

ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Anchorage.LIO@akleg.gov 907-269-0111/ phone, 907-269-0229/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Sandy Travis
REPRESENTING: Sandy Travis Disabled Injured Workers
BILL#/ SUBJECT: How the money is being spent
COMMITTEE &
HEARING DATE: March 2

My name is Sandy Travis I am a disabled injured worker I worked at API What a joke that is.

The state hired private contractors to run ~~the~~ ~~to~~ to provide food and clean the dirty sheets.

The money needs to be put back to the seniors.

Do you know how the money is being spent the department of Law just on my case alone has payed for 3 IME the 1st IME cost over 6,000.00 fly a doctor up from wging. ~~the~~

That you cut the costs for IME's and STME's the state will spend

That ~~is~~ using private contractors does not work the people of the state get cheated

Also cut the costs at the Department of Law That you ~~add~~ look at each department to see how the money is being spent and how much the private contractors are costing the state of Alaska.

Testimony to the House Finance Committee,

3/2/16

To the House Finance Committee through the Chair,

The Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 74 proposed that money be spent “analyzing the feasibility of privatizing services delivered at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute.” We could save a lot of money for the state by answering the question—Do not privatize the Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

Prior to 1960, all treatment of the disabled in Alaska was privatized. It was a very dark history for the disabled. In the 1960’s, the Alaska government took more control of treating the disabled and patient rights increased. The work is still not finished.

Private psychiatric facilities have been working for decades to get their financial foot back in the door for treating the disabled. Those same private facilities operate on convenience and economics and that philosophy is not conducive to good patient rights or patient recovery.

Our message to the Alaska House Budget and House Finance Committees: Save the money. Alaska should not privatize the state-run Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

Faith Myers Dorrance Collins

Mental Health Advocates, Faith Myers/Dorrance Collins, 3240 Penland Pkwy,
Sp 35, Anchorage, AK 99508 (907) 929-0532

Reference Information: The Alaska Supreme Court stated (paraphrasing) psychiatric institutions that use convenience and economics as a business model put patients in danger. AS47.30.847 gives institutions the ability to write the patient grievance procedure, due process, appeal process, etc.

The Alaska legislature should rewrite the grievance law for all of Alaska’s disabled. Alaska is about 30 years behind best practices.

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D&B

FACT: All Justices/Judges/Attorneys are bound by their "Oath of Attorney" (Bar Rule 5) and "Affidavit" (Bar Rule 64) to only practice in the Administrative "Third Judicial District" created by the Alaska Bar instead of the Constitutional Venue and Jurisdiction of the "Third District" established by the Legislature. They can't enter a constitutional Venue and jurisdiction of the "Third District."

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the Bar Card members are known as foreign agents!

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Also doing business w/o a license and posing as a 'government entity.'

I am Jeff Jabusch, the borough Manager for the City and Borough of Wrangell. As the finance director in Wrangell since 1977 and only recently the manager, I have seen the pre-oil years and then the various ups and downs since then. I know where this is all heading and all Alaskans will feel the effect.

We support the governor's budget which includes some funding of revenue sharing which makes up about 10% of our general fund budget. This like many of the cuts that you are considering will come at a cost of reduced services to especially smaller communities that don't seem to have the revenue generating options and tax base of larger communities. There may be other ways to assist local governments if these cuts are necessary.

1. A good look at the property tax exemption law would be an option. According to the State Assessor's Office, Wrangell has the highest percent of senior exemptions in Alaska. It is hard to fund services when 17% of the property is exempt for seniors. I know when this law was put in effect, 100% of the lost revenue of the taxing jurisdictions was reimbursed by the state to the municipality. I understand that it is not possible for the state to fund this, but would the original law have been passed if the reimbursement provision was not part of it. Also, I have no problem with seniors in need to receive this exemption, but in many cases the exemption is for the more wealthy in a community. Maybe you make this optional at the community level. I know this option will not be a popular one, but if it could be done on needed it may be more tolerable.
2. I would like to say that Wrangell if given a choice would prefer a state income tax versus a state sales tax. For those cities and boroughs that already have a 5, 6 or 7% sales tax as in Wrangell, Adding a sales tax to that or not allowing us to have 7% would limit our options to raise local revenue for the purpose of offsetting reduced state funding.
3. In our small community, public broadcasting is essential and part of our emergency network. We don't have other radio or TV stations in town. I don't know the total amount this adds to the budget, but would like some consideration to keep this funded.

Finally, my testimony is no different than the thousands of others that will testify to keep various aspects of the current state budget, but after you have listened and decide how to best prioritize the money available, I do support a balanced budget in the current year. Thank you and good luck.

