

From: [Kirsten McGraw](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: AK Budget Cut - Interpreter Referral Line
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:01:26 PM

Dear Finance Committee,

My name is Kirsten McGraw. I am deaf and I speak on behalf of Fairbanks Deaf Community and for myself as well on the issue of cutting services necessary for Alaskan Deafs, specifically Interpreter Referral Line. IRL is provided by Access Alaska here in Fairbanks along with many other vital services that has aided many deaf and hard of hearing people with every day needs.

Interpreter referral line does several things - One, it screens and provide certified American Sign Language interpreters for many Deafs who do not speak or write English. ASL is a separate language from English. ASL do NOT share same grammar structure or concept. There are some interpreters who can do SEE (signing exact English) and they're just as important as ASL interpreters. I am bilingual and can understand both language, but there comes situations where my hearing loss prevents me from receiving information required for my job on same level as people with normal hearing, IE large meeting with many voices or meeting with doctors where there are many terms that are tough to understand through lipreading. Without certified interpreter I only can understand 20% of all things being said because lipreading don't always succeed.

Using IRL service has gotten me interpreters to help me have clear communication with my trainers, my bosses, and my doctors.

Hearing loss for deaf people is permanent and there are no cure for it, only tools such as interpreter, hearing aids, therapy, etc can help us overcome difficulties associated with deafness.

Two, IRL also provide interpreters who are certified to work in hospital setting or with doctors. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) require health care providers and organizations, as well as their business associates, develop and follow procedures that ensure the confidentiality and security of protected health information (PHI) when it is transferred, received, handled, or shared. As such, it is required for interpreters to have the clearance to work with deaf people or the said providers and organizations face dire consequences when non-certified interpreters are used and misinformations happens, or dire health issues (as result of miscommunication through interpreters) occur, or results in death to deaf patients.

Three, IRL provides jobs for ASL interpreters and allow Deaf people like me to have on site service. There has been some talk of removing the option of on-site interpreters (removing IRL in all) in favor of off site such as video relay service in where businesses with deaf clients will have to hire out of state interpreters and rely on Alaska's already shaky internet connection for clear video images. Not only using video relay often result in poor video quality due to internet connection (i.e. delays, freezes, choppy images, etc), it doesn't always guarantee

clear communication, and it is considerably MORE expensive to hire out of state than it is to hire someone in Fairbanks. Budget-wise for many people... It doesn't make sense to spend MORE for service that isn't as good when we can save with IRL.

Without IRL in Fairbanks, I fear more interpreters will leave Alaska or Fairbanks due to lack of go-between person or contacts with Deaf people.

And lastly, IRL and number of other services do fall under American Disabilities Act in providing equal opportunities. In such that removal of it results in putting businesses, organizations, and Deaf people in many areas that don't have enough support to run the service as for profit (like Anchorage) in the dark.

I understand that the people on finance committee have a tough job of deciding on budget cut and I hope all the facts and informations given so far helps with the decision making.

Thank you,

Kirsten McGraw

From: [Paul Affatato](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Bargaining Chip
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:03:01 PM

To whom it may concern:

I've written to all of my representatives. I've gotten one response, which was a few sentences long.

Year in and year out, we as a public body vote for our representatives. And they let pride, greed, and other personal gains stand in the way of doing what's right for everyone.

Now we're being used as a bargaining chip, like a plastic chip in a poker game that fuels political interests - not public interests. My entire family and household works for the State. And we're being used like toys, pushed around to prove who's who. We don't care. The bodies don't change anything. But God, would it be nice, if for once they represented public interests, instead of their own political agendas, and did so without trying to look like a hero deserving of special recognition for **DOING THEIR JOBS**.

The same way all of us State employees do our jobs, proudly. We work hard to keep everything in motion and we're discarded as soon as it helps a political ambition.

It's ridiculous. Grow up. Do what needs to be done. We're paying you enough to do at least that much.

Regards,

Paul Affatato
907-500-4141

Lilly Goodman

-Allwright

30656 Kupark

Eagle River AK

99577

MAY 22 2015

To House Finance Committee:

Thank you for hard work for Alaskans!

→ Please work to restore education funding. Education needs to be a priority Above transportation projects. ~~The~~ Education budgets have been slashed to the point of destabilizing education institutions. In the Anchorage School District for example, there is one person in the science curriculum department doing a job that was formerly shared by seven people!!

→ Please ~~expand~~ Medicare in Alaska. Clinics for lower income residents cannot heal people without funding. Medicare expansion will save ~~the~~ money for Alaska by providing health care to those who save their ailments for the emergency room.

→ Please do NOT pull funds from the permanent fund earnings reserve. Such a move would represent a FLAT TAX for all state residents. Other more thoughtful forms of revenue exist such as income tax and cuts to unnecessary TRANSPORTATION projects.

Thank you.

Lilly Goodman

Lilly Goodman-Allwright

From: [Andy Durny](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: Budget and PF Earnings Reserve
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:43:17 PM

I oppose efforts to push through a budget by taking billions of dollars from the Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve without fully considering either the full impact this might have, or other options for dealing with the current budget impasse.

Before placing the full burden of budget cuts on schools, state employees, seniors, and tens of thousands of other Alaskans, and before jeopardizing the Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve account, I believe the legislature should look at other options. In particular, I support proposals to reduce or limit the hundreds of millions of dollars in tax incentives and tax credits that were so generously granted to the profit making multi-national oil corporations, while the rest of us wonder if we will have jobs, affordable health care, and good schools.

If cuts must be made, the burden should not be placed solely on the Alaskan public (I.e. The voters) while profit-making corporations continue to benefit from our resources.

Andy Durny
PO Box 70768
Fairbanks AK 99707

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bob Marshall](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: Budget comment
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:44:58 PM

SOA legislators,

Please restore funding to the ferry system in SE Alaska...it is our highway and access to the rest of the US.

Please also implement the governors Medicare proposal and fully fund education.

Why fund oil companies and not us??

Robert Marshall
Juneau AK

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S™ III, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: [Barry Santana](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: Budget Shenanigans
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:42:47 AM

All,

This is a very sad state of affairs when an entity of a governing body chooses to play games with the process by using the Permanent Fund in a shell game. You were elected to work TOGETHER to provide Alaskans with a government that considers the voices of ALL your constituents in coming to a compromise on important issues. A funded budget is an important issue, for those of you unable to comprehend this.

The holdout of a minority group on a major issue is a tool to gain compromise in our political system the best I can determine, and has been for as long as I have been aware of politics. This used to work. Make it work now.

Most Alaskans want a reduced and funded budget.

Republicans:

- I don't see you making much of an effort to reduce the budget when you don't address the LIO Building fiasco you created a few years ago. We can't afford it now and probably for the next decade. Get over it. Fix the problem. Move to less expensive digs and deal with the contract you created. You had no problem going back on the educational funding promises made in better times.
- Remove any money left over for KABATA and Watana Dam and make it available for spending in the budget. We can't afford these project either. When the State is flush with money again, consider the projects based on best available data at that time. Baseline project data can be filed away for a small cost.
- Rescind the Agrium tax give-away and remove any moneys from this and future years' budgets. We can't afford to grease those wheels at this time either. Reconsider when we are on better financial footings.
- Road extensions in Anchorage, Juneau and the Mat-Su Borough as well as any off the radar in other parts of the state should be de-funded and the money removed put in this year's budget. We can wait on those frills and just buck-up and use current travel patterns that are used now.
- Do not renege on your previous commitment to education. Make some minor cuts in accordance with the current fiscal condition the State finds itself.
- Try Medicaid Reform and Expansion concurrently. We will only have one year left as a freeby from the Feds. Keep what works after 2 years. My concern is that neither will work. At the national level, we are stuck with Obama care. Alaska has little or no say in this fact. Understand that. 3% of my Federal Taxes are going to Obama care; it is a significant amount. I'd prefer to see it used for Alaskans.
- Last but not least, get with the times and cut the Legislative budget by 16-20%. Get some skin in the game. Your constituents are going to have to cut back, you should as well.

