

Operating  
Budget Public

Testimony: #3

Public  
Broadcasting  
System

## **Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Dulce Ben-East <dulce@alaskabirchsyrup.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 5:59 PM  
**To:** Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Public broadcasting

Please keep some funding in the budget for public broadcasting. The services provided by PBS are so valuable to rural areas in particular, and all of us due to the non-commercial and unbiased news programs. Public broadcasting helps to connect Alaskans across this vast state. We donate to and advertise on our local stations, and we know so many people listen. It would be a great loss to the community. Thank you for your time and consideration

Dulce Ben-East; Owner/General Manager  
*Alaska Wild Harvest LLC, dba Kahiltna Birchworks*  
PO Box 2267  
Palmer, Alaska 99645  
Main Office/kitchen phone: 907-373-1309  
toll free: 800-380-7457  
Talkeetna Taste-Tour-Shop: 907-733-1409 seasonal  
fax: 907-373-1359  
[www.alaskabirchsyrup.com](http://www.alaskabirchsyrup.com)  
[www.alaskawildharvest.com](http://www.alaskawildharvest.com)  
**Like us on Facebook!** [www.facebook.com/alaskabirchsyrup](http://www.facebook.com/alaskabirchsyrup)

*"Sustainable use of Alaska's forest resources"*

## **Doniece Gott**

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**From:** agpacsu@xyz.net  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 3:33 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Cc:** Senator Gary Stevens; Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** Restore 100% funding for Alaska Public Radio

To members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Alaska Public Radio is the all important tie that binds us together from Barrow to Ketchikan.

Over 90,000 Alaskans listen to public radio stations each week in more than 330 communities, with satellite-links to 29 member stations. Radio goes across the state where cell phones can not reach.

There are numerous services provided by Public Radio such as "Talk of Alaska" "Alaska News Nightly," "Home Town Alaska" and the "Alaska Fisheries Report ". We hear the State of the State address by our Governor as well as our Senators' yearly addresses to the state legislature.

Our District 31 Representative Paul Seaton updates us weekly with legislative news on KBBI. Our city council, and borough meetings are broadcast as public services as are weather and marine forecasts several times daily . . .

Homer has had some serious wildfires in the last decade. KBBI has done a superb job of keeping us informed along with airing prompt reports about earthquakes and potential tsunamis. This is reassuring as the active volcano Mount Saint Augustine is less than 70 miles away from Homer and tsunami warnings on KBBI could help prevent a disaster.

The Alaska Public Radio connection to NPR brings us international and national news. The political news and opinions are balanced in a way that listeners often get to hear two or more points of view. Any one of us would be able to relate to at least one of these and learn from the others' opinions.

I urge the Senate Finance Committee to restore 100% of funding for the essential services of Public Radio.

I'd like to end with a quote:

"This is probably one of the most important public services we have going for us today in Alaska..." – U.S. Representative Don Young, Speaking about public media in Alaska before the board of directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Sept. 2012, Washington, D.C.

Thank you,  
Anne Wieland  
Homer

Request this testimony be placed on the documents for SB22.

Chairman Hoffman, Committee members, I am David Boyle, Executive Director of the Alaska Policy Forum, a nonprofit which takes no funding from federal, state or local governments. I am speaking for myself and those who are not aware of what is happening in this state. Many legislators have stated that it is just too hard to cut the Operating Budget. This is because of the many special interests who are feeding at the trough of state government. The trough has dried up and now these same special interests want Alaskans to fill that trough with their wealth. To make it easier for you, I have reviewed SB22 and have provided a listing of those areas/programs which are not core services of the state and not necessary to fund. I have listed these as SB22 page numbers, line item, amount and the number of PFDs for the program.

<u>Page</u>	<u>line</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>PFDs</u>
3	33	AK Land Mobile Radio	\$4.4M	4,400
6	16	AK Gasline Devlpt Corp	\$10.3M	10,300
10	19	Dept of Ed IT	\$1M	1,000
10	31	PreK	\$2M	2,000
10	30	Earl Learning Coord	\$8.6M	8,600
11	5	1% For Art Council	\$2.8M	2,800
13	13	State Libraries/Museums	\$10.1M	10,100
11	25	WWAMI	\$3M	3,000
11	27	AK Performance Schol	\$11.8M	11,800
19	19	Performance Bonus DHSS	\$6M	6,000
20	17	Adult prev dental DHSS	\$15.6M	15,600
21	26	AK Safety Advis Council	\$161K	161
22	19	AK VOTEC	\$15M	15,000
25	8	AK Aerospace Corp	\$11M	11,000
27	24	Troopers Special Projects	\$2.6M	2,600
29	29	Prisoner Transport Troopers	\$2.3M	2,300
36	13	UAF Org Research	\$55M	55,000
<u>TOTAL</u>			<u>\$161,661M</u>	<u>161,661 PFDs</u>

All of the above are not core services required by the Alaska Constitution. There are many more suggested cuts, by Department, at [www.missioncriticalalaska.com](http://www.missioncriticalalaska.com). One very large source of funds that is not addressed above is the number of "funded, vacant" positions. As you know, it is very difficult to get any valid information from the Administration on these positions. I believe that there may be more than 2,500 funded, vacant positions. Valuing these positions at \$100,000 means that more than \$250,000,000. Recommend you subpoena the Administration to ascertain the real number of funded, vacant positions. We cannot afford not to.