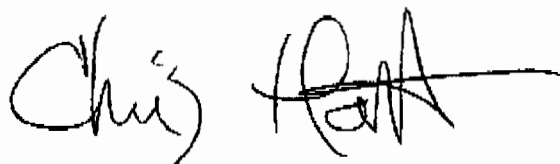
My name is Chris Hatton. I am a small business owner, EMT/Firefighter/search and rescue volunteer, and do environmental work for our local tribe here in Wrangell. Our radio station, KSTK, as well as other small town radio stations play a pivotal role in day to day life.

KSTK keeps us informed of local, regional and national news, events and updates. Living in small town Alaska affords me the luxury to choose whether I engage with broader issues or not. I do. I listen to NPR and APRN every day because I feel it is important to know what is happening in our country, state and region. I spend a LOT of time looking at a computer screen for my jobs, and simply would not engage with the outside world without the radio option KSTK provides.

From a more local perspective, KSTK allows us to maintain and continue to develop our true community. Wrangell is incredible, in that we are a community in the deepest sense of the word. We have social capital here. When I hear about a fund raiser for a child who is suffering from cancer, it allows me to look into the eyes of their parents in the grocery store or at the post office and say "I hope you are doing okay today." That is the type of thing that we do here. KSTK facilitates that very real communication because they tell us, through their programming, what is happening. here in town.

The radio station is the MOST reliable and timely method of communicating critical information. Whether it is a power outage or cell phone failure, KSTK provides updates that other avenues cannot. As a volunteer of the local fire department, KSTK assists us in providing timely information regarding missing persons, reaching beyond the grasp of social media and cell phones to remote areas that may hold clues to help with the search.

Without KSTK, I would have little knowledge of the incredible challenges that you currently face as our state officials. Your decisions are critical and affect all of us. Please take my PFD, use it wisely and allow programs like local radio to continue. Thank you for your service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Hatton". The signature is stylized with a large "C" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO EXPRESS MY THOUGHTS AND CONCERNS. I AM, GAYLE EASTWOOD, AND I LIVE IN BOTH FARFAGUT BAY, ON THE MAINLAND IN PETERSBURG BOROUGH, AND OUTSIDE DELTA JUNCTION. BOTH LOCATIONS ARE OFF THE GRID.

PUBLIC RADIO IS ESSENTIAL TO US, IN THE BUSH, AS IT IS ARE ONLY MEANS OF HEARING THE NEWS, GETTING MESSAGES ON "MUSKEG MESSAGES WITH KFSK IN PETERSBURG, RADIO GRAMS ^{KSTK} ^{WRANGELL} & MUKTUK MESSAGES WITH KUAC IN TAIIBANKS. SUCH MESSAGES COULD BE AS MUNDANE AS "YOUR AML DELIVERY IS READY TO BE PICKED UP" TO AS SERIOUS AS "TOLLIBUE BRODIER AS GOOD AS TOTTERED TO A FAMILY EMERGENCY".

MOST PLACES IN THE BUSH DO NOT HAVE "ALL SERVICE AND TV COVERAGE W/O EXPENSIVE SATELLITE EQUIPMENT SO WE RELY ON PUBLIC RADIO.

I REALIZE WE ARE IN A FINANCIAL CRUNCH AND CUTS MUST BE MADE SOMEWHERE. I AM SUGGESTING THAT PUBLIC RADIO NOT BE WHERE THE CUTS ARE PLACED. A LOT OF MONEY COULD BE SAVED IN OTHER AREAS. FOR EXAMPLE; ADF & G DOES NOT NEED VESSELS FOR SEASONAL

USE INSTEAD OF HAVING THEM LAYED UP, PAYING MOORAGE, ELECTRICITY, HAVING AN EMPLOYEE WATCH THEM WHILE LAYED UP, ETC, CONTRACT FOR VESSELS FROM THE COMMERCIAL FLEET FOR THE STOCK ASSESSMENT SURVEYS, ETC, AS IS BEING DONE FOR GROUND FISH.

