

**From:** [Ann Millard](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Cc:** [Keith Martin](#); [Yukon Ron"s](#); [mike macdougall](#); [jan dave](#); [Jeanne Tatangelo](#); [Etta Mail](#); [Steve Hamlin](#)  
**Subject:** Need for continued support of KUAC-FM & ARCS  
**Date:** Monday, March 07, 2016 11:07:14 AM

---

This is my testimony to the Senate Finance Committee:

I have lived in Alaska and been a teacher here since 1986. When I first moved to Alaska, I lived in Eagle River and taught kindergarten in Anchorage and then moved to Fairbanks in 1988. I immediately discovered KUAC-FM and have been a supporter ever since. In 1996, I moved to Eagle (on the Yukon) to become Principal/Teacher of Eagle Community School. When I moved to Eagle, the only television we got was RATNET and there were no radio stations at all. I contacted KUAC and began the process of building a translator station for KUAC-FM here in Eagle. I retired in 2003 and again in 2013 and am now on a fixed income.

Eagle is a very small community and most people have incomes below the poverty level. In spite of that, every year the people of Eagle show their support for KUAC-FM by contributing to the pledge drive. Although I am retired, I am a sustaining member, contributing \$110 per month. Elisabeth Sager loves opera and supports that programming with regular donations. Sonja Sager and Mike MacDougal and their 6 children contribute every year to support the news and educational programming. Betty & John Borg, retired Postmaster, support the programming with regular contributions. Steve and Kristy Robbins, current Principal of Eagle Community School, get no TV reception because they live on the hill and KUAC-FM is their only source of local news (thank you Dan Bross). Often, I hear townspeople say "I heard it on NPR". That source of information is ONLY available on KUAC-FM in Eagle. Other contributors include Mary Morris and Ron West, Jan & Dave Roy, Jeanne Tatangelo and Dana Ulvi and these are just the ones I know about. Native residents in Eagle Village get no ARCS reception, but can get KUAC-FM. The most popular programming on ARCS is Alaska Weather, again the ONLY source of local weather information. There are several pilots in town and because our mail and freight delivery are weather dependent, Alaska Weather is vital to our community's commerce and transportation.

KUAC-FM is a big supporter of the Yukon Quest which passes through Eagle in February.

This event is not only our main cultural event in Eagle (there are many mushers in Eagle), it is also a source of revenue for the school and community.

Eagle residents have only two choices for TV reception. The first is to get a DishNetwork or Direct TV satellite dish, which is costly and out of reach for many residents, and presents low-quality programming compared to KUAC or AKPB. Only this year were we able to convert from an analog to digital signal increasing our choice of channels from 1(ARCS) to 4 (ARCS (Anchorage based), AKPB (Anchorage based), FNX (from KUAC) and 360 North (from UATV)). 360 North is our only access to Gavel to Gavel. We would never have been able to afford the conversion without government support. In fact, we did a special pledge drive in Eagle to support this conversion and received \$350 from local residents. Although that may not sound like much, it is a lot in Eagle for a local fund-raiser. UATV is also a source of educational programming for some of our students. Since there is no option for streaming KUAC-FM or TV, Eagle residents depend heavily on the publicly funded, non-commercial TV available only on the ARCS suite of programming. The signal reaches around Eagle City, but since the flood, when Eagle Village was destroyed, the residents of the Native Village of Eagle have been without access to ARCS. We are working on getting a permit to relocate Channel 5 (already held by the State of Alaska) but without support from the State, this conversion wouldn't be possible.

Eagle has no cell phone service. The only choices for Internet access are dial-up from APT (too slow for most purposes), HughesNet (which is capped at 350MB per day for almost \$100 per month), and the free public access at the library. Unfortunately, the library is only open 3 days a week and sitting outside during the winter is not a pleasant option. Without the OWL program and the subsidy for the internet at the school, Eagle would be even more isolated from news and educational programming than it is now.

We realize that there are hard choices to make when the price of oil is so low. Gasoline, propane and fuel oil have remained at \$5.00 per gal in Eagle since 2009. We pay almost \$1 per pound to ship groceries and freight in on Everts. Even so, many people are more willing to give up part of the PFD, get reduced services from DOT (the road is only open from Apr.1-Oct. 1), find other funding for the school, or even pay an income tax rather than lose the funding for KUAC-TV. When I was Principal in the 1990's and gas was \$18 a barrel, we were able to maintain the ARCS and KUAC-FM funding. The equipment is housed at the school and doesn't cost the State of Alaska for the electricity to run the station. The school also maintains the equipment and pays a portion of the cost when equipment has to be replaced.

Finally, last winter, I was in Colorado visiting my family. From what I observed, I am convinced that when marijuana taxes are put in place, you will discover that they will generate enough money to keep the funding for schools and public broadcasting at or above current levels.

Thank you for your attention to Eagle's needs and we hope you will consider other alternatives for cutting spending rather than eliminating or reducing our access to Public Broadcasting.

Sincerely,  
Ann Riley Millard

Ann Millard  
[amillard@aptalaska.net](mailto:amillard@aptalaska.net)  
POB 124  
Eagle, AK 99738  
907-547-2321