental health symptoms.

Not only do places like Sitka Counseling provide a safe place for Clients with severe mental illnesses to be and learn skills to be part of the public but we help Clients access services such as adult public assistance, housing assistance, Social Security, and much, much more. Without access to services such as these our clients would not have the resources necessary to acquire safe housing or have the means of shopping for food or other necessary items and instead end up adding to the homeless population.

Places like Sitka Counseling prevent so many people from being a burden on society and allows them the opportunity to learn how to maintain an independent life style.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danielle Rider', is written over the bottom of the text block.

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Cameron Mutchler  
Representing: Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services  
Bill #/Subject: HB256, HB257  
Committee & Hearing Date: Finance 3/2/16

As a Direct Service Provider I help individuals, on a daily basis, to learn basic living and social skills while actively practicing coping mechanisms for various mental illnesses. As a behavioral health rehabilitation center, what we do is act as crutches for our clients with the goal of allowing them to eventually develop the skills and coping mechanisms to completely integrate into society. Without our intervention, and the intervention of agencies like ours, the future for severely mentally ill individuals would be bleak indeed.

Without the intervention of behavioral health rehabilitation facilities the opportunities and futures of severely mentally ill individuals would be limited to: being committed, incarcerated, homeless, or withering away in their darkened homes. With behavioral health rehabilitation facilities, our clients can experience a maximum of freedom and opportunity for improvement while minimizing their burden on society.

Cameron Mutchler

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cameron Mutchler', with a stylized, cursive script.

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Mary Elizabeth McCormick  
Representing: Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services  
Bill #/Subject: HB256, HB257  
Committee & Hearing Date: Finance 3/2/16

I have been a client at Sitka Counseling for five years and the services I receive from Harbor Lights have helped me control my temper, not burning down houses and not beating the living daylight out of people. If I did not have these services I would have blown up BIHA, Burnt down a house on Peterson st, would have killed Joe's ex-wife . The rehab services have been a big influence on my anger management. On a scale of 1-10 these services to me are a 10+.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mary E. McCormick", followed by a horizontal flourish.

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: James Lapchynski  
Representing: Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services  
Bill #/Subject: HB256, HB257  
Committee & Hearing Date: Finance 3/2/16

I have been a client of Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services for eight years. The mental health rehab services I have received have helped me get my benefits, it is a safe place for me to come and I have so much fun here. I have learned so much but can't explain it in words. The people here are always have a smile on their faces and will help me with whatever I need. They help me with reading and understanding my mail because I can't read or write very well. If I did not have these services then I would probably be on the street.

③ 

**From:** [The Dochertys](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding the Budget cuts  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 5:44:02 PM

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Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

From what I understand, the The Seed Potato Program and the Cooperative Extension Service is on the chopping block. Please do not cut these vital programs! The Seed Potato Program is vital to ensure disease free potatoes - farmers need this safety measure! They grow disease free plants in test tubes to make the disease free potatoes that we eat & sell to local farmers. The Cooperative Extension is the heart of the gardening community throughout the state. In Anchorage, the gardening community relies on information and assistance from the Cooperative Extension. There have been so many losses in the Agriculture arena already, this cut would effectively gut the gardening community completely. This would also be a huge blow to agricultural research and food security in the state. With "Food Security" being a big issue in our semi-isolated state, it would be a big mistake to remove these programs.

The Cooperative Extension in Anchorage assists the public in so many ways:

1. Working with refugees to help them become self sustaining by raising & selling produce at the Farmer's Market
2. Working with home gardeners to teach & guide them in growing food; the Master Gardener Program has taught 1000's of people gardening techniques throughout the state to grow food as well as ornamental plants to make Alaska beautiful. Food banks benefit from local farmer's extra produce as well.
3. Nutritionists help the public to handle and prepare foods safely.
4. It is well documented as to how the 4-H program helps youth development, and those benefited by these programs excel in their lives. These are yours and our children we're talking about.
5. The IPM program assists gardeners by helping to identify pests and use pesticides safely. There is nothing else available that provides this service.

If you have to dip into the Permanent fund to do this, or increase taxes a bit, I would gladly pay than see these programs discarded.

If you value local (SAFE!) produce and gardeners, please spare these programs.

Thank you.

Gina Docherty

Master Gardener, Retired Nurse, Registered Voter



**From:** [Mike M](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Operating and Mental Health Budgets  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 5:54:00 PM

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Concerning Operating and Mental Health Budgets, I want to see more cuts than the \$120 million from the Governor's budget, which is only 3%.

The goal should be to get to \$4.5 billion overall so we can get to a sustainable budget.

We are in dire times as a state and as a nation. The time of protecting sacred cows in our budget must be behind us. If agency chiefs are incapable of finding the means to operate on severely cut budgets, then they ought to be replaced by those with the skills to lead in lean times. We cannot continue down the path of denial. Living on less is the "new normal" that we all must survive under now.

I have had to deal with severe cuts in my workplace. So it infuriates me to see coddled state workers whining about having to make do with less. And this goes especially for the public schools and university. They seem to live in a fictitious world that is isolated from brutal economic realities of life. And it is only going to get worse.

Any taxes or cuts to the PFD imposed upon Alaskans should have those adjustments tied to the price of oil, and should have an automatic sunset based upon the price of oil.

Sincerely,

Mike Mitchell

PO Box 73504

Fairbanks, AK 99707

From: [golson5470](#)  
To: [House Finance](#)  
Date: Wednesday, March 02, 2016 5:56:30 PM

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I would like to comment on the University's budget. In digging through committees and subcommittee notes, I am quite surprized with the total outcomes or lack of outcomes. It would further my interest in having the Univ budgets to be incorporated in the State of Alaska's Accounting system. The University has been a golden child without having much scrutiny from year to year. Looking at the 2015 outcomes below, I believe there needs to be a major overhaul with this system.

FY15 Outcomes: degrees, certificates and endorsements totalled 4,678. This encompassess, I believe 18 locations statewide.

With a budget around one billion dollars, I would have expected more graduates, more full time students (15,675).

I think we should close down all Universities with the exception of Anchorage and Fairbanks and reduce Juneau to a community college. I would encourage distance learning statewide for general studies to provide a gateway for students to complete a degree in Anchorage or Fairbanks.

This of course, means that all credits are transferrable from all the Universities including Juneau.

This would eliminate multi chancellors and vice chancellors throughout the university system.

Eliminate intercollegiate sports in colleges. Encourage intramural sports to provide activites for more students.

For the Juneau campus, dorms could become affordable housing, and buildings could be used for state offices to eliminate current leased space.

Eliminate custodial and grounds keepers with work study students. This could be for all campusess.

Eliminate the redundacies of degree programs at each campus. Example, Fairbanks could have the emphasis in engineering.

Eliminate the cooperative extension service. There is so much information that is available on the web or through local community groups.

Eliminate state funding for research. Tap private endowments for projects. Since a lot of research is related to oil and mineral extraction, the oil and mining companies would be a prime candidate for donorship, along with federal grants.

I enjoy watching gavel to gavel and hope the legislature will leave funding in for public broadcasting. I have liked being part of the budget process.

Other comments pertaining to the education budget:

Eliminate all pre-k funding, such as besting beginnings, parents as teachers, and head-start.

Reduce the number of superintendents in the public school system. It is appalling to me that we have 7 or 8 school districts and 53 superintendents. And who knows how many assistant superintendents.

And FINALLY...I WANT THE ANCHORAGE LIO TO BE CLOSED DOWN AND ALL LEGISLATORS MOVED TO THE ATWOOD BUILDING. LEAD BY EXAMPLE!!!

Thank you for letting me be part of the budget discussion. And taking my ideas for consideration.

G.Ole Olson

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy Tab®4

**From:** [cdbergstrom@gmail.com](mailto:cdbergstrom@gmail.com)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** House Finance 519  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 5:28:33 PM

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I am writing to advocate for Parents As Teachers funding for the State of Alaska! This program is particularly needed in small communities like Tok, Alaska where there are no other opportunities in the community for parents and very young children!!!

This program provides information and opportunities for families to promote growth and development in their children!!!

Research shows that early brain development is crucial to future success in adolescents!

Please reconsider cutting this funding and put money back for our States most valuable citizens and the future of our State!