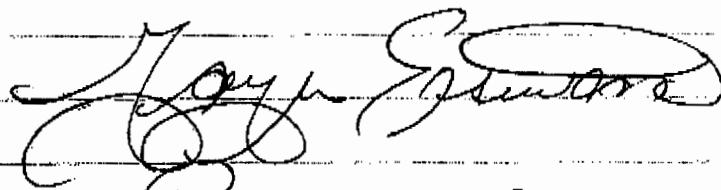
ELIMINATE THE "ALASKA CLASS FERRIES" AND THE "FAST FERRIES" AND KEEP THE MAINLAND STYLE FERRIES. THE AMHS IS OUR ROAD IN SOUTHEAST—NO OTHER ROAD IS PROFIT MAKING SO WHY DO YOU INSIST THE AMHS BE. REMOVING THE BARS IN THE FERRY WAS A MISTAKE BECAUSE THE BARS WERE MAKING MONEY ON THE FERRY. OFFERING "SPECIAL CRUISES" ON THE NORMAL ROUTES WOULD ALSO BE AN IDEA. FOR EXAMPLE: A QUILT CRUISE, PICKING UP QUILTERS AT EACH STOP AND HAVING THEM QUILT WHILE THE SHIP IS UNDERWAY FOR ALL OR PART OF THE FULL TRIP WOULD BRING REVENUE—TKTS, STATE ROOMS, MEALS ETC. THE SAME COULD BE DONE FOR MEN, I.E. FLY TYING CLINICS, ETC.

ANOTHER IDEA TO HELP SOLVE THE MONEY WOES IS TO REINSTATE THE "SCHOOL TAX" NOT FOR THE 10th IT ORIGINALLY WAS BUT FOR ⁸¹100⁰⁰ ON EVERYONE'S FIRST PAYCHECK, BE IT A RESIDENT OR TRANSIENT WORKER. ~~I WOULD~~ FEEL REINSTATING THE STATE INCOME TAX WOULD

ALSO HELP OUR FINANCIAL CRUNCH. I, HOWEVER, FEEL THAT THE PERMANENT FUND SHOULD BE LEFT ALONE.

SO, IN CONCLUSION: DO NOT REMOVE FUNDING FROM PUBLIC RADIO BUT FIND OTHER WAYS TO INCREASE REVENUE SO IN TIMES OF LOW REVENUE WE CAN STILL FUND PROGRAMS THAT ARE VITAL TO ALL NOT JUST THOSE IN THE MAJOR CITIES.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION.


PETERSBURG

465-6813

Valdez Legislative Information Office

Email: Valdez_LIO@legis.state.ak.us
Phone: 907-835-2111 Fax: 907-835-2097

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Kathleen Todd
REPRESENTING: self
BILL# / SUBJECT: Budget
COMMITTEE &
HEARING DATE: 3/3/16

- I urge the House to include taxes & permanent fund dividend reduction (or elimination) in its plans to balance the budget.
- It will not suffice to make cuts to programs, and some of these cuts will cost us in the future. For instance, pre K programs are cheap compared to remediation in K-12. Keeping some WYAMI payback is cheaper than paying travel for every Medicaid patient that has no doctor in their home community. Allowing roads to deteriorate past a certain point costs more.
- It will take time to set up tax structures, so we need to start now.
- We should spread the tax burden around to be fair and to capture tourist and out-of-state worker dollars (but beware of taxes that cost too much to collect). This is complicated and I don't have the answers to what would work best. I want you, the legislators to get the best information and make a decision on my behalf - sooner rather than later, to offset the economy, and the individual the tax.
- The Permanent Fund Dividend is not a sacred cow that has to continue.
- Saving the PFD or refusing to get taxes into place while decimating services and tanking the economy is not what the state needs and the voters understand this, much as ~~some~~ ^{some} may grumble otherwise.

Testimony to House Finance Committee Regarding the State Operating Budget – 2/29/16

Hello, for the record my name is Amy Lujan. I am the Executive Director for the Alaska Association of School Business Officials, also known as ALASBO, a professional association for K-12 school business professionals. Our members work with budgets, grants, and everything with a \$-sign attached to it in our K-12 school districts.

Prior to my six years in this position, I worked for fifteen years in three rural school districts, in Aniak, Barrow and Nome.

This afternoon I want to go on record with three messages regarding the proposed operating budget for the Department of Education and Early Development.

#1 – I would like to advocate for the restoration of the broadband assistance grants (aka BAG grants). This program benefitted 28 rural districts last year, to bring broadband up to 10 megs, which is a minimal amount for districts to be able to run current software programs. The proposed cut to the BAG grants program is \$1.6 million, and this amount enables districts to access as much as 11 times that amount in federal e-rate funding for broadband.

Instructional, testing and even financial management programs are no longer written to operate without adequate internet access. Broadband is essential infrastructure in the 21st century, and we can't operate without it in an era where we're being asked to do more, while absorbing reductions in resources.

Comments have been made that districts are not "choosing" to fund broadband on their own, but in these times choices are being made between turning the lights on, paying teachers, and among

essential instructional supplies and expenses like broadband. We need to make sure our schools have this basic infrastructure available to them.

#2 – The cuts to the DEED's personnel and basic operations budget, coming on top of other cuts in recent years are too deep. Members of my association work closely with school finance and teaching & learning support personnel, and they do a lot with a small number of personnel.

