

**From:** [MarkandCamille Terhune](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** proposed UAF cuts  
**Date:** Monday, March 07, 2016 5:22:35 PM

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I am a 37 year working resident of Alaska. My husband, daughter, son and I have all attended the University of Alaska. My son is graduating in May and has applied for graduate studies. I am very concerned about the enormous cuts to the University of Alaska funding that are being proposed by the Finance subcommittee. These cuts are drastic and devastating and will cause lasting destruction to the University education system and research overall and to individual educational concentrations, as well as to the ability of the University system to remain accredited overall and within specific core degree specialties.

I am shocked that such short-sightedness is being exercised by those who are so involved in planning for the long-term continuance and success of our state. As a former employer whose organization provided professional services in-state, 70% or more of the professional staff I hired graduated from the University of Alaska. Some continued to pursue master's level education while employed. In addition, some non-professional staff were pursuing a technical or bachelor's level education. The University of Alaska is training the majority of our workforce at some level. This state has difficulty enticing professional and para-professional workers from other states into our workforce, with the exception of possibly the Anchorage area, and this is a problem for us. We are in need of teachers, counselors, engineers, health care professionals, etc. throughout our state and the University of Alaska system is educating students in these professions. We injure our entire workforce and the future of our state when we devastate the University Of Alaska system and public education. It is time for you to think creatively and make some difficult decisions that will bring revenue into the state, not make cuts so deep that you are removing bone and limbs and causing permanent disability to educational or other systems. Some responsible cuts need to be made, but crippling systems, especially the University of Alaska, is irresponsible.

I am not a lover of taxation but the people of this state need to help contribute towards the benefits that they receive from our state government, such as roads and education. You can initiate a seasonal sales tax. All who travel on vacation know that you will pay taxes for anything related to traveling. However, Alaska businesses have long blocked such a tax. It is time to stop catering to tourism businesses and initiate a seasonal sales tax. The work tax can be increased according to income, taking care not to burden our lower income citizens.

Alaska can choose to stop providing medical benefits and welfare to non-US citizens who move here to collect free benefits and a permanent fund dividend. I believe that this is a huge cost. The Permanent Fund dividends can be partially tapped, leaving some for parents and students for college planning and expenses. A responsible state income tax is possible, as long as a limit is put in place to keep the budget in check and from becoming dependent on taxation or becoming overly bloated with excess.

At the same time, development of other revenue streams is essential, which leads back to why you shouldn't cripple the University system, since mineral development, exploration, engineering, healthcare are part of their expertise, with research being an integral component.

Incentives should be offered to all state funded programs and systems to find cost saving measures. Teach prudence by example and find the waste in your own offices and budgets.

You have many options to choose from and I'm sure that creatively and collaboratively you can come up with more. What you lack is the conviction that supporting our educational institutions is valuable and supports the overall growth, health and well-being of our state. I urge you to support funding the University of Alaska. The Governor has already recommended \$16 million in further cuts over last year's enormous cuts. I urge both you and

the Governor to change your way of thinking and support full funding for the University of Alaska and further, support funding for public education.

Sincerely,

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