It is better to build children than repair adults!!!!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cindy Bergstrom

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [billmarkis](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Budget Input  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 5:30:32 PM

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The late Bob Reeve is reported to have said about his airline business "the intake has to equal the exhaust or we are all going down" which sums up our states fiscal problem.

It is often pointed out that if all the state employees were eliminated Alaska's budget would still be in the red and you Republicans still persist on only working on budget cuts and are attempting to kick the can down the road about any increases to revenues.

By dithering along with bills about Planned Parenthood, guns on the UAA campus and suing the federal government and governor it is now official according to Moody's Analytics "Alaska Enters Recession" and since January, S&P, Fitch and Moody's have either changed their ratings for Alaska for the worse, or put the state on a negative watch.

You in the legislature are having to deal with the "damned if you do and damned if you don't" situation but doing nothing will result in bigger problems later and hopefully electoral punishment for those elected officials that fail to act and any schemes to raise revenue with new taxes and fees will also put you in the same risk.

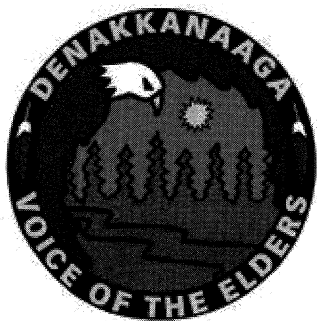
You have been elected to your offices to serve the people of the State of Alaska not just the large companies and the wealthy so now do what is best for Alaska and not serve only your individual re-election prospects.

Try to do the least harm to our fellow Alaskans that have the least when you do start working on any new taxes and cast a wide net so we all can take a fair share of the needed load.

Your concerned Alaskan voter,

Gary W. (Bill) Markis





# Denakkanaaga, Inc.

*"Our People Speak"*

March 2, 2016

The Honorable Mark Neuman, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Steve Thompson, Co-Chair  
House Finance Committee  
Alaska State Capital, Room 505 and 515  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-1182

Subject: Support for Senior Benefits, Senior Community Based Grants, and Medicaid Adult Dental (HB 256 and HB 257, Department of Health and Social Services Operating Budget)

Dear Chair Neuman and Chair Thompson:

Denakkanaaga, the regional non-profit that represents Native elders 55 and older in Interior Alaska, thanks you for this opportunity to comment on the proposed operating budget cuts that affect seniors. We know you have a difficult task, but urge you to reconsider these cuts as they will greatly impact our elders, their lives and health.

## Senior Benefits, Division of Public Assistance

The proposed reduction of \$5,137,000 from this program will impact 5,483 seniors – many of whom are women and rely on the funds for food, housing, heat and medications. And being on a fixed income, the cuts will make a huge difference in what they can afford to maintain a healthy life.

## State Heating Assistance Program, Division of Public Assistance

We would like to reiterate the fact of the high cost of fuel in our rural areas. We hope that the cuts proposed do not affect those elders receiving this assistance in our villages.

## General Relief, Division of Senior and Disabilities Services

We urge you to reconsider this reduction, many of our elders that we serve, come into the hub areas like Fairbanks and need help for placement in assistance living. Many are on a fixed income. Our villages does not have assisted living facilities, they must come to the city and being on a fixed income they cannot find affordable or safe housing. Many do not qualify for the Medicaid Alaskans Living Independently Waiver program and it can take up to a year to be placed in assistance living. With this program many of our people have the opportunity to stay within their home communities much longer. This also impacts seniors with dementia, and therein lies another obstacle, many have to travel to South Central or Sitka for care as there is not facilities in the Interior.

*Serving the Elders of Interior Alaska*

101 Dunkel Street, Suite 135, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Phone: (907) 451-3900 Fax: (907) 451-3909

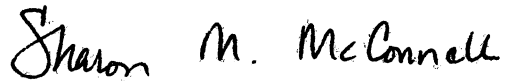
The Honorable Mark Neuman, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Steve Thompson, Co-Chair  
March 2, 2016  
Page 2 of 2

We thank you for this opportunity to address these important programs and hope you will reevaluate these cut. Our foundation is our Elders. Their guidance, support, and presence is valuable, your reconsideration to these particular programs would be appreciated as they greatly impact the valuable population of our state. Please feel free to contact me at (907) 451-3900 for further information.

Sincerely,



Anna Frank,  
Denakkanaaga Board of Director's 2<sup>nd</sup> Chief



Sharon McConnell  
Executive Director



**From:** [Patricia Bessette](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Cc:** [mcconnell](#); [afrank@gci.net](#); [denise.daniello@alaska.gov](#)  
**Subject:** Written Testimony 3.2.16 SFY Budget  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 5:06:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [3.2.16 Senior Benefits.pdf](#)

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Good afternoon, attached is a written testimony in support for senior benefits.

Sincerely,

Patricia Bessette for

Sharon McConnell, Executive Director, Denakkanaaga, Inc.



**Patricia Bessette**

Administrative Assistant

Denakkanaaga, Inc.

101 Dunkel Street, Ste. 135

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Phone: 907-451-3900

**From:** [Dreana Brown](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Cut the State Operating Budget!  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 4:58:42 PM

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Dear House Finance Committee General,

I am writing you today because I am concerned about our state deficit.

Right now it looks like we will be running a deficit of \$3.5 billion for the second year in a row.

But please do not raise my taxes in order to fix this problem. Instead, we should cut our state operating budget by at least \$500 million.

I am asking you today to please cut the state operating budget!

Thank you,  
Dreana Brown  
9300 Glenn Haven Dr Apt D3  
Anchorage, AK 99502

**From:** [Irena Adams](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Plead to restore OWL funding that vital for Unalaska community  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 4:08:00 PM

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To Whom It might Concern

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am school librarian from the most wonderful school district UCSD, that for years remains one of the top school in the State of Alaska and across USA.

We are located on isolated tiny island located 900 miles from nearest city. Yet our students prevails. they earn gold medals in the language competitions, they win poetry and art contests, striving above state average. It would not be possible if we did not had sufficient internet connection on the island.

This is why I add my voice to plead against cuts for library internet funding.

OWL (Online With Libraries) funding, which was included in the Alaska Governor's budget but was cut entirely by the finance education subcommittee, should be restored. Without this funding, it would cost us \$40,000 to keep our internet connection in Unalaska, which would increase the library's internet budget by more than 700%!

- Our internet connection, which we share with the school to save money, costs \$159,492 per year.

- o Federal e-rate funds pay \$79,746 of this cost. OWL pays \$35,074.

- o If we lose OWL funding and are unable to make up the difference with city funds, we will lose much of this \$79,746 in federal funding.

- o If we start charging patrons for internet use, we will lose all of the federal funding.

- Internet is tremendously expensive on the island, and many residents do not have home internet. They need this connection to apply for jobs, do their income taxes, apply for the PFD, continue their education, pay their bills, and connect with their families and the outside world.

- The library is the only source of free internet, open to all, on the island.

Samples of programs and services that were made possible by OWL:

- Unalaska City School students were able to take a virtual tour of the UAF campus and ask questions about college life.

- Elementary students were able to talk with NASA scientists and take a tour of the space capsule.

- Students at UAF, UAA, and UAS are able to take online classes at the library.

- Several patrons have mentioned to me that they are using the library internet to operate small

businesses.

- A dad reads children's books to his kids via Skype in the library's children's room.
- Patrons have job interviews via Skype.
- We are hoping to offer an SAT class through an Anchorage instructor this year, but it will not be possible without high-speed internet and videoconferencing capability.

Please keep OWL alive!

*Irena Adams*  
*Unalaska City School*  
*Library coordinator*  
[iadams@ucsd.net](mailto:iadams@ucsd.net)

[\(907\)581-1222](tel:(907)581-1222)

**From:** [David miller](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Cut the State Operating Budget!  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 4:10:46 PM

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Dear House Finance Committee General,

I am writing you today because I am concerned about our state deficit.

Right now it looks like we will be running a deficit of \$3.5 billion for the second year in a row.

But please do not raise my taxes in order to fix this problem. Instead, we should cut our state operating budget by at least \$500 million.

I am asking you today to please cut the state operating budget!