For example, we rely on DEED staff for assistance with basic audit and accountability questions, and to navigating state and federal programs. Many federal programs allow us to leverage state and local dollars to receive additional federal money, such as E-rate, Impact Aid, No Child Left Behind and the new ESSA, which will replace No Child Left Behind. We will need to work with DEED staff to implement ESSA effectively and legally, but I'm concerned there will be no one home at DEED to do that, with the level of these cuts. Mistakes will cost us federal money!

Finally, it's unrealistic to eliminate travel and postage, when staff need to communicate across our far-flung state. Travel is required by state statute for programs such as preventative maintenance.

There are many more programs I'd like to advocate for. For example, the elimination of Pre-K programs puts us completely out of sync with research-based studies that are resulting in the implementation of universal pre-school in many other states. From my 15 years in rural Alaska, I can tell you that these programs are needed to prepare our students for K-12.

However, my third and most important point is that my association has advocated for a state financial plan for at least 10 years. As people who work with numbers and budgets, we've long had a

concern about the reliance on fluctuating oil revenues. We work with budgets every day, so we know how difficult it is to make these kinds of choices about program reductions.

We want you to know that we support your efforts for a balance approach, combining new revenues, use of Alaska's savings, as well as well-considered cuts to solve Alaska's fiscal dilemma.

Thank you for your time and your service to our state.

House Finance Committee Hearing
FY17 Operating Budget
February 29, 2016

- I represent AgeNet, a statewide association which advocates on behalf of vulnerable older Alaskans and their family caregivers.
- The members of AgeNet appreciate the difficult budget situation which you face and we recognize that a combination of cuts and increased revenues are needed to address Alaska's Fiscal Crisis.
- On the revenue side, we support the use of Permanent Fund earnings.
- On the expense side, we need to help older Alaskans remain in their own homes for as long as possible through the senior grant program. It only costs \$600 per senior per year to fund the senior grants. A hot meal at the local senior center combats malnutrition and isolation which leads to illness, injury, and expensive hospital care.
- Home delivered meals for homebound senior citizens ensure good nutrition and a daily safety check to those whose only human contact that day is often the meal delivery driver. Research shows that states which invest more in home-delivered meal programs see greater reductions in nursing home placements. A nursing home placement for one older Alaskan costs a quarter million dollars per year.
- If a senior is fortunate to have family to depend on, we want to make it possible for the family caregiver to continue to care for them. Caring for an older person with dementia or physical disabilities can be physically and emotionally demanding and caregivers often neglect their own help.
- The caregiver support grant program offers training on caregiving skills, such as proper lifting, services such as respite care to give the caregiver a much-needed break, and items which relieve the stress of the caregiver, such as minor home modifications. Adult Day services provide a safe, structured setting for the elder so that family members can go to work with piece of mind.

Senior grants have proven to help older Alaskans remain with dignity in their own homes and communities. They also support families to care for their own and save the state money by preventing elders from going into costly institutions.

Your support of maintaining these critical programs will promote family self-sufficiency as well as cost savings to the State of Alaska. Thank you for your consideration.

Presented by Marianne Mills, AgeNet President, (907) 463-6154

My name is Stan Lujan, a resident of Alaska since 1978, and a former teacher, principal, and superintendent of schools.

Honorable legislators....

- In 2009 the cost per prisoner in our Alaskan prison system was \$49,800 per year, or \$136 per day.
- 1 year of Imagination Library books per pre-school child, per year is \$30, or 8 cent per day.
- In 2009, an Alaska Justice Forum Study concluded that **1 out of 36 Alaskans were incarcerated**. A majority of those Alaskans could not read past the 3rd grade reading level.

When that study came out, there was a rumor going around that our prison planners really used third grade reading scores **to predict** the number of prison beds they'll need?

The rumor was explosive, **because it speaks to so many of our deeply-rooted convictions—our apprehension** over the cost of our prison system, and our worry over the quality and costs of our public schools, and our pre-K support programs – **not to forget the long term benefits!**

While there is no evidence of our State Department of Corrections using third grade reading scores to predict the number of **prison beds they'll need**, there is still an **undeniable connection between literacy skills and incarceration rates**.

You see, a student not reading at his or her grade level by the end of the third grade is **four times less likely to graduate high school on time, and six times less likely for students from low-income families**.

Also, high school dropouts are 63 times more likely to be incarcerated than college grads....

So, while there is no direct evidence that prison planners use third grade reading scores to determine the number of prison beds they'll need, **there is a connection between literacy rates, high school dropout rates, and crime**.

This does speak to the important ways that reading skills are connected with favorable outcomes over the lifetime of a young child.

In conclusion, I urge the reinstatement of funding for Parents as Teachers, Best Beginnings, and Pre-K grants. These programs come at a small cost, relative to the long-term benefits.