Democrats:

- Accept some funding cuts for education. Maybe parents will have to step up as volunteers in the schools or accept some of the burden of education.

- You have a reasonable proposal on tax credits for oil exploration. Stick with that approach, maybe tie a trigger to the price of oil in the future.
- Hold fast on Erin's Law. This state has way to many child molestation problems. This is not a budget issue as I see it. Republican should as well.
- I don't support Obama care. See my next to last point for Republicans. Medicare/Medicaid fraud and inefficiency at the State level needs to be addressed. I am FOR trying Medicaid expansion for 2 years and see how both "reform" and "expansion" work out (that means keep records and audit the data). If Medicaid expansion doesn't result in cost savings and improved health care and associated costs outside the Medicaid program, expect the program to be dropped.
- I am unaware of Senior cuts in the budget, and I am one. Seniors may have to take a 20% cut as well, but only if the legislature takes the same cut in their proposed budget request. Actually, I think Legislators should have to accept a 20% cut in benefits as well, but that would be unheard of!

I am an Independent voter and have been for 20 years. I remember the years of a bi-partisan legislature and found it worked well. I have probably voted 90% Republican in my nearly 40 years in Alaska, and I have found myself voting more moderate as I age. In the last 2 elections I have found a larger number of moderate Democrats than Republicans and I find this surprising. It was a no-brainer for me to vote for an Independent governor ticket made up of a Republican and a Democrat with good ideas. I predict that Independents (and probably Republicans as well) in this state are going to have no choice but to vote based on which candidates are tagged with being in this dysfunctional Legislature and how they handled reasonable Administration proposals in the 2016 and 2018 elections. I predict that the majority's shenanigans will stick with Alaskan voters for a long time. Kudos to those of you who are stepping out and showing a little independent thinking and mainstream Alaskan sentiments on issues this year. That is what I expect of the political process and nothing less. I believe that Governor Walker's administration has done that.

Barry Santana

Wasilla and Pedro Bay

From: dchappel@usa.com
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)
Subject: comments for finance committee - subject: budget
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:55:33 AM

I understand the dire budget situation we are in. I've seen David Teal's presentations & researched the situation.

I do NOT favor using PFD earnings at this time. If/when the legislature designs a long term sustainable plan for low oil prices that has citizen support, I'd support using PFD earnings as only one PART of the solution.

I understand that we cannot cut our way to right-sized government, however many large projects should be delayed rather than funded with limited finances. Also, my AK senior benefit cut is a 3% cut in my limited income, so I believe state workers should be able to forgo or reduce any raises as their share of solving our solvency problem.

As to increasing revenues - I would support a modest sales and/or income tax ONLY if you "spread the pain" by reducing various industry tax incentives or other economic-stimulating "give-aways" by 10-25%. The SB21-benefitting companies should be able to live with even a 10% cut in their tax credits. I believe many Alaskans would accept taxes IF the resource industries also sacrificed some of their income.

Medicaid expansion should be passed. Low wage workers currently pay for other people's private insurance every time they spend their consumer dollars which creates profits that fund other people's insurance. It's only fair that those who help pay for health insurance for others deserve to have it themselves.

I've been very disappointed in how the majority has influenced this session. Budget problems should have been resolved early in the session and the positions of the citizens need to be respected by passing legislation as they indicate.

In summary....

1. support education
2. pass original Erin's law
3. pass Medicaid expansion
4. fully fund public safety

Thank you,
Denise Chappel
Sunshine, Alaska

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From: [Bob French](#)
To: [Rep. Adam Wool](#); [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Rep. Benjamin Nageak](#); [Rep. Bob Herron](#); [Rep. Bob Lynn](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Cathy Munoz](#); [Rep. Cathy Tilton](#); [Rep. Charisse Millett](#); [Rep. Chris Tuck](#); [Rep. Craig Johnson](#); [Rep. Daniel Ortiz](#); [Rep. Dan Saddler](#); [Rep. David Talerico](#); [Rep. David Guttenberg](#); [Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux](#); [Rep. Geran Tarr](#); [Rep. Harriet Drummond](#); [Rep. Jim Colver](#); [Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins](#); [Rep. Kurt Olson](#); [Rep. Lance Pruitt](#); [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Rep. Lora Reinbold](#); [Rep. Louise Stutes](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Matt Claman](#); [Rep. Max Gruenberg](#); [Rep. Mike Chenault](#); [Rep. Mike Hawker](#); [Rep. Neal Foster](#); [Rep. Paul Seaton](#); [Rep. Sam Kito](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Shelley Hughes](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Wes Keller](#)
Subject: Comments on Budget Hearing
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 10:23:04 AM

Due to work obligations, I will not be able to testify on the budget hearing this morning. Please consider these comments in your deliberations.

Yes, we have a true fiscal crisis, but the current budget shows a lack of understanding of the importance of truly investing in Alaska. As a business owner, I understand that in order to attract and retain good employees, a key indicator that people look at is the quality of our schools, and livability of our cities and villages.

We could avoid the \$47 million in education cuts by the Senate and the \$32 million cut by the House simply by deleting the \$45.3 million inserted for the Knik Arm Bridge, the \$20 million for the Bragaw extension, \$6 million for the Susitna Dam and \$25 million for the Juneau Access Road. Continuing to cut education threatens Alaska's future; Great schools help draw and keep good people in Alaska.

A Kindergarten or Pre-K child never gets a 2nd chance to get that important start on their education path. What happens if we cut partial down payments on foolish Mega-Projects that Alaska is not able to afford at this time? A few Wall Street bankers and overpaid consultants need to figure out how else to make their yacht payments.

Please restore full funding to our schools, and cut funding for the Knik Arm Bridge, Bragaw Extension, Susitna Dam, and Juneau Access Road.

Mega Projects can wait. Kids can't.

Bob French

907-240-1744

From: [Scott Chesney](#)
To: [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Sen. John Coghill](#); [Sen. Pete Kelly](#); [Sen. Kevin Meyer](#); [Sen. Anna MacKinnon](#); [Rep. Mike Chenault](#); [Rep. Charisse Millett](#); [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)
Cc: [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Sen. Berta Gardner](#); [Sen. Bill Wielechowski](#); [Rep. Chris Tuck](#)
Subject: Comments on the operating budget
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 10:51:31 AM

Dear Legislators –

I am writing today to take those of you in the majority to task about your conduct in this year's legislative session and for your lack of respect – some would say contempt – for the duly elected governor of the state and, by extension, the people of the state.

It has been clear since before the session began that the majority caucus was disdainful of Governor Walker and was going to do its best to ensure a difficult session. What I never expected to see, though, was the utter contempt you have demonstrated for the strongly expressed will of the voters and our desire for reasonable people to compromise and come to a reasonable agreement on how to resolve the current budget difficulties.

So, here we go. The operating budget: As I understand it, the differences between the budget proposed by the minority and the one that was passed are fairly small, money-wise, but huge as far as priorities go. So here are some realistic options for cuts in the budget which reflect more reasonable priorities:

- 1) Suspend oil companies' tax credits. You don't have to rewrite SB 21, just suspend for a year (subject to renewal) the credits we are paying to the oil companies.
- 2) Zero out the Susitna dam and Bragaw road extension.
- 3) Move out of the Anchorage Legislative Taj Mahal and terminate the lease.
- 4) Expand Medicaid.

The picture I see from here is that of an out of control legislature, hell-bent on showing the Governor and members in the minority just who has the power in the state and how that power will be exercised. It's pretty childish, in my opinion, to adjourn the session called by Governor Walker, and reconvene ten seconds later just to make a point. Did you not think your point had been made before then? But, childishness and the majority getting its way seems to have been the theme of the whole session. And now, I understand that there is a movement to tap the Permanent Fund earnings reserve because you are unwilling to compromise. All I can say is this: Go ahead. Touch the third rail. Elections are coming. Make my day.