Thank you,  
David miller  
2566 Meadow Ln  
Juneau, AK 99801

**From:** [Vendettis@aol.com](mailto:Vendettis@aol.com)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony from Anchorage  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 4:13:32 PM

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Dear Members of the House Finance Committee:

I am hoping this email is read into the record. I have really lost my voice due to pneumonia and no one can hear me.

I am asking that the drastic cuts proposed that will affect our seniors, our disabled and behavioral health not happen. The recommended budget cuts from the Governor, while painful, did not completely attack a vulnerable group of Alaskans. The recommendations being proposed by the Legislature are completely insane.

I am asking that you make decisions that benefit our vulnerable population rather than hurt them further. I ask that you look at revenue options rather than cut to the bone. Many of the projects on the table aren't a trade off for people. The Knik bridge, the Juneau road, etc....

The LIO is a great example. How can you support this expenditure while also supporting cuts that will deny food and medicine to seniors, treatment for many suffering with mental health issues, and impact our disabled communities?

Please provide for our people, not for "things". Please vote with integrity and honesty. Look in your hearts and "do the right thing". Vote in a way that you can tell your children and grandchildren about proudly; in a way your own parents would have applauded.

Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich  
8411 Berry Patch Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99502

**From:** [Bob and Carol Thompson](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Cc:** [Rep. Jim Colver](#); [Sen. Click Bishop](#)  
**Subject:** Public Testimony on the State Budget  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 4:19:14 PM

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I understand the difficult situation the State of Alaska has found itself with the drop in oil production and prices. I am a non-partisan voter that votes in every election and am a fiscal conservative. I also believe in the power of government to make citizens' lives better and support the important work done by the state. It is time, however, to look at programs and support in a new way. We do not have unlimited resources, but we are fortunate that we do have sufficient resources.

To keep this message succinct, I have added bullets below that outline my positions and desires for legislative budgeting this year.

- Enhanced revenues are a must this year, not just cuts and use of the CBR to balance the budget. Ratings agencies will make us pay the price if we do not act this year.
- My first choice for enhanced revenue is use of permanent fund earnings. There are many options as to just how this can be done. Creating an endowment, as suggested by the governor, is an intriguing option. This is a hard political decision and I will support any member of the legislature that votes to use permanent fund earnings, although it will reduce future dividends.
- My second choice is either a sales tax or income tax. I believe a sales tax is more palatable to the people of Alaska, but it must have features to make it less regressive. We will never balance our budgets on the backs of the poorest members of our society.
- It is obvious that reductions in our budget are also necessary, and I support efforts to do so. However, we cannot cut our way to a balanced budget. So, the decisions are about what Alaskans are willing to pay for. The outcry from some Alaskans to devastate the state budget and not pay taxes, while loud and intense, represents a vocal minority, and it is an unworkable solution.
- Budget reductions this year, coming on the heels of a \$400 million reduction last year, should be in the \$300-\$400 million range. Cutting beyond that risks throwing the state into a long-term recession that will further complicate matters.
- First and foremost on my budget cutting list is reducing credits to oil companies. This program to encourage exploration and development is needed, but it is unaffordable in its current form. Just three or four years hence we could easily be paying oil companies more than we are taking in. This makes no sense. Please adjust this program.
- I do not believe cuts to public safety, transportation, health and human services, and education are in the public interest. These agencies sustained cuts last year and further cuts will adversely affect Alaskans. If revenue enhancements are utilized, cuts to these agencies are not necessary. I realize that this does not leave much to cut, but realistically, there is not much left to cut in the budget without affecting the lives of people that depend on the state for their wellbeing.
- Finally, it is important for legislators to be honest, courageous and informative with the Alaskan public on these issues. To go along with ideas that we can cut our budget and not enhance revenues this year is being disingenuous. When responding to comments, it is important for constituents to hear from legislators that a solution to the problem requires enhanced revenue. Frankly, I do not hear that a lot and believe that only makes your job harder in the end. Honestly prepare the public for what is coming and it will be

easier for everyone.

Thank you.

Bob Thompson  
9757 N Waldo Reed Rd  
Palmer, Alaska



**From:** [Fillymcc@aol.com](mailto:Fillymcc@aol.com)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Cc:** [bill.walker@alaska.gov](mailto:bill.walker@alaska.gov); [pat.pitney@alaska.gov](mailto:pat.pitney@alaska.gov); [cnmclaughlin@jeffnet.org](mailto:cnmclaughlin@jeffnet.org); [dschenk@pfpalaska.org](mailto:dschenk@pfpalaska.org); [ave2cg@gmail.com](mailto:ave2cg@gmail.com); [randall.burns@alaska.gov](mailto:randall.burns@alaska.gov)  
**Subject:** Testimony supporting inclusion o Partners Reentry Center in the Operating Budget  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 4:21:29 PM

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Cochairmen and Members of House Finance Committee:

Operating Partners Reentry Center in FY17 will require \$685,000 from DHSS. With this, we are assisting up to 70 people a day. The program has been operating since FY14 and has been successfully closing the revolving door of recidivism, and saving the state far more than it costs.

We believe DHSS is an appropriate source for the funding, because recidivism reduction is as much a matter of behavioral health as it is of corrections.

Using a private non-profit to provide necessary public services is a good way for the State to do more with less.

Unlike a state agency, Partners Reentry Center can move nimbly and swiftly to address immediate needs. The Center's use of Medically Assisted Treatment for heroin addicts, together with treatment to correct criminal thinking errors, is just one example.

Respectfully,

*Partners for Progress Board of Directors*

*Janet McCabe, Community Planner, **Chair***

*Mary Hilcoske, Organizational Management Specialist, **Vice-Chair***

*Mark Schneider, CPA, **Treasurer***

*Cristy Willer, Operations Director, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, **Secretary***

*Troy Buckner, Reentry Housing Provider*

*Rev. Jim Duncan, Statewide Chaplaincy Coordinator*

*Billy Houser, Electronic Monitoring Specialist*

*James Wanamaker, Retired District Court Judge*

*Ron Wilson, Alaska Therapeutic Court Alumni Group*

*Megan Zlatos, Writer/Media Specialist*

**From:** [Chuck Berray](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Cc:** [Rep. Harriet Drummond](#)  
**Subject:** State Budget testimony  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 4:22:04 PM

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I am sorry I am not able to testify in person, so here are my thoughts on the Alaska budget.

I support cutting the Permanent Fund dividend in half--with a caveat. Let's make it for 4 years and then revisit and vote to continue or return to full share depending on our economic health then. Everyone in this state needs to have skin in the game. Yes, I realize cutting the dividend will impact lower income residents to a greater degree, but this method treats every single Alaskan as an absolute equal.

Impose an income tax. This will not affect lower income residents as much.

Impose a State sales tax. Make grocery and drug purchases exempt.

You cannot cut our way out of this fiscal crisis. You all know the figures--lay off every single State employee and it still won't be enough, but you will drive this State into a recession the likes of which it has never seen.

Let's all give up a little, instead of some (mainly State Employees) giving up everything, to make it through these trying times.

Sincerely,

Charles Berray  
17015 Nickleen St.  
Anchorage, AK. 99516

**From:** [laureneburnham@gmail.com](mailto:laureneburnham@gmail.com) on behalf of [Lauren Burnham](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Written testimony for budget hearing 3-2-2016  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 4:39:37 PM

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I understand that the budget needs to be balanced. I think that the only way this can happen is if you, the legislature, do a combination of the following:

1. cut back on spending
2. Cap PFD payment
3. Institute income tax
4. Create a statewide sales tax
5. reduce by half the amount put into inflation proof the PFD.

The PFD is the largest sacred cow in our state. But the PFD was not meant to create a generation dependent on oil revenue to make it through the winter. It was meant to share the oil revenue the state brought in with all Alaskan residents. Well, the state isn't bringing in oil revenue anymore, and it is time to spend the money to provide the services we need.

I know that more has to be cut, but shutting state offices and centralizing services is doing a great disservice to the rural areas. AS is cutting funding to mental health and the justice system. Those are problems that do not decrease simply because there is a fiscal downturn. More often mental issues and crime increases.

It wouldn't be beneficial to cut off the PFD completely. People have come to depend on that money. We need to be weaned off of it. Setting a cap on the dividend payout would provide people with a PFD, but would also balance the budget.

