

From: [Jessie Morgan](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support Online With Libraries (OWL)
Date: Friday, March 04, 2016 4:56:48 PM

Good afternoon,

I am e-mailing to encourage the Senate Finance Committee to continue supporting Online With Libraries (OWL). OWL provides broadband subsidies for Alaska's small and remote public libraries, a videoconferencing network for all Alaskans, and leveraged e-rate subsidies.

OWL (Online With Libraries), which was included in Governor's budget, is being cut entirely by finance education subcommittee. The governor's funding of **\$761,800** should be restored. 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. In Haines alone, we stand to lose \$28,000 in federal e-rate funding. OWL is a critical program that enables libraries to provide basic internet service to all Alaska residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

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