Scott Chesney

P.O. Box 84396

Fairbanks, AK 99708



**ALASKA STATEWIDE POLL
FIELDDED APRIL 6-8, 2015**

Methodology: Hays Research Group LLC contacted 500 Alaskans by telephone (live, not automated calls) for this survey. Individuals were selected randomly from a list of Alaskans who had voted in at least two of the last three statewide general elections in Alaska. At least 20% of the individuals contacted for this survey were called on a cell phone. Quotas were established to ensure a representative sample by gender, region, and to match the demographics of the population of Alaska. The sample size of n=500 completed surveys results in a margin of error of +/- 4.3%. This survey was paid for by NEA Alaska.

Contact Adam Hays at adam@haysresearch.com if you have questions about this poll.

Hello, my name is _____. I am calling from Hays Research Group and we are conducting a very brief survey this evening. May I speak to (name)?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Continue	500	100.0%
2. Initial Refusal	0	0.0%
3. Schedule Callback	0	0.0%

Screenener 1

Are you 18 or older?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	500	100.0%
2. No	0	0.0%

Screenener 2

Are you registered to vote in Alaska?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	500	100.0%
2. No	0	0.0%

Gender: (BY OBSERVATION)

		500
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Male	250	50.0%
2. Female	250	50.0%

Question 1

Do you approve of the job that Governor Walker is doing to balance the budget?

		500
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	277	55.4%
2. No	69	13.8%
3. Don't know / Refused	154	30.8%

Question 2

Do you approve of the job that the Legislative Majority is doing to balance the budget?

		500
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	129	25.8%
2. No	247	49.4%
3. Don't know / Refused	124	24.8%

Question 3A

(Asked only to split sample A)

Over the years, the state has put about 16 billion dollars into savings, not including the Permanent Fund, but at current spending levels, the state will spend those savings in a few years.

Neutral analysts have pointed out to the Legislature that even if all possible funds were cut from the budget, leaving only Constitutionally mandated expenses, there would still be a nearly 1 billion dollar deficit and that cutting the budget alone is not enough to resolve the deficit. Would you support a state income tax to help close the state budget gap?

		250
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	108	43.2%
2. No	124	49.6%
3. Don't know / Refused	18	7.2%

Question 3B

(Asked only to split sample B)

Over the years, the state has put about 16 billion dollars into savings, not including the Permanent Fund, but at current spending levels, the state will spend those savings in a few years

Neutral analysts have pointed out to the Legislature that even if all possible funds were cut from the budget, leaving only Constitutionally Mandated expenses, there would still be a nearly 1 billion dollar deficit and that cutting the budget alone is not enough to resolve the deficit. Would you support a state income tax if it meant reducing cuts to public schools, the University of Alaska, and Pre-K and early child literacy programs?

	250	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	125	50.0%
2. No	106	42.4%
3. Don't know / Refused	19	7.6%

Question 4

If you had to choose between a state sales tax and a state income tax in order to fill the current budget shortfall, which would you prefer? (If Respondent says neither, ASK: If you had to choose right now, which would you prefer: a state income tax or a state sales tax?)

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. State income tax	157	31.4%
2. State sales tax	285	57.0%
3. Don't know / Refused	58	11.6%

Question 5

Would you support spending a portion of the Permanent Fund earnings reserve, which would reduce the size of the annual Permanent Fund Dividend over time but would protect the main savings account of the Permanent Fund?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	198	39.6%
2. No	263	52.6%
3. Don't know / Refused	39	7.8%

Question 6

The state revised its oil tax law in 2013, and Alaskans voted by a narrow margin in August not to repeal the new tax system. At current oil prices, the state gives out more in oil tax credits to the oil industry than it receives in revenue from the oil industry. Would you support the Legislature revisiting the issue of oil credits and taxes in light of the current deficit?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	355	71.0%
2. No	111	22.2%
3. Don't know / Refused	34	6.8%

Question 7

Some have said that Alaskans will need to feel the pain of budget cuts before they are willing to support new taxes. Do you think lawmakers should wait until next year before they consider new forms of state revenue to address the current deficit?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	206	41.2%
2. No	268	53.6%
3. Don't know / Refused	26	5.2%

Question 8

Last year, the Legislature passed a three-year funding plan for education, but the Governor has proposed cutting education funding by 32 million dollars for next year. The Senate just proposed cutting an additional 47 million dollars from education formula funding. Do you think the state Legislature should agree to cuts for the coming year, or should they provide the original amount that was committed in last year's three-year funding plan?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Agree to cuts for coming year	140	28.0%
2. Provide the original amount that was committed in last year's three-year funding plan	319	63.8%
3. Don't know / Refused	41	8.2%

Question 9

The Alaska Legislature has eliminated the funding next year for the Best Beginnings Literacy program, which provides free books to nearly 24 thousand Alaskan children up to age five. Would you support restoring the nine hundred thirty seven thousand dollars fund for this program for next year?

		500
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	253	50.6%
2. No	210	42.0%
3. Don't know / Refused	37	7.4%

Question 10

The Alaska Legislature has eliminated the funding next year for the Parents as Teachers home visiting program, which is an early childhood parent education and family support program. Would you support restoring the \$681,000 fund for this program for next year?

		500
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	212	42.4%
2. No	230	46.0%
3. Don't know / Refused	58	11.6%

Question 11

Would you support directing new state tax revenue to public education to give school districts the ability for multi-year budget planning?

		500
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	302	60.4%
2. No	141	28.2%
3. Don't know / Refused	57	11.4%

Question 12

Would you support reinstating Alaska's annual education head tax, which would assess an equal tax amount for every person who works in the state of Alaska, including non-residents, to support education?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	341	68.2%
2. No	105	21.0%
3. Don't know (unfamiliar with the program)	41	8.2%
4. Don't know (familiar with the program but do not have an opinion)/ Refused	13	2.6%

Question 13

Would you support reconstituting Alaska's Public School Land Trust in a manner similar to the Mental Health and University of Alaska Land Trusts to help support education now and in the future?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	258	51.6%
2. No	91	18.2%
3. Don't know (unfamiliar with the program)	128	25.6%
4. Don't know (familiar with the program but do not have an opinion)/ Refused	23	4.6%

Question 14

By one legislative research estimate, state support for students in private schools could cost as much as 100 million dollars. In light of the current deficit, would you support changing the State Constitution to allow public money to be spent on private and religious schools?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	114	22.8%
2. No	356	71.2%
3. Don't know / Refused	30	6.0%

Question 15

Do you currently have any children who are enrolled in a public school in Alaska?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Yes	114	22.8%
2. No	377	75.4%
3. Don't know / Refused	9	1.8%

Question 16

And finally, for statistical purposes only, can you please tell me if you are registered as a (rotate) Republican, Democrat, Independent, or something else?

	500	
	Tot/Ans	%/Ans
1. Republican	149	29.8%
2. Democrat	78	15.6%
3. Independent	156	31.2%
4. Other/Something else	95	19.0%
5. Don't know / Refused	22	4.4%

[END OF SURVEY] Questions about this survey should be directed to Adam Hays, Research Director of Hays Research Group LLC by email at adam@haysresearch.com

From: [Larry Meshkin](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)
Subject: Dear Representative Neuman, My wife and I are your constituents.
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:42:47 PM

Dear Representative Neuman,

My wife and I are your constituents. I have lived in Alaska since 1974. My wife has lived here since 1997.

We oppose all forms of socialism and totally reject Obama's takeover of our medical system.

We respectfully ask you to oppose the expansion of Medicaid in Alaska.

We believe in cutting the budget to whatever level is necessary. We all do that as private citizens with our own personal budgets.

We oppose any new taxes, especially an income tax. Karl Marx supported it in his Communist Manifesto. We do not.

