

From: [John](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: public comment budget
Date: Saturday, March 05, 2016 12:01:49 AM

March 4, 2016

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am commenting on the budget.

First, I want you to fund Public Broadcasting at the current year's level. I live in Talkeetna, and our public radio station is not a luxury; it is an necessity. It lets us know what is going on in our community so we can participate in our community; it gives us local (especially important), state and national news, and it keeps us informed and warned in emergencies (e.g., floods which are becoming more frequent in recent years, and wildfires such as last summer's Sockeye fire in nearby Willow). KTNA has many volunteers and enjoys strong and broad financial support from the community. But we can't do it all... we need your help. Please restore funding.

Second, you, the legislature, are cutting or talk about cutting in all the wrong places: the Nome Youth Facility, Senior Benefits Program, UAF, closing rural schools, and you have ADOT so tight that it is refusing to fund maintenance on a planned construction of an underpass near the intersection of the Parks Highway and Talkeetna Spur Road, so Susitna Valley High students can safely cross the Parks Highway... even though the underpass would be a state facility in a state right of way. You, the legislature are bit by bit cutting off our future and dismantling the fabric of our society.

Third, stop throwing money down the drain by continuing to fund the mega projects, like Susitna-Watana Dam, Juneau Road, Road to Ambler, Knik Crossing... four that are the most egregious waste of money. If you are going to cut, cut these mega-projects.

Fourth, you focus almost entirely on cuts. I and everybody else have had a free ride for 36 years, since the state income tax was abolished. It is about time for the people of this state to start paying for the services they consume. I urge you to consider reestablishing an income tax. And other taxes... motor fuels, fishing, mining, and especially get rid of the oil tax giveaway. I'd say cap the dividend at \$1000 or one-half (of what it would normally be) if it weren't regressive.

I urge you to put an end to your cut-cut-cut mantra. You are hurting a lot of people, with a disproportionate burden on those least able to manage the loss.

I hope you get serious about addressing our budget problems in a comprehensive way.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

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