Continually inflation proofing the PFD is great to make it "permanent" but what is the point of a fund that cannot support itself. The money we use to inflation proof the dividend should be used in part to ease the debt of Alaska.

Sincerely,  
Lauren E Burnham  
PO Box 872  
Discovery Lane  
Tok, AK 99780

**From:** [Sharon Winner](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Budget shortfall  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 4:03:05 PM

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I am in favor of a balance of cuts (but NOT to education!) and new revenues. The new taxes should not be regressive. So no state sales tax. I prefer an income tax based on a percentage of the federal income tax. I also support cutting the PFD checks somewhat, so that more money can be reinvested, providing an endowment for funding state government together with tax revenues. Also, please STOP spending money on futile lawsuits, unneeded legislator travel & per diem, studies on the LIO, and oil tax credits to companies who end up paying nothing in taxes to our supposed "owner state."

Finally, PLEASE, DO IT THIS YEAR!!!

Sharon M. Winner  
Winner & Associates, P.C.  
[900 W. 5th Avenue, Suite 700](#)  
[Anchorage, AK 99501-2044](#)  
Phone: [907-277-9522](#)  
Fax: [907-277-4510](#)  
[swinner@winnerlaw.com](mailto:swinner@winnerlaw.com)  
<http://www.winnerlaw.com>

John D. Stelling Jr.

PO Box 518

Dillingham, Alaska

99576

Dear Finance Committee Members,

My Suggestions:

- Change laws requiring non-violent Drug/Alcohol offenders to complete a rehab program in lieu of jail time [Insurance will often cover costs of rehab clinics/people do not learn in jail.]
- Please tear down prisons and build education to invest in our future.
- Propose an income tax with a residential tax credit of (approximate/actual) amount of PFD value.

John Stelling

**In regards to House Bill 256: Operating Budget**

I respectfully request the consideration of the Finance Committee on the topic of state funding for Public Radio. I understand that the State of Alaska faces a budget crisis. Yet I believe that eliminating funding for Public Radio will destroy an essential communications network here in rural Alaska.

I live in the island community of Petersburg, where the radio station provides many services, in terms of local, statewide, national and international news, community announcements and the airing of public meetings. KFSK is designated our local Emergency Broadcasting station for natural disasters and Amber Alerts.

A few weeks ago, the importance of KFSK's role in emergency broadcasting became very real when an inmate escaped from the downtown jail on a weekday morning, and remained at large as police pursued him through town. He remained at large for five hours. During that time the hospital and the school were both locked down.

I would not have wanted to wait for Channel 2 Evening news in Anchorage to report on the story. Nor would I want to wait 6 days for the weekly paper to tell me what was happening.

This is not the first lockdown here in town. I still remember the looks on the faces of the women I worked with when the school was locked down for the first time. It was good we had KFSK announcing the children were safe, and what was happening as police pursued another potentially dangerous individual.

KFSK also was instrumental in keeping the community and outlying areas informed when we had a tsunami warning in effect a few years ago.

In some places like Anchorage, there are other radio stations that can act as emergency broadcasters. That is not available here in many rural parts of the State. Public radio provides a literal lifeline in these places.

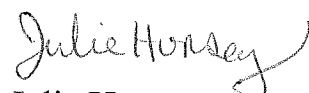
Some legislators have asked "what about cellphones and Smartphones and computers?"

I work at the local Clinic, and at the Courthouse. I have also worked at the Public Library. In my experience, there is a large percentage of people in our town and the outlying areas who cannot afford regular cellphone service, or a computer, or cable service. Often people have shared phones, short-term prepaid phones or use the computer at the Public Library. This does not afford ready access to information when there is an emergency.

I am asking you not to severely cut the funds to Public Broadcasting. Eliminating funding will cause public radio stations like KFSK to lose federal funding, and our budgets cannot sustain this hit. Public radio stations would close and an essential rural communication service would be lost.

I recognize the dire situation you face trying to come up with a state budget. I work three jobs trying to meet my budget. These are tough economic times. I do support a percentage income tax based on the amount of federal income tax a person pays. I also believe that perhaps receiving permanent fund could be based on income level as well. There are people in rural areas that have few other sources of income at all.

Thank you for your consideration.

  
Julie Hursey

PO Box 213

Petersburg, Alaska

Copies TO House Finance  
Senate Finance

also: Rep. Kreiss-Tomkins  
Senator Stedman



PETERSBURG LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: petersburg.lio@akleg.gov  
907-772-3741/ phone/ 907-772-3779/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
(Please Write Clearly and Legibly)

YOUR FULL NAME: Sharon Hunter Circle one: Support Opposed

REPRESENTING (ORGANIZATION OR SELF): self

BILL #: HB 256 Subject: Removal of all funding for public radio

COMMITTEE NAME: House finance HEARING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

It is of utmost importance that the decision to zero fund public radio be considered. Here in our rural southeast Alaska setting it is our only source of daily news, we have no other local (or other) radio and no daily printed news to access. When we have urgent need for current ongoing news, it is our only source & serve a vital function in our community safety. Two examples come immediately to mind. The first was in January 2013 when we experienced strong earthquake tremors. KFSK was the only up to the minute service we had to know what happened, what to expect and what to do. The second event was when our community needed to go on lock down due to a very real concern regarding a person the police needed to locate. Without this type of resource we would be in an extremely difficult position.

I am certain other rural communities are in the same situation as Petersburg.

I thank you sincerely for your thoughtful consideration of my remarks and hope for revision of current decision.

Thank you for submitting my written comments to the record.

Sincerely, Sharon Hunter

PETERSBURG LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: petersburg.lio@akleg.gov  
907-772-3741/ phone/ 907-772-3779/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
(Please Write Clearly and Legibly)

YOUR FULL NAME: Chris Lopez Circle one: Support Opposed

REPRESENTING (ORGANIZATION OR SELF): SELF

BILL #: HB 256 Subject: Operating Budget

COMMITTEE NAME: House Finance HEARING DATE: 3/2/16

I'm opposed to cuts to Public Radio (KFSK) as they are an essential part of our Community. They provide local News, Weather, Public Announcements, Information when Natural Disasters such as Earth Quakes, Tsunamis and the like. If 100% percent of State Funding is cut, Federal Funding will also be cut, Leaving us in the dark and without a needed resource of information and entertainment. I understand the Financial Dilemma you are facing and Hope and pray that some funds can be found for a very essential Service for the Community of Petersburg and Surrounding Communities thank you for your time

Respectfully yours

Chris Lopez

Thank you for submitting my written comments to the record.

Sincerely,

PETERSBURG LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: petersburg.lio@akleg.gov  
907-772-3741/ phone/ 907-772-3779/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
(Please Write Clearly and Legibly)

YOUR FULL NAME: Susan Erickson Circle one: Support ☐ Opposed  
REPRESENTING (ORGANIZATION OR SELF): self  
BILL #: HB256 Subject: Public Radio  
COMMITTEE NAME: House finance HEARING DATE: 3-2-16

I am opposed to eliminating funding for public radio. The public station here, KFSK, is the only radio that serves central Southeast Alaska. There is no other option. It is vital for this service to continue. In the last month we have had an escaped prisoner, schools and hospital in lock down mode and trees that blew down on the highway. These safety issues were imminent and we learned of these from the radio. There is no television station servicing our area and during the daytime hours the radio is the source for emergency and public safety broadcasts. We do get Anchorage T.V. but they will never override their broadcast to ask the public for help in a manhunt for an escaped prisoner in Petersburg nor to notify the public that there is a mudslide on Mitkof Highway.

This public radio service is absolutely essential in our community. Decreased funding starts a snowball effect on federal funding as well. If you must cut some funding please keep it less than 5%.

Thank you for submitting my written comments to the record.

Sincerely,

Susan Erickson

(Updated 4/9/2013)

**From:** [D. Tyrell McGirt](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** SUPPORT OWL FUNDING  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 3:58:49 PM

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Good day. I am D. Tyrell McGirt, City of Unalaska Department of Parks, Culture and Recreation (PCR) Director. The Unalaska Public Library falls under the PCR department.

I was disheartened to hear that funds to support the OWL program have been removed from the Governor's budget. This will have a costly impact on the Unalaska Public Library's budget and potentially put citizens that live here at a greater disadvantage of staying connect to the outside world. I ask you to reconsider eliminating OWL funding.