After the budget was cut to as low as possible and before any new taxes were created for individual people, we do believe in using earnings from the Permanent Fund Dividend program.

Only after all of this was done, would we support a flat state sales tax that everyone would pay. People who don't pay taxes do not care about more state spending that they don't pay for. They just vote for politicians who will give them a chicken in their pot that someone else has to pay for.

Thank you for your time and work.

Sincerely,

Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence (I go by Larry) D. & Marie H. Meshkin
5668 West Beverly Lake Road,
Wasilla, AK 99623-9115

From: [Anne Fuller](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: dropped by the teleconference system
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:05:16 PM

Legislators -

This is my written note to the House Finance Committee, Friday May 22
first, it appears the call in system for hearings doesn't 'play well' with cell phones - I was
dropped three times (and called in again), then couldn't make the phone let me respond when
you called my name.

I am Anne Fuller, from Juneau. I am retired now, but still an Alaskan citizen, living the
seasonal round. At this time of year, there are many chores and tasks that just have to get
done, from pulling weeds (which I was doing while listening to the testimony) to getting
boats and bikes ready for the summer. Like most people, I find additional things to do as I'm
starting the activities. Some of those things really could have been done during the winter, but
I didn't get around to them.

Your committee is in a similar position - the 90 day session is over, several days of the special
session are past, and yet you have not negotiated a spending plan that is fully funded. Please
work WITH other elected people to start an income tax, use the Constitutional Budget
Reserve, and pass a budget that does not fund the hugely expensive road extension in
Anchorage (UMed) and does fund public schools. The Medicaid expansion means an increase
in revenue for the state.

You know, we've funded a Department of Law that can win settlements from oil companies,
let's turn them loose on the computer contracts (Xerox for Medicaid, etc).

Spring is here in full force - please do your chores.

Anne Fuller

*"If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier
world" J.R.R.Tolkein*

From: [Nancy Kuhn](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: erin's law
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:40:41 PM

A very special 9 year old boy was sexually violated and the school was unable to offer comfort and support because it was a dirty little secret. (was the meta message he asked for it?????????) Had the school and children and teachers confronted this issue in the early years, maybe the boy would have been alerted. His parents had spoken of the dangers after the neighbor girl had been raped and killed. But for the child it was too much to comprehend. You, legislators, owe it to all the children and their parents to educate and shed light on this sick behavior in our community. Ignorance is dangerous!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Get off your pious pots and vote yes for Erin's law. Our children deserve to be protected. Just as girls and boys learn about the sexual facts of maturity so should they learn in a safe environment about the dangers of sexual trespass. Just ask the third grade teachers if they have any little child who has been pimped by daddy or mommy? Or if Daddy or Mommy or Mommy's boyfriend has "played special" with them? Or how about big brother and his friends???

**Testimony of Richard A. Fineberg on State Budget Issues
House Districts 1, 4 and 5 Joint Constituent Meeting
May 14, 2015 ***

Since the discovery of the nation's largest oil field at Prudhoe Bay, state budget issues have been closely linked to unresolved petroleum taxation issues by our extreme dependence on that revenue. Because of this linkage, understanding petroleum revenue is therefore necessary to the formulation and execution of state petroleum revenue and budget policies.

But quantifying petroleum revenue is a complicated subject that creates chronic confusion and clouds perspectives, preventing understanding of (a) petroleum profitability and (b) the fiscal aspects of public policies that enable the execution of government services.

This special session hiatus creates the possibility for legislators to attain clarity on the chronic problems of petroleum revenue quantification that will enable Alaska to establish long-term policy goals for government service.

For this reason, I have identified seven process fixes necessary to (a) improve understanding of petroleum quantification issues, which will (b) enable formulation and execution of long-term government service policies:

1. Focus on industry profitability – a subject essential to policy deliberations that is notably ignored by some esteemed state economic analysts.
2. Focus on conversion of fiscal year data to calendar year data to permit understanding of the relationship between government “take” and industry profitability, as well as timely assessment of global trends in production costs, supply and demand.
3. Focus on total net revenues, an important economic element, without which percentages of government “take” are virtually meaningless and liable to be misleading.
4. Focus on the degree of corporate consolidation of petroleum production facilities and operations, limitation of which may be necessary to assuring competitive economic environment that will attract potential investors in Alaska petroleum development.
5. Focus on the functioning of the state petroleum auditing program, which should be instructed to use the first four guidelines above to provide a framework for examination of the following two cost elements that may include a profit element but are normally subtracted from commodity revenues to determine total net revenues.
6. Focus on field cost accounting to ensure that excessive field costs do not undermine a competitive economic environment.
7. Focus on correct accounting of transportation costs in order to determine whether transportation profitability adds to or subtracts from production profits (depending on ownership overlap between production and transportation operations) in order to assure a competitive economic environment.

For three fact-oriented reports on recent Alaska North Slope petroleum policy issues, see “Aftermath of the SB 21 Referendum” (April 8, 2015), posted on my web site home page at <http://www.finebergresearch.com>. Many articles previously posted on this web site cover issues that illustrate the importance of the focus elements listed above.

* 2nd revision to oral testimony of May 14, 2015 (May 20, 2015).

From: [Jan Rutherford](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: For House Finance committee regarding the state budget and funding priorities
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:18:41 AM

In lieu of testimony, I am asking the legislature to support the following programs in the budget:

- Education: funding pre-K, the Base Student Allocation, and our University system.
- Medicaid expansion and reform.
- Alaska Marine Highway Service: Add the \$7 million back in the budget.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jan Rutherford

From: [Todd Poage](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#)
Subject: Fully Funding Public Education
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:46:51 PM

Good Morning House Finance Committee:
Co-Chairs Representative Neuman & Thompson,
1-844-586-9085

We all realize you have a most difficult task of balancing an operating budget and appreciate your efforts. Notwithstanding, in 2014 the Alaska Legislature made a commitment to Alaska's families and children by forward funding public education to support Alaska schools. Efforts to retreat from this commitment are now under consideration, and it is a crucial concern of utmost importance facing school districts across our State. The impacts associated with the elimination of funding for public education are woven within the basic function of responsible budget-building for all school districts for FY16. At this time, we just don't know and we are already at the end of May. We need a fully funded public education budget for FY16. Most districts had planned on these allocations to continue quality programs that are just plain and simple good for kids.

Instead of a cut-the-budget only approach, let's provide time to explore revenue solutions to balancing the budget deficit faced by Alaskans such as instituting an education deduction from each PFD (much like the amount deducted from each individual's PFD for community jails as well as medical and public assistance), head charge on airlines and cruises coming to Alaska, income tax, sales tax during tourist season, or the establishment of an education foundation. The State does have a saving account to access (as most of us have our own personal savings accounts which assist in making it thru hard times) for circumstances like these so that the cuts to public education (a public education that provides a free education to all kids without restrictions) are not so severe. Public education funding should be adjusted gradually over-time according to the three-year funding plan approved last session so that districts have a legitimate opportunity to find creative solutions to accomplishing more with less.

As district leaders, all of us have analyzed and re-analyzed our budgets and schools to find cost savings. We all do our best to guarantee that the funds that remain are used as efficiently as possible to ensure every dollar spent goes toward meeting the educational needs of our students. As the economy of our State weakens further, public schools will be responsible for providing additional support to address the needs associated with the increase of low-income students walking through our doors. Without the committed funding, public schools will face enormous difficulty in meeting even their basic missions while taking on additional responsibilities. Let's all work together on behalf of Alaska's children. Thank you for your consideration of restoring all public education funding committed last session.