My name is Noel Maxwell, and I am from Palmer, AK.

Thank you for taking the time to hear this public testimony. I know this budget crisis is a multi-dimensional problem, and you all have spent long hours in Committee and Sub-Committee hearings trying to understand and resolve all the various issues to craft a reasonable budget. Thank you for all your hard work.

As much as I hate to swallow it, the only way the numbers seem to add up is if we try to stabilize the budget by using part of the earnings reserve, after cutting as much waste and redundancy as possible. I also think it is imperative that the State set a guaranteed cap on spending and clearly provide for a way for the PFD to be restored to higher levels when revenue increases into the State from other resources. I do not support changes to the PFD that allows for unrestrained raids on the fund in future budget cycles when the State has increased income from other sources. Government hands on that pot have to be strictly limited.

That said, this only addresses one side of the budget problem – the money coming in.

It is also imperative to address the other side – the money spent.

As a State, we just got through the National Guard scandal, and we are currently dealing with extensive corruption at DOC. The “systemic problems,” as Commissioner Williams describes it, did not occur overnight. Whether in DOC or in other State departments, such as David Haeg’s case that has recently been in the news implicating an extensive judicial cover-up, show that the State has a track record of stonewalling and protecting itself at the expense of its citizens.

It is only now that the budget is in crisis that the legislature is intensely reviewing State Agencies. Yet people within and without these agencies repeatedly tried for years to get our State to deal with clear abuses. If the State had listened to its people in previous years when the budget was good, we may not be in as big a crisis as we are now.

Therefore, I think it is only right that *as* you, our representatives, look at cutting wasteful appropriations to these agencies, you also consider how to hold these same agencies accountable to correct and prevent such abuses in the future.

I have heard from some legislators that they don’t know what they can do about these situations. My mother always told me that those who hold the purse hold the power. If the legislature can’t hold these agencies accountable, who can?

I would be willing to pay extra in the budget for real accountability measures like public internal reviews and independent audits regularly on all our State Agencies and Departments so the public can clearly see what we are getting for our money. The Governor in his State of the State address suggested establishing a Public Integrity Task Force. What solutions would you legislators suggest?

This State not only has a budget problem, it has an integrity problem. There are some big rats in our rabbit holes. If you want our PFD, show us how you are going to ferret them out, and ensure a government that works for its people instead abuses them.

Thank you.

We are here to talk about the budget. Within that discussion, I can only present my story about what I have seen regarding all the corruption and waste of money and good people with in a system that fails to hold its own accountable, and how many resources has been wasted as a result.

My name is Dave Maxwell. I am a former State of Alaska employee with 8.5 years of service. I started with DOL at AVTEC in Seward as an electrician. During my time there, I noted one of my cohorts was running a side business on state time and the foreman was altering time cards. I reported it to Human Resources. They were found guilty, but the retaliation I experienced was harsh and unrelenting to the point of needing to quit to save the health of myself and my family. It is worthy to note that the thieving of State funds had been occurring for about 20 years.

I was eventually hired by DOC as an electrician at Palmer Corrections. Within my first 6 months I received many compliments and one in particular stood out, sent to me in an email.

(Read email)

Once this email came out and was sent to upper management, I was regularly targeted and attacked by Superintendent Tomi Anderson. A few months later she shut down the apprenticeship, no reason given – even though on record, Palmer Corrections was supposed to be offering educational programs to help reduce recidivism, just like they say they are pushing for today. How do we know these programs are for real now?

Back to my story – after multiple accusations against me and many investigative meetings were held with HR, I was still targeted.

About this same time, Randall McClellan, the president of the Corrections Officers' Union, had received a settlement from the state of over \$150,000 for having to endure the abuse of Commissioner Joe Schmidt and Director of Institutions Bryan Brandenburg.

Clearly there was a history of abuse within DOC that went beyond me. But I found out more directly when by chance I saw Joe Schmidt at Lowes one evening. I questioned Joe as to why he engaged in this kind of behavior and wanted him to know that other administrators in DOC were emulating that kind of abuse. Palmer Corrections was under a hostile work environment at the time. Joe's response

showed he didn't care about me, but was only concerned about the McClellan case. It was only two weeks after this conversation that I was fired. Makes me wonder if there is a connection.

Now the State is in a bind, and it doesn't look good for the budget. I'm wondering if now the State has ears to hear and deal with what is going on within its walls?

Why should the citizens of this State trust – and pay for – a State government that attacks its own citizens? What are you going to do to hold the system accountable?

I end with a quote from my father-in-law. "We cannot afford sin."

What are you going to do about it?