Being able to offer recreational and library services in a small rural remote place like Unalaska helps attract families here, help families stay here, adds to the quality of life, and makes our community a livable place. The cost of living in the Aleutian Islands is substantially more and the internet cost is even higher. Currently the Unalaska Public Library is the only place on the island where internet is free and open to all. We currently partner with the local school district to offer internet services and save money. We depend on OWL funding coupled with Federal e-rate funding to make accessible internet possible in our community and in our schools.

With OWL funding the Unalaska Public Library has been able to support educational opportunities for the Unalaska City School District, support Unalaska small businesses, and support citizens and seasonal workers by having a place for them to stay connected to loved ones off the island, pay bills, get additional training and education, apply for jobs, complete taxes, and apply for PFD.

Please continue funding the OWL program. Rural Alaska greatly benefits from the service. Thank you.



**D. Tyrell McGirt, Director**  
**City of Unalaska | Department of Parks, Culture and Recreation**  
**Post Office Box 610 | Unalaska, Alaska 99685**

**907.581.1297 ext. 5110 | 907.581.2989 Fax**  
**Alaska Recreation and Park Association**  
**National Recreation and Park Association**

**From:** [Cora Holmes](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Owl Internet funding in UNALASKA, Alaska  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 3:56:08 PM

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>

> To whom it may concern:

>

> Please restore the OWL funding included by the governor in his budget and cut by the finance education subcommittee. As a library employee in Unalaska for eight years I saw firsthand the need for free readily available Internet service in that community of transient multilingual residents. The loss would devastate the canneries, schools, and general public.

>

> Cora Holmes

> Library staff 2004-2012

>

> Sent from my iPad

3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature:

The Department of Public Safety gives the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault a mere \$200,000 to fund Batterer's Intervention Programs. This funding has not increased in over 20 years. This money is spread thinly between multiple programs. These programs are the only best practice treatment for male and female domestic violence offenders. If this funding is cut, these programs will shut down. Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence in the United States. These programs work to help these offenders become non-violent. To lose these programs would be a serious loss for our state, for the victims – including the children of the offenders, and our communities. Please keep that small amount of funding intact. It is crucial to the efforts to reduce the amount of domestic violence and child abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely-

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Michael A. R. [unclear]", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

City: Fairbanks

3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature:

The Department of Public Safety gives the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault a mere \$200,000 to fund Batterer's Intervention Programs. This funding has not increased in over 20 years. This money is spread thinly between multiple programs. These programs are the only best practice treatment for male and female domestic violence offenders. If this funding is cut, these programs will shut down. Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence in the United States. These programs work to help these offenders become non-violent. To lose these programs would be a serious loss for our state, for the victims – including the children of the offenders, and our communities. Please keep that small amount of funding intact. It is crucial to the efforts to reduce the amount of domestic violence and child abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely-

*David Leonards*

City:

*North Pole AK 99705*



3/1/16

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Sincerely- Josh LaBreck

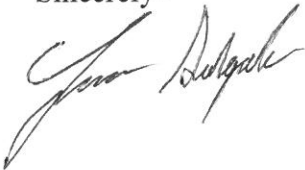
City: Fairbanks / North Pole

3/1/16

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Sincerely-

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Rodgark".


City: Fairbanks

3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature:

The Department of Public Safety gives the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault a mere \$200,000 to fund Batterer's Intervention Programs. This funding has not increased in over 20 years. This money is spread thinly between multiple programs. These programs are the only best practice treatment for male and female domestic violence offenders. If this funding is cut, these programs will shut down. Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence in the United States. These programs work to help these offenders become non-violent. To lose these programs would be a serious loss for our state, for the victims – including the children of the offenders, and our communities. Please keep that small amount of funding intact. It is crucial to the efforts to reduce the amount of domestic violence and child abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely-

  
Greg Crompton

City:

North Pole

3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature:

The Department of Public Safety gives the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault a mere \$200,000 to fund Batterer's Intervention Programs. This funding has not increased in over 20 years. This money is spread thinly between multiple programs. These programs are the only best practice treatment for male and female domestic violence offenders. If this funding is cut, these programs will shut down. Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence in the United States. These programs work to help these offenders become non-violent. To lose these programs would be a serious loss for our state, for the victims – including the children of the offenders, and our communities. Please keep that small amount of funding intact. It is crucial to the efforts to reduce the amount of domestic violence and child abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely-

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. J. ...' with a stylized flourish at the end.

City: Fairbanks, AK

Good people in place to do go things

3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature:

The Department of Public Safety gives the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault a mere \$200,000 to fund Batterer's Intervention Programs. This funding has not increased in over 20 years. This money is spread thinly between multiple programs. These programs are the only best practice treatment for male and female domestic violence offenders. If this funding is cut, these programs will shut down. Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence in the United States. These programs work to help these offenders become non-violent. To lose these programs would be a serious loss for our state, for the victims – including the children of the offenders, and our communities. Please keep that small amount of funding intact. It is crucial to the efforts to reduce the amount of domestic violence and child abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely-



City:

*Fairbanks*

3/1/16

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The Department of Public Safety gives the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault a mere \$200,000 to fund Batterer's Intervention Programs. This funding has not increased in over 20 years. This money is spread thinly between multiple programs. These programs are the only best practice treatment for male and female domestic violence offenders. If this funding is cut, these programs will shut down. Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence in the United States. These programs work to help these offenders become non-violent. To lose these programs would be a serious loss for our state, for the victims – including the children of the offenders, and our communities. Please keep that small amount of funding intact. It is crucial to the efforts to reduce the amount of domestic violence and child abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely-

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. J. [unclear]', written over the word 'Sincerely-'.

City: FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

VERY RESPECTFUL CLASS, HELPS GET ALOT....

3/1/16

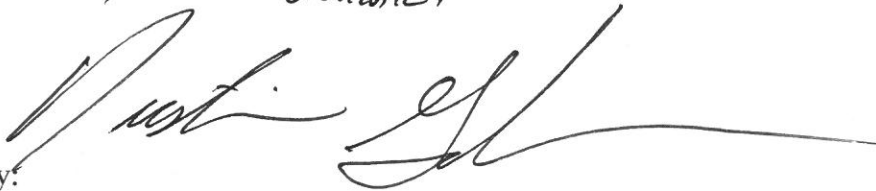
To the Alaska State Legislature:

The Department of Public Safety gives the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault a mere \$200,000 to fund Batterer's Intervention Programs. This funding has not increased in over 20 years. This money is spread thinly between multiple programs. These programs are the only best practice treatment for male and female domestic violence offenders. If this funding is cut, these programs will shut down. Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence in the United States. These programs work to help these offenders become non-violent. To lose these programs would be a serious loss for our state, for the victims – including the children of the offenders, and our communities. Please keep that small amount of funding intact. It is crucial to the efforts to reduce the amount of domestic violence and child abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely-

Dustin Gonzales

City:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dustin Gonzales', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

FAIRBANKS

3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature:

The Department of Public Safety gives the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault a mere \$200,000 to fund Batterer's Intervention Programs. This funding has not increased in over 20 years. This money is spread thinly between multiple programs. These programs are the only best practice treatment for male and female domestic violence offenders. If this funding is cut, these programs will shut down. Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence in the United States. These programs work to help these offenders become non-violent. To lose these programs would be a serious loss for our state, for the victims – including the children of the offenders, and our communities. Please keep that small amount of funding intact. It is crucial to the efforts to reduce the amount of domestic violence and child abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely- Leanna Phipps

*Leanna Phipps*

City: Fairbanks



3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature:

The Department of Public Safety gives the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault a mere \$200,000 to fund Batterer's Intervention Programs. This funding has not increased in over 20 years. This money is spread thinly between multiple programs. These programs are the only best practice treatment for male and female domestic violence offenders. If this funding is cut, these programs will shut down. Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence in the United States. These programs work to help these offenders become non-violent. To lose these programs would be a serious loss for our state, for the victims – including the children of the offenders, and our communities. Please keep that small amount of funding intact. It is crucial to the efforts to reduce the amount of domestic violence and child abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely-

W. A. H. H.

City: Fairbanks AK

3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature

Please do not remove the custody presumption in AS.25.20.061. The current wording is fine the way it is. Most domestic violence offenses never come to the attention of the police, for many reasons. When they do they often don't result in a conviction due to the understaffing of our district attorney's office. DV offenders rarely have safe parenting skills and often use custody exchanges etc to further abuse their victim(s). Requiring treatment before an offender can get custody has shown to be a safer option. Alaska has the highest rates of domestic violence in the country. We need to be proactive in working with these families especially with the offenders so the violence can stop.

