

From: byelines@arctic.net
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Cuts to public broadcasting
Date: Friday, March 27, 2015 10:49:35 PM

To the Alaska Senate Finance Committee:

I understand that the State of Alaska finds itself in a difficult fiscal situation at the moment and I appreciate the tough choices that the Governor and the Legislature have to make. However, I am extremely concerned about the proposal to cut ALL funding to public media in the state. As a resident of Unalaska, I know how much our community relies on our local public radio station, KUCB, and I am sure that residents of other rural communities feel the same about their stations. In much of rural Alaska, there is only one local radio station and it is publicly funded. These stations provide essential information and services to Alaska citizens across the state.

In Unalaska, our radio station is an integral part of the community and is the only source of local daily news—we cannot rely on reports from Anchorage or Juneau to adequately reflect the priorities of our small town in the Aleutian Islands. KUCB also provides state, national and international news, fisheries reports, weather alerts, emergency announcements, and updates about local events and activities. KUCB collaborates with the city of Unalaska, the Unalaska City School District, the local medical clinic, Public Safety, and virtually all local organizations to provide important health, safety, educational, and cultural information to the public. I am greatly distressed to think that the legislature might tell us that these services are not important to our citizens, expecting us to settle for information from elsewhere that does not fit with our community's needs.

If implemented, these cuts will be devastating to many small communities across the state, including ours, resulting in work force reductions and corresponding reductions in local service throughout Alaska. Our community depends on this service! The State of Alaska provides about one quarter of KUCB's current budget. KUCB as we know it will not exist without funding from the State of Alaska. This crippling funding cut will result in a drastic cut in the local programming our community counts on. Instead, local information will be replaced with syndicated content which does not address our community's unique circumstances.

You may think of a radio station as just music and entertainment, but in rural Alaska it is so much more. It is an integral part of community life, providing essential information to our residents as they go through their day. We rely on KUCB to keep us updated on local issues, upcoming elections, City Council activities, weather, marine info, emergency alerts, high school sports (a big part of rural life!) and local events and activities. I ask that you take our community's needs into consideration when discussing such a major cut to public broadcasting. Please seriously weigh the implications these cuts will have on our small communities throughout Alaska as you make your decision.

Thank you.

Richard Bye
PO Box 921169
Dutch Harbor AK 99692
907-581-6321