

From: [James Alborough](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: OWL Funding Appeal
Date: Saturday, March 05, 2016 9:19:53 AM

Dear Sentate Finance Committee,

I am writing to you 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.

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

PS. Here are some additional facts about what OWL means to the citizens of Alaska:

OWL (Online With Libraries) provides broadband subsidies for Alaska's small and remote public libraries, a videoconferencing network for all Alaskans, and leveraged e-rate subsidies.

OWL internet funding leverages federal dollars in E-rate subsidy so is a good investment. **For every \$1 spent by the state on internet services, the federal match is \$4.**

Without OWL, Alaskan libraries will lose:

- Affordable and high speed Internet connections necessary for 21st century tasks and competencies.
- Videoconferencing capabilities which has allowed for student participation in classes not available in their own communities, local Board trainings, personal legal advice, healthcare advocacy, and shared programs and trainings between libraries.
- Access to information and resources and online library catalogs available only through consistent and high speed internet connections.

Cutting the OWL program will not only create hardship for libraries and communities across the state but will jeopardize federal E-rate funding that pays for 79% of Alaska's high broadband costs to rural and remote libraries.

OWL is a critical program that enables libraries to provide basic internet service to all Alaska residents.

James Alborough
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