P62

Tutuo Doye Hood, 9350 View Drive, Juneau 99801
Though I served on the Juneau Commission
on Aging for many years in the past, today
am representing myself as a low income Sr.
I am single, 82 years old and, if I am lucky,
will turn 83 in August.

I wish to address some proposed cuts and
also revenue sources.

Educational programs at all levels, from
Pre-K to college level are the most
important expenditures in the state.
they impact learning ability, financial
achievement, community and state
economic stability, crime and prison
costs and, importantly, a well-educated
and informed citizen in Alaska, the United
States and globally — for the present
and generations to come.

The cuts being proposed to Early Education
all the way up through the University of
Alaska, I find damaging and irresponsible.

I have two graduate degrees and am a
licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, but
I do not have the advantage of a State or
other government pension and cannot afford to

retire. I cannot to live on my Social Security Benefit alone and, luckily, healthy enough to maintain a very part-time private practice. If my profession as a Marriage and Family Therapist was included on the state list of Medicaid Providers, both Alaska and myself would benefit financially. This should be supported by the Legislature.

Because of my counseling work I am involved with Individuals, Couples and Families around all sorts of issues, including alcohol and drug abuse, suicide and ex-inmates. I started the first Substance Abuse Treatment Program at Lemon Creek Correctional Center back in the 1980's. Budget Cuts to Health and Social Service Programs and Behavioral Health specifically have a serious negative impact on the well-being of all Alaskans and should be protected.

Cuts to Senior Benefits, The Senior and Veterans' \$150,000 Property Tax Exemption and reduction and future loss of the Permanent Fund Dividend would all prove financially devastating to me. I depend on these

Revenue increases are the solution, not more and more drastic cuts. It was a serious mistake to eliminate the State Income Tax. Maintaining a token amount would have avoided the political risk, you all apparently feel.

Following are the sources of Revenue I support:

1. A graduated Income Tax, starting at 15% which would be deductible on the Federal Income Tax ^{*It would inc. out of state workers}
2. Increased taxes on Alcohol and Tobacco products, as well as Marijuana businesses.
3. Increase the Alaska Marine Hwy Budget because as recent research shows, it contributes far more to the economy than it costs.

UA Public Testimony for House Finance Committee Consideration

From: **Jared Weems** <jaredweems@hotmail.com>

Date: Fri, Feb 26, 2016 at 2:05 PM

Dear House Legislators,

Name: Jared Weems

Affiliation: University of Alaska Fairbanks,
School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences,
Juneau, Alaska

Title: Ph.D. Student in Fisheries and Research Professional I

Legislative District: 33, Rep. Sam Kito

All Alaskans are under intense pressure to help solve the State's apparent fiscal crisis, however you are our elected officials sent to represent our integrated interests. We charge you with common sense and the common interests inherent in our strong and caring populace.

Current proposed action to severely cut the coming UA budget is being done without introspection of our common goals, seemingly haphazardly, and without consultation from our own professionals whom know the facts and role of higher educational institutions.

The attempt to subvert two main pillars of any university's core functions by legislation while under political stress shows a lack of wisdom and sense in a time when it is most needed. Research and public services and outreach are indispensable and cannot be separated from higher education both financially and socially. These two specific aspects of university function are the whole point of higher education and student instruction. A single student given knowledge has no purpose if they cannot push knowledge forward or apply it to our communities and citizens. Learning for the sake of learning benefits very few and will likely lead to migration of those young people we do educate to more supportive, forward thinking states.

Personally, I am both student and staff within the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences and would be directly impacted by such severe cuts to research and public service funds at UA. To conduct novel research in Alaska requires integration with locals on the ground across the state. Removing both funds and positions would essentially create a severe public knowledge gap in nearly every sector of the State's economy. Fisheries would be less informed and at risk, mining and resource extraction would be driven by outside, profit driven interests alone, and public voices and health would be strained to the point of non-participation or collapse, to name a few. I have been in Alaska for 10 years now and have never once considered permanently leaving for outside opportunities. Do not force educated, responsible, aspiring life-long Alaskans to leave the state they love just to satisfy a few million dollars savings near term. Our benefits through productive careers and socially aware families will in the long run be far more lucrative.

Overall, our brightest economic, scientific, and social minds have recently given a great deal of public testimony and editorials issuing the importance of always striving for a better higher education system, and the proposed cuts will prove detrimental to maintaining or growing our

UA System and will prove to be economic 'peanuts' in terms of closing the State's large fiscal gap.