Todd Poage

Alaska Gateway School District Superintendent - 8th year

Alaska Superintendents Association President - 2nd year

Graduated from Nome-Beltz in Nome, Alaska

27th year in public education - all in Alaska

From: [Ginger Jewell](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Fwd: HB2001 Written Testimony
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:56:58 PM

Your support for public education is needed now more than ever. The discussions you are having will have an effect far beyond this fall. The students entering their freshmen year of high school this August will be eligible to fill the seats you now hold in the Alaska legislature in 10 short years. Having a top flight school system is the key to ensuring Alaska's road to the future is without roadblock. Budgets are not about what happens today or tomorrow in education; they are about what happens to Alaska's future forever. You are morally obligated to fully fund the BSA so that Alaska stays on a path to success for all of its citizens, a path that you yourselves have trod in order to be where you are today, in large part to the educational opportunities you were afforded.

Think long and hard about going to the school system you graduated from and how YOU would decide who gets laid off, how YOU would decide what programs are no longer affordable, or how YOU would decide which activities must be dropped. Do the right thing, and fully fund the budget.

Dr. Virginia (Ginger) Jewell

Superintendent

Haines Borough School District
604 Haines Highway
P.O. Box 1289
Haines, AK 99827
[907-766-6725](tel:907-766-6725)

The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.

From: [Philana Jarvis](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: HB & SB 2001
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 2:55:02 PM

Attn: House Finance Committee:

I am a current state employee. I am writing this email to you (during my break) to request that you pass a budget that will prevent a government shutdown and fund the state employee contracts through FY16.

Most of us are willing to forego a raise, if it means we will not lose our medical insurance or that the costs for our medical coverage does not increase or cover less services. State employees no longer have what would be considered "Cadillac Coverage". Please do not diminish the coverage we have.

I realize that it is difficult for legislators to justify providing a blanket salary increase to all state employees. There are some employees who have not earned a raise and/or lack a work ethic worthy of a reward. Please understand that this is also a frustration shared by those of us who treat our jobs like a career, and not just a paycheck.

Rather than punishing everyone across the board by reducing salaries and benefits, consider renegotiating the terms of the disciplinary process so the state, as an employer, is rewarding qualified, productive employees. I believe if the state was able to have more control over staffing decisions, productivity and efficiency would increase.

Currently, the state is at risk of losing the well qualified, productive employees to the private sector because of the blanket approach applied to employee salaries and benefits.

Thank you for your time.

Philana Miles

From: [Sue Bergstrom](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Rep. Dan Saddler](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Cathy Munoz](#); [Rep. Lance Pruitt](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Rep. David Guttenberg](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Mike Hawker](#)
Subject: HB2001
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:37:52 AM

Members of the Finance Committee;

Thank you for your continued work on the operating budget, without which our state cannot function. And thanks for restoring it to the Conference Committee version with provision for funding. As this process struggles on, please keep in mind that there were good reasons for those restorations, that the people of the state spoke up in defense of the things they cared about, and continue to support the good compromise that everyone worked so hard to reach. In particular, I would ask that you remember that, unlike in some other parts of the country, Public Radio is not a luxury in Alaska. It's necessary to the welfare of many of our citizens, especially in rural areas.

Sincerely,

Susan M.S. Bergstrom

Valdez

7,

Sue

From: [Virginia Evens](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: House Finance Committee - Education Funding
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:23:28 AM

May 22, 2015

Attention House Finance Committee:

Honorable Members of the Alaska State Legislature:

I am unable to testify in person today because of work, but wanted my voice to be heard.

For the record my name is Ginger Evens, a lifelong Alaskan, who currently lives in Petersburg, Alaska. I am writing as a community member with a vested interest in Petersburg School District. My oldest son will be graduating in two weeks and my youngest son is finishing his freshman year.

I am deeply concerned that the budget information released last week only funds education at 28%. For Petersburg School District this potential means that the district will need to cut around \$900,000 from a budget that has been fiscally conservative for the past five years. In terms of impact on the education of my son and the other children of Petersburg, here are a few potential impacts on Petersburg School District.

1. Elimination of our elementary swimming program that not only teaches our young community members the basics of swimming, but also survival skills while on the water.
2. Closing of the elementary and middle/high school library.
3. Increased class size because of reduction in force and the inability to hire the necessary teachers to replace resignations.
4. Salary freeze for all staff K-12.
5. Elimination of all extra curricular activities.

The current budget proposal is draconian. Petersburg School District and the community will be devastated if additional funds are not allocated, as mandated by the Alaska Constitution

Sincerely,

Ginger Evens

From: [Bob Sylvester](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: House Finance Committee Operating Budget Testimony
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:21:13 PM

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to urge you to support the children of Alaska and the economy of Alaska by funding at the least, these items:

I support the reform and expansion of Medicaid such that our working people who cannot afford health care insurance have available a level of coverage. The reforms within the Medicaid system are moving forward and show signs of increasing responsiveness. The opportunity to provide healthcare access to so many Alaskans must be grasped now. There is an economic benefit to accepting the \$145 million federal dollars and saving millions in State general funds.

Pre-kindergarten Education, it is crucial to get our youngest citizens a leg up in their early years. I consider this a valuable investment that will return much more value than is invested. Also of course the Base Student Allocation for our K-12 schools must be fully funded. We cannot leave our schoolkids subject to a substandard education until oil rebounds. Again, a real investment in our future that will pay dividends into the future! In addition I fear that without an adequate funding level our University system will fall prey to the collapse that many other State University Systems have suffered. We have some cutting edge education happening in our campuses that is the envy of many State Systems. Please conserve it.

Finally, the Alaska Marine Highways System is the highway of Southeast Alaska. It is a necessary part of Alaska's transportation system. The Seven Million Dollars that Governor Walker has proposed to add back into our Operating Budget is the least we can do to keep the many Towns and Villages connected to our State.

I urge you to look for off-setting Budget reductions in expenses that can be eliminated or delayed while causing less direct harm to the children and people of Alaska.

Thank you so much for your attention,

Robert Sylvester
PO Box 22487
(128 Dixon Street Apt L)
Juneau, AK 99802

From: [Sharon Early](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: Income tax, Education, Medicaid, & AMHS
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:56:36 AM

Please provide Funding for Education, medicaid, and the AMHS

Education—we can't "afford" not to Fund:

pre-K
the Base Student Allocation
our University system
(not fully funding education?? this is Alaska) —

Alaska Marine Highway Service

The Ferries ARE part of our highway system. Let's fund transportation that is not as car-centric—not everyone in Alaska lives right on the "road" system". It's amazing how much the AMHS supports—fishing—shoppers from villages—cargo....(& tourism, too)

Medicaid expansion:

Simply ridiculous not to fully expand Medicaid for those in need; even if it didn't bring more money to our state.

I support considering new income sources.

Alaska State Income Tax

I've paid an Alaska State Income Tax before. I should be paying this again. I *use* to think of our PFD as a "reverse" Income Tax. It's not. It does not and cannot fund our basic needs much less other projects we could be providing to keep Alaska beautiful and Alaska's population healthy

Thank you,
Sharon Early

[Sharon Early](#)
[17009 Towers Rd](#)
[Juneau AK 99801](#)
[907-321-4009](#)

From: [Karen Wilson](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: Legislative public testimony
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:33:57 PM

To Our Legislators:

Please excuse our blanket email, given the short notice for testimony. In the spirit of best serving those you represent, and the future of our state, we hope you can come together to find budget solutions that are truly best for all Alaskans.

Education is at the top of our list of importance. Our children are our future, and a single year of lowered quality of education can affect a child for life. Please make education funding from pre-K through the University system a top priority, and keep previous funding promises. Our schools are not the place for budgetary slashing and burning.

Medicaid expansion and reform will positively affect both young and old, and the savings will be good for all Alaskans. To us it's a no-brainer. Please work with our governor to make this a reality.

As Southeast residents, we depend on the ferry system. Many of our most economically challenged families live in villages only served by the ferry and float planes. These folks cannot afford to fly, plain and simple. They depend on the ferry for medical trips, food supply, employment, and all manner of transportation needs. And cutting ferries cuts tourist dollars coming into the state. The ferry system is vital to coastal Alaska, and the \$7 million add-back by our governor is critical. Please support it.