Sincerely,

*Michael S. Alexander*

*Michael Alexander*

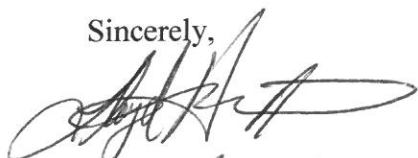
*Domestic Violence is a serious problem.  
the classes I've taken have been very helpful.  
It would be a loss to make them harder to get.*

3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature

Please do not remove the custody presumption in AS.25.20.061. The current wording is fine the way it is. Most domestic violence offenses never come to the attention of the police, for many reasons. When they do they often don't result in a conviction due to the understaffing of our district attorney's office. DV offenders rarely have safe parenting skills and often use custody exchanges etc to further abuse their victim(s). Requiring treatment before an offender can get custody has shown to be a safer option. Alaska has the highest rates of domestic violence in the country. We need to be proactive in working with these families especially with the offenders so the violence can stop.

Sincerely,



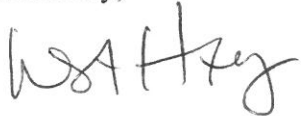
LLOYD HOBAN

3/1/16

To the Alaska State Legislature

Please do not remove the custody presumption in AS.25.20.061. The current wording is fine the way it is. Most domestic violence offenses never come to the attention of the police, for many reasons. When they do they often don't result in a conviction due to the understaffing of our district attorney's office. In my over 20 years experience in working with offenders, I can tell you that DV offenders rarely have safe parenting skills and often use custody exchanges etc to further abuse their victim(s). Requiring treatment before an offender can get custody has shown to be a safer option. Alaska has the highest rates of domestic violence in the country. We need to be proactive in working with these families especially with the offenders so the violence can stop.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Hay', written in a cursive style.

Lisa Hay, MFA, MSW, LCSW  
Fairbanks, AK

**From:** [Jacky Graham](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Please balance the budget  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 9:13:13 AM

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Good morning,

Your hearing from constituents is key at this time. I would like to make my opinion heard.

Please do everything you can to balance this budget and close the gap.

Slash every program to the bone. Do not hire new staff for government positions.

For the next couple of years, shutter extraneous facilities.

Raise taxes now without delay. A sales tax on everything but food. A transportation tax to pay for Trooper patrols on the Seward Hwy.

If we have to go 3 years without a large PFD or any PFD at all, that is OK with me until we get this budget balanced.

Most importantly grow balls, man up, woman up, and make the hard decisions now that are required of you as our elected servants. Vote with courage and you will get my vote. Do nothing and you won't.

Thank you and good Luck,

Nina J Graham  
Girdwood

**From:** [Scott Anaya](#)  
**To:** [allegislators@akleg.gov](mailto:allegislators@akleg.gov); [gov.allegislators@akleg.gov](mailto:gov.allegislators@akleg.gov)  
**Cc:** [House Finance](#); [Sen. Cathy Giesel](#)  
**Subject:** AK Budget  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 3:48:36 PM

---

Dear Members of the Legislature,

Please first:

- Cut wasteful dead-end boondoggle projects: Susitna dam, railroad spur, roads to no where Juneau, Cordova, & the Rampart/Ambler Road.
- Rein in Oil Tax credits to \$10 Million & make them loans given towards only those projects proven to show a return on investment of our state dollars.
- Keep the Permanent Fund & the PFD intact- only use ONLY the excess earnings.
- NO to sales tax, NO to alcohol taxes
- No to tax increases on small family fishermen
- Greatly increase mining and minerals taxes more than the Governor proposes.
- Then Consider an Income tax @ 7-10% of Federal

Scott Anaya  
Alaskan Business Owner & Father

I ask that you consider cuts in the budget and any potential new revenue sources in order of the least impact they have in hurting the overall Alaskan economy. Your response to the budget shortfall could make things far worse for our state.

Please keep education funding in-tact. No to school vouchers, yes to more charter & language immersion schools. I support using the excess earnings of the Perm Fund for education, but please keep the Fund & PFD in-tact.

Please do NOT implement a sales tax which would further burden our state's small businesses.

I am not sure why Alaskans support a regressive sales tax over an income tax that would treat income levels more fairly as well as capturing all of the outta state workers. Plus, deducting a state income tax off of our federal taxes eases that burden more easily for all of us who don't itemize. Also collecting an income tax is less of a burden on Alaskan businesses compared to a sales tax.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my views.

**Scott Anaya**  
owner/manager  
**CRUSH Wine Bistro & CeLLar**  
[www.crushak.com](http://www.crushak.com)

Sent from my iPad. Please forgive typos.

**From:** [James Alborough](#)  
**To:** [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)  
**Cc:** [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Rep. Dan Saddler](#); [Rep. Cathy Munoz](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Lance Pruitt](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. David Guttentberg](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Mike Hawker](#)  
**Subject:** OWL Funding Appeal  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 8:11:39 AM

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Dear Mark and the rest of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing to you again to voice my support for the OWL program and to request that OWL funding be re-instated into the budget. The relatively small expenditure on this program yields exceptionally high value. Cutting the OWL program will not only create great expense and hardship to libraries across the state, but will also jeopardize federal E-rate funding that pays for the 60-90% of Alaska's high broadband costs to rural and remote libraries.

OWL is a critical program that enables us to provide basic internet service to Alaska residents. I don't need to remind you how essential this sort of service is in this day and age.

Sincerely,  
James Alborough  
Chair, Haines Borough Public Library Advisory Board

-----  
James Alborough  
907-766-2082

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Donna Rae Faulkner  
Representing: Self + Oceanside Farms  
Bill No./Subject: HB 256  
Committee: House Finance  
Date of Hearing: 3/1/2016

I respectfully ask you to reconsider the budget you are proposing. The future of Alaska is at stake. What kind of Alaska do we want?

Governor Walker's budget cut proposals would clearly be felt by all Alaskans. But the truly devastating budget that the legislature is now putting forward is shocking + unreasonable at best. It slashes programs entirely — programs + people. Small businesses will be harmed. I support some cuts. I support restructuring of the Alaska pfd + implementing a state income tax. I believe in community, health + maintaining a healthy food supply, helping Alaskans to be happy, healthy + connected. In particular, I especially support reinstating funds (or at least not cutting so deeply)

• Alaska Public Radio / public broadcasting - a crucial lifeline for Alaskans everywhere - our democracy, emergency info center, cultural business advertisement, educational provider, entertainment, inspiration, honoring system for communities.

Farming + Ag cuts { inc. Northern Latitude Plant Materials Center - especially make sure that the AK Certified Seed Potato Program continues. Our small businesses + other farms across AK depend on this program (that we pay \$30/lb. for starting stock + inspections.) (It is not "free" to us, we value it!!) As AK farmers who have invested so much, you will really hurt our businesses with this cut.  
• Cooperative Extension - practical, educational opportunities for sustainable Alaskan lifestyles, great staff + resource for citizens, gardeners, farmers + more!

Early Childhood Education +

OWL → especially being sure to not cut off internet access in rural villages which could be catastrophic!! Note that many programs like this one would lose lots more in matching / federal funding opportunities.

Aarrgghh! Thank you for your reconsideration  
Donna Rae



## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Don McNamara  
Representing: Self + Oceanside Farms  
Bill No./Subject: HB256  
Committee: House Finance  
Date of Hearing: 3/1/2016

I understand the need for cutting the state budget and looking for revenue. I understand that making cuts is challenging & everyone ~~will~~ will be impacted by the cuts. Governor Walker, it seems to me, proposed strong cuts that were going to be felt by Alaskans, but the Alaska legislature's dramatic + much deeper cuts are appalling!! A 4% cut is one thing, but the legislature's proposals are truly devastating to Alaskans. It feels like an assault on our communities, way of life + interconnectedness.