Cutting drastically to UA and State budgets at a time of low oil revenues and decreasing interest in resource extraction could only lead to an all-out collapse of Alaska's economy. It's time to bring sense and professionalism back into this process, at a time it is so drastically needed. Please use the wisdom of professional individuals to which we all hold in high esteem, including President Jim Johnson and his evolving "Strategic Pathways", Dr. Gunnar Knapp and his sensibility and expertise on Alaska's economic past and future, and our elected Gov. Bill Walker whom has done an appreciable job of constructing a FY17 budget that is responsible and sensibly aggressive.

And don't forget to listen to your everyday Alaskans to whom you represent. All understand that a university's prime directive is to create and disseminate knowledge that is unbiased and trustworthy, represented in the products, documents, and students it creates and values. This encompasses all functions of which Rep. Wilson has identified as essentially non-important through lack of support proposed in these budget negotiations.

Thank you for your time and please take my testimony into consideration.

Sincerely for a strong Alaska and UA,
Jared Weems

afternoon,
Good morning,

Please reinstate university research and outreach funds from the state of Alaska operating budget.

I utilize the extension program here in Juneau monthly if not more frequently. I went through the Master Gardener Program. Now I write a gardening article for the Juneau Empire, and have a small business devoted to vegetable garden coaching. I am currently working on a Master Gardener project to update the varieties of vegetables that grow well in Southeast Alaska.

Encouraging people to garden increases our state's food stability.

I have been working with the other Juneau Cooperative Extension agent, Sarah Lewis, to provide a series of monthly walks, beginning in April and running through September. The purpose of these walks is to learn about what foods can be foraged and then to process those foods in a kitchen after the walk. The first walk is to look for nettles, devil's club shoots, twisted stalk, violet leaves, willow leaves, and whatever else we can find. We'll process nettle pesto and make a salad with the greens. These walks have come about because we offered a hike last year as part of the Food and Fowls Weekend activities.

Encouraging people to forage local resources increases our state's food stability.

My daughter and I have also been involved in the 4H Program. We began with the 4H cross country ski program. She then joined the Outdoor Explorers Club where I joined as a volunteer. We learned to fish (I had only caught pan fish in Wisconsin, so it was a learning experience for me as well), make fire starter and deer calls, learned to shoot (again, a first for me), and archery. Naara has been involved in the Luge program. But, perhaps her favorite 4H moments have been in the Alaska Experience Camp.

At the camp, my daughter has learned survival skills. She kayaked to a nearby island from the camp, set up a shelter and slept in it overnight. She learned how to cook over a campfire and has opportunities to learn to field dress a deer, fish, forage, and be confident in outdoor skills. One comment that sticks out with me when I assisted at camp one day was, "Everybody here carries a knife." If this statement had been made somewhere else, I would have worried, but here I knew it meant that my daughter had learned to feel comfortable with a necessary and useful tool.

4H Cooperative Extension provides experiences and knowledge to Alaska's Youth in a way that is different from other youth organizations.

program
I am also working on a hiking ^{program} with Darren Snyder in cooperation with Girl Scouts of Alaska to do a series of hikes, allowing naturalist experiences and getting kids (both girls and boys) outdoors.

4H Cooperative Extension provides experiences and knowledge to Alaska's Youth.

I took a class offered through Cooperative Extension, Starting and Operating a Specialty Food Business. It was offered out of Fairbanks, but without the technical assistance of Sarah Lewis, much of the video broadcasting would have been missed.

Cooperative Extension offers classes that are specific and focused, they are not offered anywhere else.

When I recently visited my friend in Hawaii, she had questions about her fruit trees. I immediately thought of going to the Cooperative Extension office. When we went there, I was disappointed at how little help they were. It was obvious that their funds were so low, they were ineffective at assisting at a most basic level. Cutting university research and outreach funds would most likely eliminate offices outside of Fairbanks and Anchorage and I know that everything I told you about in this letter would disappear or look like that very sad office in Hilo.

Please reinstate university research and outreach funds from the state of Alaska operating budget.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. J. Allen', written in a cursive style.

My name is Amy Jo Meiners, I am honored to be the 2016 Alaska Teacher of the Year. I was born and raised in Alaska, and I remember a time before oil when my grandparents and parents had the opportunity to contribute state taxes to fund a quality public education and other important health and safety services. When oil monies first came along they were able to supplant the need for our taxes, and a quality public education and other services could still be funded. Now, oil monies have dwindled and a quality public education is in jeopardy without stable funding. I urge you to give my generation the same opportunity to support services as my grandparents once had – allow me the chance to pay to support a quality public education. Please work to stabilize our multiple funding sources so that Alaska can continue its service to families for health, safety, and education. Given federal changes now, it is a crucial time for Alaska to invest in our children and our families. I am asking you to focus on revenue sources and quality, comprehensive services for the education, health, and safety of our children and families. The other day, one of my students, Jack, found in his research that NASA considers Apollo 13 to be their most successful failure. It led us into a conversation about when is a failure a success and when is it a failure? If you do nothing to stabilize funding, I believe it will be a great failure for Alaska on a galactic scale. However, you have the opportunity to turn this current economic state of failure into a success by choosing to focus on alternate funding sources and providing quality public education, health, and safety services that Alaskans can be proud of. Turn this economic downturn into the most successful failure it can be by stabilizing funding and supporting the public education and health of all Alaskans. Please bring out the creative thinking of the Apollo 13, as Jack and the rest of us need you to be successful! Stabilize funding. Support education.