There are many places to look for available funds. We realize it's a daunting task, and can't please everyone. A few possibilities to consider: non-critical construction projects such as the Susitna Dam funds and the Anchorage Bragaw Road Extension and the road out of Juneau. Moving out of the new Anchorage Legislative Office Building to less expensive space. Closely examining oil company tax credits.

We thank you for you time, your efforts, and we particularly appreciate those of you who have already responded, and continue to work, in positive and thoughtful ways on these issues.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey and Karen Wilson
Juneau

From: jen.laroe
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov; Juneau Empire
Subject: ONCE AGAIN
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:35:43 PM

Dear legislators~

I have taken many moments over the last five months to take the time to sit down and send you my thoughts as an Alaskan resident and mother of 2 children in the hopes that some if not all of you would reciprocate. My hopes were that you would also take the time to get the job you were elected to do done in the time allocated with the effort required for proper representation of the people who elected you.

This lag in passing a budget acceptable to the people by working together as legislators to find solutions has gone on too long. How many times to citizens have to tell you their positions?

Once again:

I support an education budget that keeps the promise made last year to fund the BSA at the level agreed upon. Find solutions to shortcomings of education through research and collaboration among experts, not by cutting the funding that keeps our students surrounded by supportive and caring adults.

I support Medicaid expansion. I have received support for medical coverage for my children through the Denali Kid Care program. I am a prime example of being right on the edge of the income restrictions and have experienced when our family has to take cuts in other areas of our budget, food, clothing, heat, when we have the added burden of high cost insurance premiums. Support the system while repairing it, same as education.

I support the ferries. Transportation within SE AK and north to Yakutat and beyond along the Marine Highway system is a necessity for small communities.

I support Erin's law.

Get it done instead of bickering and standing your ground and causing greater legislative expense. Paying for all those hotels and travel costs for staffers to go to Anchorage is sickening. Enough is enough.

Jen LaRoe
5134 Glacier Hwy
Juneau, AK
907.780.3625

From: [Jon Mark Stickland](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: Pass a budget without Medicaid expansion
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:28:26 PM

Jon Mark Stickland
18430 Kittiwake Circle
Anchorage, AK 99516

May 22, 2015

Dear Alaska Legislature,

I am reaching out to you today to urge you to pass a budget that does not include Obamacare's Medicaid expansion.

Medicaid expansion has been a failed experiment in states across the country. Taxpayers will be put on the hook for millions of dollars - placing funding for roads and schools at risk, possibly leading to tax increases, or both.

With the federal government \$18 trillion in debt, why should we add more? You have the chance to vote for a budget that would cut spending from the last fiscal year and also stop Obamacare's Medicaid expansion. Please stop Medicaid expansion.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jon Mark Stickland

From: [Tim Clark](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: Pass a budget without Medicaid expansion
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:28:19 PM

Tim Clark
7206 Zurich St.
Anchorage, AK 99507

May 22, 2015

Dear Alaska Legislature,

I am reaching out to you today to urge you to pass a budget that does not include Obamacare's Medicaid expansion.

Your job is to protect and defend the state and federal constitution. It is NOT to hand out free medical care to the people.

REMEMBER every dime you spend comes from the PEOPLE.

CUT THE SPENDING NOW!!!!

Medicaid expansion has been a failed experiment in states across the country. Taxpayers will be put on the hook for millions of dollars - placing funding for roads and schools at risk, possibly leading to tax increases, or both.

With the federal government \$18 trillion in debt, why should we add more? You have the chance to vote for a budget that would cut spending from the last fiscal year and also stop Obamacare's Medicaid expansion. Please stop Medicaid expansion.

Using the excuse that this creates jobs is misleading at best and an outright lie at worst. Government funded jobs COST many times more than they contribute to any economy.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Tim Clark

From: [Paul Fredrick](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: Pass Medicaid expansion now!
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 2:28:57 PM

Please do the right thing for Alaska pass Medicaid expansion now ! My campaign money next election will ride on this!

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jennie Hafele](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Cc: [Rep. Adam Wool](#); [Rep. David Guttenberg](#); [Rep. David Talerico](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Sen. Click Bishop](#); [Sen. John Coghill](#); [Sen. Pete Kelly](#)
Subject: POM
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:37:37 AM

POM
Patricia Goble
HD 3

I am adamantly opposed to using the Permanent Fund Dividend. I will not vote for legislators who choose to use the PFD.

Submitted to:

Jennie Hafele
Fairbanks Legislative Information Office
1292 Sadler Way Suite 308
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone: 907-452-4448
Fax: 907-456-3346
Click [HERE](#) to visit the Alaska State Legislature Website
Click [HERE](#) to watch live streaming of the Alaska State Legislature
Click [HERE](#) to send your legislator a Public Opinion Message during session

From: [Jennie Hafele](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Cc: [Rep. Adam Wool](#); [Rep. David Guttenberg](#); [Rep. David Talerico](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Sen. Click Bishop](#); [Sen. John Coghill](#); [Sen. Pete Kelly](#)
Subject: POM
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:40:48 AM

POM
Joan Weaver
HD 3

I am not in favor of the legislature raiding the Permanent Fund. I vote in every election and have for a very long time.

Submitted to:

Jennie Hafele
Fairbanks Legislative Information Office
1292 Sadler Way Suite 308
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone: 907-452-4448
Fax: 907-456-3346
Click [HERE](#) to visit the Alaska State Legislature Website
Click [HERE](#) to watch live streaming of the Alaska State Legislature
Click [HERE](#) to send your legislator a Public Opinion Message during session

From: [Jim Lanier](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Public Testimony on the Operating Budget
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:12:34 PM

TO FUND THE BUDGET:

DO NOT use funds from the Permanent Fund Earnings.

DO use funds from our Constitutional Budget Reserve Account, as necessary.

DO NOT cut funding for education any more than is absolutely required to keep the ship afloat.

DO cut the Susitna Dam.

DO expand Medicaid.

DO adopt Erin's Law, or a meaningful version thereof.

Respectfully submitted at 12:19 PM on May 22, 2015

James F. (Jim) Lanier
19643 Tenada Ave.
Chugiak, Alaska 99567

From: scatycaty
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Cc: Governor@alaska.gov
Subject: public testimony, May 23rd, 11am-2pm
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:31:35 PM

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for all your hard work this year and for allowing for public testimony today regarding the State budget.

I would like to live in a community founded upon a democracy with the values I learned as a child; values of compassion, justice, and equality.

Please work together, across the aisle, to pass a budget that makes sense to the people, not the corporations. Please do not abandon our children, elderly and working class in order to build dams and bridges and road extensions., or to give subsidies to corporate giants. In a time of fiscal need, capital projects can wait. We must educate our kids, for they are the backbone of our democracy. Please restore funding to the levels promised last year for public school. These levels were barely adequate anyway, and anything less will devastate our public school systems. Please listen to your constituents who believe in medicaid expansion, which will not only help our working class, but will also add jobs, and increase revenue to the State.

For those of you who are already fighting for policies that champion our children, seniors, and poor, I thank you. Please keep up the fight. Let's have solutions that make sense, support our communities and better our economy.

Support bringing public education funding back to last year's promise, and support medicaid expansion.

Thank you,
Catherine Coward
6221 Farpoint Dr
Anchorage, 99507

From: [Ben White](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Public Testimony
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:46:50 PM

Legislators,

I want to express my gratitude to you all for your service. We are all in a difficult time and finances are on a lot of our minds lately. You all have a very difficult task ahead of you and I appreciate that. I typically do not write letters or emails to politicians so for me to take the time I hope that you take this into consideration.