I particularly want to ask you to not make your proposed + unreasonable cuts to the

- Plant Materials Center
  - Cooperative Extension Service
- } cuts are one thing, but Do Not take out the entire!

### Alaska Certified Seed Potato Program

Our small farm business has invested in growing a healthy food supply using organic methods. We pay \$30/lb. for AK Certified Seed to start our crops. Potatoes are an important crop that is susceptible to many viruses + blights. The Alaskan potato crops are in much better shape than those in the lower 48 and we want to keep it that way. Eliminating the AK certified seed potato program will be bad for our safe food supply + our small businesses. Cooperative Extension provides great education opportunities that are practical for gardeners, farmers + <sup>healthy</sup> sustainable lifestyles of ~~many~~ Alaskan Citizens - cut some of the budget, but not that much!! I also support reinstating the Alaskan lifeline of Alaska Public Broadcasting and OWL - especially supporting the internet connectivity of our rural villages.

Thanks Don

Do you indeed support Alaskan communities + small businesses? It is not evident by this budget! (I support a state income tax + restructuring of the AK pfd's) but these cuts are outrageous. Please reconsider. Thank you.

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name:

NELSON PALMIA JR.

Representing:

THE ALISI

Bill No./Subject

HB 248 / SB 131 / HB 256

Committee:

FINANCE; LABOR & COMMERCE

Date of Hearing:

3/1/2016

I'M THE OWNER OF A BAR & CAFE HERE IN HOMER.  
MY WIFE & I TOOK OVER THE BUSINESS 7 YRS. AGO.  
BEFORE PERMANENTLY RESIDING IN ALASKA, I WAS  
INVOLVED IN THE LIQUOR INDUSTRY IN NEVADA, CALIFORNIA,  
OREGON & WASHINGTON. I WAS SHOCKED TO SEE THE LEVEL  
OF TAXATION HERE IN ALASKA. THOUGH I DIDN'T AGREE  
WITH ITS PURPOSE, I UNDERSTOOD IT. NOW, AMID A  
NEW BUDGET CRISIS, YOU WANT TO DOUBLE TAXES  
ON SPIRITS AGAIN !!! ALASKA LIQUOR BUSINESSES  
ALREADY FACE THE 2ND HIGHEST RATES ON BEER, WINE  
& SPIRITS IN THE NATION. YET YOU FEEL ITS NECESSARY  
TO RAISE TO LEVELS WHICH EXCEED 5X ~~THE~~ THE  
NATIONAL AVERAGE. "SIN" TAXES MAY WIN YOU  
MORALITY VOTES, BUT IT IS UNFAIR! ALCOHOL IS AND  
HAS BEEN PAYING ITS FAIR SHARE TO THE STATE.  
WE SHOULD NOT BE THE EASY TARGET TO  
HELP SOLVE THE STATE'S BUDGET CRISIS.

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Penelope Haas  
Representing: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bill No./Subject: HB256 Operating Budget  
Committee: HFIN  
Date of Hearing: 3/1/16

Thank you for your time. ~~There are two particular areas of concern for me. The first is the ADF&G cut and the second is the gap in the budget. I am asking you to please consider the gap in the budget and the ADF&G cut.~~

~~It takes millions~~ No more ADF&G cuts.

~~It only takes 2 consecutive years of mismanagement to destroy a wild salmon run population.~~ What will this state be without wild salmon? I have worked w/ ADF&G on a wild salmon weir for the past four years. The budget for that project has been cut. Knowing what I know about that system and what I know about the power of the commercial boats, I believe there is a very good chance that this <sup>run</sup> population will be wiped out.

If this is the model, we will have no more wild fish. They will not come back. It took millions of years for them to get here. BE SMART.

~~Secondly, you can't have a state without high education.~~

NEW REVENUE. STATE INCOME TAX. \_

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name:

Nancy Lord

Representing:

self

Bill No./Subject

budget

Committee:

H. Finance

Date of Hearing:

March 1

I will send a separate email - but  
came to testify about my concern about  
the level of cuts you're contemplating -  
particularly <sup>for</sup> the University. I urge you  
to adopt the governor's proposal (\$5.8  
million cut) which is drastic enough.  
for the university

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: David G. Lewis

Representing: people of AK.

Bill No./Subject HB256

Committee: House Finance

Date of Hearing: 3-1-16

How will your cuts affect the rest of the state <sup>→ budget</sup>  
lay offs - business - population loss + bad housing  
market. I support using the PFR of those who  
aren't low income + an income tax over a  
sales tax. Spend time on the budget not  
pet social issues of individual legislators  
Please don't make the GREAT LAND  
THE NOT SO GREAT LAND.

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Caroline Venuti  
Representing: Self  
Bill No./Subject: funding UAA - H.B. 256  
Committee: House Finance Committee  
Date of Hearing: 1 March 2016

Thank you for serving Alaska.

My story about the U.A.A begins at U.A.F in 1967 where I completed my Bachelor's of Education. Later I attend UAA and received my Masters of Education. I have taught as an adjunct at K.B.C. in Homer. Currently I work at the Learning Resource Center.

I am amazed that the legislators would make larger cuts to the UAA budget than our governor. This deep of a budget cut will affect Homer's College. Kachemak Bay Campus is a key to Homer's prosperity. It's location is in the middle of town. The campus hosts Arts on Friday, Socratic circles, forums, readings by authors and a reception area to celebrate learning.

We offer vocational programs for the fishing industry, GED testing, and an Associated Arts degree classes. Students travel from all over the state to attend K.B.C.

Please consider carefully the UAA budget - respect the Governor's budget and let the UAA continue to educate Alaska's future leaders.

**From:** [Brad & Sharon Hunter](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** HB256  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 8:51:19 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I recently found out that the legislature is considering seriously cutting funding to public radio in the State of Alaska. This is a bad idea. Public radio is critical to the communities of the State, especially the small communities. By cutting the State funding you will effectively be cutting the federal funding too, since we'll no longer have that qualifying matching funds.

Instead you should implement the governor's proposal for dealing with the funding shortfalls.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Brad Hunter

Petersburg, Alaska

This email has been sent from a virus-free computer protected by Avast.  
[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**From:** [Stephens, Michael - NRCS, Delta Junction, AK](#)  
**To:** [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Neal Foster](#); [Rep. Paul Seaton](#); [Rep. Liz Vazquez](#); [Rep. Jim Colver](#); [Rep. Adam Wool](#); [Sen. Pete Kelly](#); [Sen. Anna MacKinnon](#); [Sen. Gary Stevens](#); [Sen. Johnny Ellis](#); [Rep. Mike Chenault](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. David Guttenberg](#); [Rep. Shelley Hughes](#); [Rep. Wes Keller](#); [Rep. Charisse Millett](#); [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. David Talerico](#); [Sen. John Coghill](#); [Sen. Click Bishop](#); [Sen. Mike Dunleavy](#); [Sen. Charlie Huggins](#); [Sen. Bill Stoltze](#); [Fred Schlutt Jr](#)  
**Subject:** In Full Support of Forestry Extension through UAF-CES  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 8:49:40 AM  
**Attachments:** [Boreal Forest eNewsletter Fall-Winter 2015 FINAL.pdf](#)

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To All the Leaders and Decision makers of this Great State-

As a natural resource conservationist myself, I believe in extension.

Especially in a state covered in trees, please don't cut forestry extension. Glen does a great job and we need more like him out there working with and for us all. Glen is a wonderful man, but it's not just about Glen, its about reaching the masses with education and practical experience that can be directly applied to ever day situations that we experience in Alaska. If it weren't for people like Glen and others in the CES, this state would be nowhere near what it is now, nor will we reach our potential as a whole in this Union.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email to you. This is very near and dear to me.