My name is Andi Story. I am a Juneau school board member and testifying on behalf of our Board today.

Thank you for your support of education. Like all states, one of the biggest responsibilities and expenditures in the budget is the necessary funding of our children's education. How well we educate our children today will be reflected in the quality of our work force tomorrow. The public repeatedly prioritizes education as a highest value.

We ask this committee to prioritize, full funding of the Base Student allocation and the scheduled adjustment of \$50 dollars to the Base Student Allocation. This amount of funding is critical to keeping class sizes reasonable and continuing supports to help our students make academic gains.

Our Board understands that the state is facing tough financial times. Our Board urges the adoption of a state fiscal plan that maintains essential services necessary for a strong economy. A sustainable fiscal plan will make it possible for the Legislature as well as School Boards and staff to focus strategically, having a sustainable budget to work from.

Our school board can relate to what you all must be feeling now with the State budget, as you are having to make agonizing choices about what effective programs to cut. The Juneau Board is in our sixth year of making cuts as revenues are not keeping up with increased costs.

It is important to note that the States that are seeing the most academic gains in youth have strong early learning programs, make Kindergarten thru 12th grade investments, with an emphasis on Career Technical programs that offer dual credit with Universities.

Our Board appreciates your taking on the challenging task of examining various fiscal options and their economic impacts as you work towards a stable fiscal plan.

We are working countless hours to continue improving the education of our children. Thank you for all your dedication to children and youth of this state.



JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT

CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU

10014 Crazy Horse Drive • Juneau, Alaska 99801-8529 • (907) 523-1700

Board of Education 2015-2016 Legislative Priorities

As a member of the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB), we take part in adopting AASB Resolutions¹ and advocate for the following priority resolutions.

2.1 Sustained, Reliable and Adequate State Fiscal Plan

The sustainability, reliability and adequacy of Alaska's funding for public education are of highest concern to the Association of Alaska School Boards. AASB urges the Legislature to develop a state fiscal plan. This fiscal plan would provide a long-term approach to funding the costs of public education and other services upon which Alaska's students and their families depend. The plan should be strategic, sustainable and realistic, providing a framework for balancing budgets while adequately funding public education.

This plan will create a stable economy for families, businesses, government and investors.

2.2 Urging Adequate, Equitable and Predictable Funding of Public Education

AASB urges the State of Alaska to provide adequate, equitable, and predictable funding of public education. AASB believes that adequate funding should include the following:

- State funding of the TRS-PERS retirement liability;
- An increase to the Base Student Allocation to account for both inflation and adequate pre-K through 12th grade education;
- Recognition of the need to keep pupil-teacher ratios to a level in line with research-based best practices;
- Career and technical education.

The scheduled \$50 dollar BSA increase (HB 278) is a total \$12 million investment to children and youth statewide. This is a commitment to their education which is of high value to Alaskans. **The Juneau School District is facing a shortfall for FY 17 and has cut \$10.7 million in services and 96 positions from FY 2011 – 16².**

2.6 Funding for Early Learning Programs in Alaska

AASB supports legislation to add additional funding for the planning and programming of voluntary early learning and family support programs.

Alaska is at the bottom of the fifty states in preparing preschoolers for the skills needed in kindergarten. High state standards are set in math, reading and writing standards for children age 5 through 7. Best Beginnings, Parents as Teachers, quality preschool programs and Headstart save state revenues over time.

2.22 Provide Reliable and Efficient Service by the Alaska Marine Highway System

School districts in Southeast Alaska and Southcentral Alaska depend on ferry access to provide transportation to and from other communities for academic and athletic activities. **Activities keep youth involved in education and build physical, team and leadership skills.** The lack of frequent and dependable ferry schedules makes it difficult to schedule affordable trips.

¹ AASB Resolutions – *Where We Stand*

² JSD Cumulative Budget Reductions – Operating Fund

Board of Education Members:

Brian Holst, President; Andi Story, Vice President; Lisa Worl, Clerk

Josh Keaton, Emil Mackey, Sean O'Brien, Barbara Thurston

Email the Board at: schoolboard@juneauschools.org