Our family's budget is made up of two State employees. My wife and I are both currently working for the State. It has been rather frustrating to watch this session with the debates on daylight savings, legislative office remodels, and other items and the budget not dealt with. It is also very frustrating to see that there are millions of dollars in incentives provided to industry, while meager 2.5% increases in State employee salaries and education funding is cut. When revenue was high, State employees still only received a meager 1% raise.

This is a tight situation for all of us. I would gladly give up my 2.5% **if the legislature suspends the incentives for industry** as well. It does not seem right to have the working folks of the State make a financial sacrifice at the expense of industry.

I also encourage you all to put petty party differences aside and get us a budget!! Your irresponsible actions are having a profound impact on this State.

Thanks,
Ben

From: [Michele Vasquez](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)
Cc: [Rep. Steve Thompson](#)
Subject: re: Operating Budget testimony
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:31:07 AM
Attachments: [Dear House Finance Committee.docx](#)

Dear House Finance Committee:

I sent this letter during the regular session opposing the budget that is now being presented again, so I am re-sending my comments.

This letter is geared towards the Majority, not the Minority.

Fund education fully, cut the tax breaks for oil companies, break the lease on your fancy LIO in Anchorage, stop with all boondoggle projects that we cannot afford and expand Medicaid....now!

You do not have the support of the Alaskan people on the current budget with the outrageous and egregious cuts. We know what you are doing; we get it....you do not! The people have spoken out in hearing after hearing, emails galore, protests, letters to the editor, etc. WE are your constituents, not the oil companies or refineries or mining companies.

It's time to diversify this economy, and we start by fully funding education for our youth. This is not rocket science. As legislators, you should make certain that every citizen has access to basic/essential services needed in everyday life. Medicaid expansion should also be a no-brainer as we have many citizens desperately in need of health coverage, and it will create jobs! People before corporations!

I have not spoken with one single person, Republican or Democrat, who supports this budget. Support ALL Alaskans, not the chosen few companies that do business here. Oil companies are going to drill with or without tax breaks. Stop paying them to take OUR oil.

Sincerely,

Michele Vasquez

Soldotna, Alaska

From: [Rebecca Bernard](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Dan Saddler](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Cathy Munoz](#); [Rep. Lance Pruitt](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Rep. David Guttenberg](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#)
Subject: SB 2001
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 2:08:43 PM

Dear Co-Chairmen and Members of the House Finance Committee:

Please include my written testimony in the record for SB 2001.

This new version of the Operating Budget for FY16 has the same problems as earlier versions. Please restore the education funds passed by the Legislature just last year. Please do not use or manipulate the Permanent Fund or its Earnings Reserve without a meaningful public process. Please negotiate a compromise so that the CBR can be used to cover this year's shortfall.

I appreciate the opportunity for public testimony but am disappointed that it was scheduled on such short notice and on a day that so few people can participate -- the day after school ended and the beginning of the Memorial Day weekend.

Respectfully,
Rebecca Bernard
1210 N St
Anchorage AK 99501
907-244-3988

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Erika Burkhouse](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: State Budget Crisis
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:57:22 PM

Good Afternoon,

I am writing in regards to the state budget gridlock. This needs to be resolved. If 15,000 state employees are laid off, this would be devastating for the state as a whole. It would take a very long time to recover from this.

My personal story would go something like this. One month with no pay would mean that I would lose everything and would not be able to support my family. I am a single income household. I work hard and budget in order to keep food on the table, put my children in sports, buy them what they need. We live a good life. I don't consider us poor. I do not get assistance. I work very hard to provide for my kids. I don't have a lot to spare at the end of each month, but I survive and my children do not go without. My rent is \$2,000 a month and that is only a portion of my bills. If I, as a single parent with two children can budget my money and raise two children on my own, why is it that the state cannot budget? This is not acceptable.

Please fix this problem! I have always taken pride in being an independent Alaskan. Use the PFD but do not make all state employees suffer. This should affect each Alaskan and not just certain Alaskans.

Thank You,

Erika Bukrhouse

From: [sharon.whytal](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: State budget input
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 2:00:57 PM

Honorable legislators,

Thanks for your efforts on this difficult issues. As a retired Public Health Nurse of 23 years, I am concerned about our current crossroads at hand. I am unable to wait for testifying in the present hearings, so I will email now instead. Please pass a budget that plans for the future and takes advantage of some opportunities at this specific time. It's not time to dip into reserves yet.

Medicaid expansion is the right thing to do for vulnerable Alaskans-the facts demonstrate that it is also the efficacious thing to do financially. Please do it.

Education is our most valuable resource. We need its stable, assured funding to continue having the excellent teachers that prepare our children for tomorrow's world.

Places we CAN make cuts include:

oil company tax credits: Some have proposed capping credit payments, until Alaska gets its fiscal house in order, at perhaps \$500 million a year. The first \$500 million worth of credit payments would be paid in the order they are submitted, and, perhaps 10 months into the fiscal year, remaining credit applications would have to be honored a few months later when the next fiscal year starts.

Susitna Dam: There is roughly \$6 million in money appropriated in prior years that is not obligated for this coming fiscal year, and that can be transferred back into the state's General Fund.

Bragaw Road extension: \$17.3 million of this previous appropriation has not been spent and construction on this controversial road has not been started. That can be transferred back into the General Fund.

Please refer to the recent DHSS report: these decisions and these savings can make the difference while longterm solutions continue under discussion.

Thanks!
Sharon Whytal
Homer

From: [Craig Douglas](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: State Budget- State Sales Tax
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:53:44 PM

Good Afternoon-

There needs to be heavy consideration for a state sales tax. If you review the Economic Impact of Alaska's Visitor Industry for 2013-2014 on DCCED's website (link below). Tourists \$1.8 billion in Alaska. A 4% sales tax is \$72,000,000 from tourism alone. We could then put back to developing our state for the better. A 4% sales tax would be easily managed by our residents; true Alaskans want our state to move forward, we are tired of putting bandaged on our roads, schools, and businesses. We want to develop a future for our state.

<http://commerce.state.ak.us/dnn/ded/DEV/TourismDevelopment/TourismResearch.aspx>

Have a nice one,
Craig Douglas

From: [Beth Affatato](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: State Budget
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:04:54 PM

Dear Committee Members,

As an employee of the state, I work for you and for the public. It's difficult to serve in the public sector when the constant threat of budgetary issues looms over our heads. We work in civil service to SERVE the state. We gain pleasure in helping our state be the best it can be and our hard work shows for it on a daily basis. To threaten layoffs to your own state employees is detrimental not only to morale, but to our personal lives. Public Assistance is already shorthanded and in a backlog, but if and when a statewide layoff happens, can you imagine the stress that will further fall on the state? Please support the very people that 1) helped put you in the office you are in and 2) that serve you on a daily basis to ensure state government runs as smoothly as possible.

--

-Beth Affatato

From: [Bob Sylvester](mailto:Bob.Sylvester)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: State Operating Budget
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:31:10 PM

Dear Legislator,

For your consideration, I am sending you this email that I recently sent to the House Finance Committee:

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to urge you to support the children of Alaska and the economy of Alaska by funding at the least, these items:

I support the reform and expansion of Medicaid such that our working people who cannot afford health care insurance have available a level of coverage. The reforms within the Medicaid system are moving forward and show signs of increasing responsiveness. The opportunity to provide healthcare access to so many Alaskans must be grasped now. There is an economic benefit to accepting the \$145 million federal dollars and saving millions in State general funds.

Pre-kindergarten Education, it is crucial to get our youngest citizens a leg up in their early years. I consider this a valuable investment that will return much more value than is invested. Also of course the Base Student Allocation for our K-12 schools must be fully funded. We cannot leave our schoolkids subject to a substandard education until oil rebounds. Again, a real investment in our future that will pay dividends into the future! In addition I fear that without an adequate funding level our University system will fall prey to the collapse that many other State University Systems have suffered. We have some cutting edge education happening in our campuses that is the envy of many State Systems. Please conserve it.