Respectfully,

**Mike Stephens, NRCS**

**1420.5 Alaska Hwy**

**PO Box 547**

**Delta Junction, AK 99737**

**Office: 907.895.4241 ext. 110**

**Cell: 907.505.0772**

**Fax: 855.705.9787**

**From:** Glen Holt [mailto:[ggholt@alaska.edu](mailto:ggholt@alaska.edu)]

**Sent:** Monday, February 29, 2016 7:20 PM

**To:** Rep. Scott Kawasaki ; Rep. Tammie Wilson ; Rep. Neal Foster ; Rep. Paul Seaton ; Rep. Liz Vazquez ; Rep. Jim Colver ; Rep. Adam Wool ; Sen. Pete Kelly ; Sen. Anna MacKinnon ; Sen. Gary Stevens ; Sen. Johnny Ellis ; [Representative.Mike.Chenault@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.Mike.Chenault@akleg.gov); [Representative.Lynn.Gattis@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.Lynn.Gattis@akleg.gov); [Representative.David.Guttenberg@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.David.Guttenberg@akleg.gov); [Rep.Shelley.Hughes@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Shelley.Hughes@akleg.gov); [Representative.Wes.Keller@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.Wes.Keller@akleg.gov); [Representative.Charisse.Millett@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.Charisse.Millett@akleg.gov); [Representative.Mark.Neuman@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.Mark.Neuman@akleg.gov); [Representative.Dave.Talerico@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.Dave.Talerico@akleg.gov); [Senator.John.Coghill@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.John.Coghill@akleg.gov); [Senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov); [Senator.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov);



Senator.Charlie.Huggins@akleg.gov; Senator.Bill.Stoltze@akleg.gov; Fred Schlutt Jr  
**Subject:** Forestry Extension through UAF-CES

Dear Forestry Cooperators and Stakeholders;

As you know, the State legislature is concerned with reducing Alaska's state budget.

I have served at the UAF-CES as the Extension Field-Forester the last 4-years providing information, outreach and education on forestry topics as requested by the public.

Please take a moment to send an email to the above legislators, depicting in your own words, the value that the Cooperative Extension Service has made in providing you with valuable forestry outreach and information.

I am sure that most of our legislators don't realize there is a forester doing outreach to industry, organizations, Native corporations, agencies and private citizens in the State of Alaska.

Attached is the latest Boreal Forest e-Newsletter that most of you (more than 800) received a couple months ago. The next one will come out in the Spring and will be the 6th edition.

Until then, I would appreciate your comments and support and please let our legislative body know that you support the Cooperative Extension Service and School of Natural Resources and Extension.

Thank you,

Very Sincerely Yours, Glen Holt.

--

***Glen Holt  
Eastern Alaska Forester  
UAF Cooperative Extension  
PO Box 757200***

***Fairbanks, AK 99775-7200***

***Phone [\(907\) 474-5271](tel:9074745271)***



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**From:** [Johanna Tellman](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 1:34:38 AM

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I, Johanna Tellman, am writing in support of restoring the OWL funding that has been cut from the Unalaska Public Library. Without this funding there's a huge chance the library could also loose additional federal funds. Internet on this island is extremely expensive, and by offering our residents this service it enhances our community. I've seen school kids go there and use the internet for reports, fisherman go there to email loved ones, locals do their taxes and apply for PFD's, and just many other people from all walks of life who can't afford the internet here. You would be doing our community a great disservice by taking away the free internet the Unalaska Public Library provides.

Sincerely,

Johanna Tellman  
Unalaskan resident of over 32 years

**From:** [Tracy Mikowski](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Please protect public radio funding in Alaska  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 6:13:44 AM

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Please do not cut the funding of our community radio. Those of us living remotely rely on the news, weather and emergency updates on our public station. In addition it is our connection to everyone else in our community. It is how we return lost dogs and property, how we get medications to people off the road system, it's how we know to attend a spaghetti dinner to raise money for medical expenses for our neighbor...the radio is at the center of our community. I think that eliminating our public (and only) station would put people's health and welfare at risk and would diminish the overall quality of life here in Southeast Alaska.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tracy Mikowski  
PO Box 1356  
Haines, AK 99827  
(907) 303-0235  
[tracy@talkingcrowpublishing.com](mailto:tracy@talkingcrowpublishing.com)

**From:** [Sandi Koval](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Public Testimony FY2017  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 7:35:53 AM

---

Dear Alaska House Finance Committee:

As you prepare to craft FY2017 statewide operations budget I am asking you to please remember that many of our beloved Elders in this state are the very pioneers who have contributed to and have supported our communities for decades. Now, as they enter their final years of life it is our responsibility to help them maintain their dignified independence. Services such as senior nutrition programs and Care-A-Van senior rides are NOT luxury items; rather these are the very necessities which promote continued dignified ageing and independent health-promoting lifestyles. Without such access as senior-rides many of our Elders will honestly become shut-ins; unable to get out from their homes, their lives will have less purpose and they will become sedentary and health will deteriorate in multiple unfortunate and PREVENTABLE ways. Further, many Elders simply no longer have the appetite, energy, and/or money to prepare a daily healthy meal with all of the thoughtfully prepared nutritional value that a senior meals program can offer. Congregate settings also offer a meeting place for our older-ones and there is no monetary value to put on such an important necessity in a social-being's healthy life! Furthermore, home-delivered senior meals bring this life promoting nutrition to our frail Elders who quite obviously need this service. Malnourishment should never be a reason that an Elder can no longer live in his/her home – or what sends her/him to the hospital. This is the truth of it: If our state budget decision-makers choose to cut funding for these types of services, then MANY Elders will suffer. Know this is factual as you make your decisions; and please, please remember that as Alaskans we must honor our Elders and do all that is necessary to promote and support their dignity to the very end. A cradle to grave society never questions or sacrifices the necessities. It is not too far-reaching to hope that as our beloved senior citizens take their final breaths of life in Alaska that they do so knowing that the community they've loved and supported for so long still gives value to their existence.

Thank you for inviting me to testify as a citizen.

Respectfully,

Sandra Koval

Sitka, Alaska, (907) 738-8280

**From:** [Mark Lindberg](#)  
**To:** [House Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on State Operating Budget  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 7:52:22 AM

---

## **What Makes a Great State?**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the operating budget. I was unable to testify in person yesterday so I am providing written comments. My name is Mark Lindberg. I am resident of district 4C and a professor of wildlife ecology at UAF. I appreciate the past support that you have shown for education and I hope you will do so in the future.

My wife and I are both graduates of UAF. Following graduation, we left Alaska for five years moving first to Tennessee and then Montana. Things weren't working out in Montana, although we were living in the state known "as the last best place". We wanted to start a family and we wanted to do so in "the last great place" – Alaska. Until recently, we never really thought hard about why Alaska was labeled the last great place, it seemed obvious. The natural beauty of the state is certainly a reason to characterize the state as great; however, wild places and stunning landscape alone don't define greatness if the citizens of that state aren't served in way that leads to a safe, healthy, and happy life. I won't dispute that those programs that serve the safety and health needs of the citizens are of utmost importance. Close behind those programs and sometimes in collaboration with those programs is education. For us, the educational system of this state is the most defining feature of greatest because it makes a direct investment in the states' most precious, renewable resource, its' children, and therefore the future of the state.

Even though education is already paying some of its own way through school taxes, tuition, and cost recovery and matching from research, and through other returns like an education and associated job opportunities, quality of life, and outreach, it's clear we still need to do more to maintain greatness. It's clear that we have reached the limits of investment and returns from a finite resource such as oil and we need to take responsibility for our greatness and future by paying our way through income taxes and more responsible use of the permanent fund.

However, an income tax and wise use of the permanent fund comes with a responsibility and a trust between the citizens of Alaska and its government officials, who will be charged with deciding how to use that revenue. Show us that you deserve that trust by making responsible decisions that value our future. Making poor decisions about matters such as air quality and budget cuts that would cripple the university don't reflect that you value our health or the future of our state. Making uninformed decisions about the role of research in the educational process and in the state economy, do not suggest that you deserve our trust. Misusing the permanent fund by sending \$10,000,000s of dollars out of state in the form federal taxes each year doesn't demonstrate responsible management. We are prepared to do and pay more to assure the future greatest of our state – are you?

We understand that cuts may need to be part of the short term solution, but please consider reasonable and responsible levels of cuts to the state educational system that reflect how you value the future of our state. Please also admit that we need to seek longer term solutions to our state financial crisis that don't just include cuts. Consider forming an alliance and trust with the citizens of this state through an income tax and more responsible use of the permanent fund. We will not be judged by our ability to balance the budget this year or even next year, but by our ability to provide a great state for future generations and that will require that we support a high quality educational system.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Mark Lindberg