Finally, the Alaska Marine Highways System is the highway of Southeast Alaska. It is a necessary part of Alaska's transportation system. The Seven Million Dollars that Governor Walker has proposed to add back into our Operating Budget is the least we can do to keep the many Towns and Villages connected to our State.

I urge you to look for off-setting Budget reductions in expenses that can be eliminated or delayed while causing less direct harm to the children and people of Alaska.

(My apologies to Members of the House Finance Committee who will receive identical messages)

Thank you,

Robert Sylvester
PO Box 22487
(128 Dixon St Apt L)
Juneau, AK 99802

From: [Lura Noss](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Testimony for HB2001
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 12:31:37 PM
Importance: High

Good afternoon Honorable Representatives:

My name is Lura Noss, I am a State Employee.

First off, a shout-out to all of the Legislative Agencies Employees. They are hard-working folks who ensure the legislative sessions are running smoothly without a hitch. They tirelessly work to ensure the Legislative branch is paid and has the ability to conduct business, all in a quietly impartial and fair manner. Often everyone is completely unaware they are there, but the Legislature could not run without them.

So too are State Employees. State Employees work to implement the laws, directives and missives of three branches of State Government; as well as implement the laws, directives and missives of three branches of Federal Government. They work to ensure the State of Alaska is running smoothly, and ensure Alaska citizens are served to the best of their abilities. 15,000 of them will be laid off on July 1st if the unfunded sections of the budget remain unfunded.

Governor Walker is doing the right thing; we as a state should be fiscally conservative - which means we only operate on the funding we have available to us- nothing more. That is called a balanced budget. It is in our Alaska constitution to only pass a balanced budget. The Constitutional Budget Reserve was created for this situation. I suggest we use it. To not do so a wasted opportunity.

I know it is a hard position, but everyone must do what is the right thing for the State of Alaska. This means some ideals must be tabled for the day, to ensure Alaska keeps running. To ensure your constituents are able to live in Alaska.

From: [Moore, Terri A \(DOA\)](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Testimony for Public Hearing
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:29:38 PM

Good afternoon Honorable Representatives,

My name is Terri Moore, I work for the State of Alaska. I sit on the Confidential Employees Association Executive Board as the Vice President. I am writing to you today on my own behalf. First, I would like to thank you for all of your hard work in and being willing to serve in the Legislature. Your hard work is appreciated.

I am testifying regarding the public employee contracts and the pending layoffs. A collective bargaining agreement is a promise, and I respectfully ask you to honor that promise. And I also ask that an agreement to fund the budget is made in order to avoid pending layoffs. State Employees work to implement the laws, directives and missives of three branches of State Government; as well as implement the laws, directives and missives of three branches of Federal Government. We work very hard to ensure the State of Alaska is running smoothly, and ensure Alaska citizens are served to the best of their abilities. 15,000 of them will be laid off on July 1st if the unfunded sections of the budget remain unfunded. At least 15% of each of the districts on the Budget Committee are State employees. And many more so depend on the services they provide. As our leaders I would hope that you see that this is completely unacceptable. The amount of damage these layoffs (if they happen) will cause to the hard working families of Alaska that live pay check to pay check is heart breaking. As a member of my union board I am hearing from our members daily.

As a State worker I agree that the State should be fiscally conservative by operating on the funds we have available to us. It is in our Alaska constitution to only pass a balanced budget. The Constitutional Budget Reserve was created for this situation. I believe Governor Walker is doing the correct thing. Please do what is necessary to ensure our budget is fully funded and we do not let the families of Alaska suffer.

I know it is a hard position, but everyone must do what is the right thing for the State of Alaska. This means some ideals must be tabled for the day, to ensure Alaska keeps running. To ensure your constituents are able to live in Alaska.

Again, thank you for your dedication to public service.

Sincerely,

Terri A. Moore

Human Resource Technician III - Trainer

Department of Administration

Division of Personnel & Labor Relations

Payroll Services Section

Training & Special Projects Unit

Telephone: (907) 465-2072

Fax: (907) 465-5511

E-mail: terri.moore@alaska.gov

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**Testimony on for House Finance Committee
May 22, 2015**

**Kevin Shipley
Superintendent Kake City School District**

This morning we conducted our last day teacher in-service and I am sending my staff home for the summer. As we are required to have our budget to the city for approval by May 1st, we planned in April and based our budget on the worst case scenario that was being discussed. We examined what programs to cut and determined how to staff based and what programs would suffer and the overall needs of our students. However, with no public comment at the end of April the legislature came back with not the worst case scenario being discussed, but an additional 4% cut to the BSA.

I realize the dire financial straits that we are in as a State and that there are painful decisions to be made. But as leaders, it is our responsibility to let our constituents know what we are contemplating so that they have an opportunity to be heard, provide assistance if they wish and to be able to plan so that what is left can be successful.

As a person that believes problems can be solved by teamwork, leadership, and vision it has been disheartening to see the negative energy of this legislative body concerning our current challenges. I am requesting that you restore the 4% to the BSA and then let us know what we are looking at next year so we can work together to create a lean but well-designed educational system here in Alaska.

From: [Sharon j Clawson](#)
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: The Real Moral Majority
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 11:34:50 AM

Kudos to the six rational and reasonable House Majority Caucus members who urge their fellow caucus folks to care about Alaskans and work on cooperating with the Governor and the Democrats to pass a budget that is funded and fair:

We need a “clean” Erin’s law that refutes the antics of the Dunleavy reactionaries;

We need public schools that are fully funded at the minimum standards passed by the previous legislators and not under siege by those wanting public schools weakened;

We need Medicaid expansion to provide health care for needy and deprived Alaskans and for all Alaskans to live in healthier communities.

As a former Republican who could not stomach the Party’s dominance by corporate financing and religious zealotry, I urge any moderates left in the Party to stand up for sincere family and fiscal values.

Now is the time for all good men and women to come to the aid of their fellow Alaskans and break with your caucus leaders.

Sharon Clawson
Anchorage

From: [john sonin](#)
To: [Sen. John Coghill](#); [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Louie Flora](#); [Sen. Mike Dunleavy](#); [Sen. Peter Micciche](#); [Rep. Chris Tuck](#); [Rep. Mike Chenault](#); [Rep. Charisse Millett](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Sen. Kevin Meyer](#)
Cc: [all AK Leg](#); [House Finance](#)
Subject: This is the option
Date: Friday, May 22, 2015 1:59:40 PM

Folks,

I was unable to make the testifying time with the brief notification (probably still going-on right now?) but here, in-a-nutshell, is my position.

Refusing the economic stimulus available from the Feds for Medicaid expansion, then needing to undercut full-funding the education of our future, is exactly the kind-of thinking that has presented Maryland with this insane choice!

"Governor Larry Hogan made the tough choice to use the [\\$68 million Maryland's legislators earmarked for education](#), not for education! Over \$11 million of that money would have gone to Baltimore schools. Governor Hogan called that money "extra money" and put it into the state's underfunded pensions, saying it would be irresponsible not to" (reported by Daily Kos 5/22/16).

Recall that imbecilic Parnell-driven tax-throwaway, accept the dollars that will save us all from having to make this choice...ultimately...and maintain or enhance with an increase in teacher salaries the educational benefits to my State future. Quit diddling-around playing mindless political games thinking you can 'rob' our Permanent Fund! Re-visit Les Gara's *road-to-solvency* plan, instead of wasting our lives thinking like two-year old's!

John S. Sonin, Juneau
907-586-8212

From: [john sonin](#)
To: [Sen. John Coghill](#); [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Louie Flora](#); [Sen. Mike Dunleavy](#); [Sen. Peter Micciche](#); [Rep. Chris Tuck](#); [Rep. Mike Chenault](#); [Rep. Charisse Millett](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Sen. Bert Stedman](#); [Sen. Kevin Meyer](#)
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John S. Sonin, Juneau
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