It is time to make the "hard" decisions to save the private economy of Alaska. Otherwise, you may deepen the recession. You were elected to do the people's work, not the work of special interests and lobbyists. You hold the future of Alaska in your hands and you will be held accountable in the history books which way forward Alaska goes--bigger government or a prosperous Alaska. Thank you for the opportunity to voice my position.

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Santa Claus <santaclaus@usa.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 3:46 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Public Broadcasting and Fred Rogers :-}}

Public Broadcasting and Fred Rogers :-}}

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/mr-rogers-pbs-budget-cuts\\_us\\_58ca8d6fe4b0be71dcf1d440?xf2ld0o7isbtep14i](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/mr-rogers-pbs-budget-cuts_us_58ca8d6fe4b0be71dcf1d440?xf2ld0o7isbtep14i)

## **Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Lea Harris <plentypaws1@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 3:23 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Cutting funding

To whom it may concern,

Please do not cut funding for public broadcasting. It is essential for people like me who live out of cell range in Alaska. We love our programs and kick in our own money , but we would like to see some of our tax dollars supporting this. I know I speak for many of my neighbors as well.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Lea Harris  
Hc 60 box 3271  
Haines, AK 99827  
Sent from my iPad"

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Zoya Saltonstall <zoyasalt@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 3:12 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** SENATE BILL 22

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing regarding Senate Bill 22: Please, do not cut funds to public media.

Public media is a critical part of rural living and helping people stay tuned into local happenings. Please consider cuts to permanent fund, income tax or perhaps taxing oil companies more before cutting out such a critical part of rural living.

I am AGHAST with disgust that our budget has gotten to the point where this measure is even being considered.

Our state politicians and budget planners need to look at the whole big picture of oil companies and the wealth they receive and the possibilities of income tax and PFD cuts before cutting such critical programs as public media.

Thank you,

Zoya Saltonstall

Kodiak, AK

99615

907-654-0860



## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Mary Ellen Anderson <matikataco@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 3:02 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Funding for public radio, tv

Please maintain funding for public radio and tv in Alaska. The radio, especially, is our lifeline to the world here, and our only source for local news, events, emergency notifications, weather, etc. It is also a hub of our little community, serving to unite us all. It is already subsidized heavily by our local population through donations, volunteer hours and business/organization underwriting.

I know in Anchorage, there are media choices, but this is IT for us here...it's all we have.

Thank you,  
Mary Ellen Anderson  
PO Box 411  
Petersburg, AK 99833

Sent from my iPad

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Steven Russell <rstevenj@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 2:53 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** No cuts to Alaska Public Media!

No cuts!

Public media is essential to Alaskans!

Do not eliminate funding for Alaska public broadcasting!

As part of the Alaska public broadcasting community, Alaska Public Media provides free over-the-air and online non-commercial public service programming and community-based services to unserved and underserved audiences throughout Alaska.

Public media is important - and not just to me!

Sincerely,

SJR

Steven J. Russell  
PO Box 39304  
Ninilchik, AK 99639-0304  
Cell: (907) 854-4996

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sherry Dugan <smdalaska@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 2:41 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Public Media

Dear Members of the Alaska Legislative Finance Committee:

Please do not vote to cut funding for public media. Alaska Public Broadcasting provides free over-the-air and online non-commercial public service programming and community based services to unserved and underserved audiences throughout Alaska.

I have been an Alaska resident for 42 years and use public media daily.

Thank you,  
Sherry Dugan

Written Testimony of Julie Kitka, President of the Alaska Federation of Natives  
To the Alaska Senate Finance Committee  
March 16, 2017

**DRAFT      DRAFT      DRAFT**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this vital matter.

AFN is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska. Our members include hundreds of for-profit corporations, not-for-profit organizations and federally-recognized Indian tribes. Our mission is to enhance the cultural, economic and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community on a wide array issues.

Urban Alaskans often take for granted the cornucopia of media choices available to them 24/7 and the robustness of those choices, thanks to high-speed broadband, cable, over-the-air broadcasting, satellite television, and mobile phone networks. In rural Alaska, it's an entirely different world. With low-speed or non-existent broadband, much of rural Alaska relies completely on public broadcasting, the Alaska Rural Communications Service (ARCS), and the state's satellite system.

The Alaska Rural Communications Service (ARCS) and Satellite Infrastructure are State of Alaska owned and operated services that are integral and complimentary to the public broadcasting system in Alaska. ARCS is an Emergency Relay Network, a key component in Alaska's Emergency Alert System (EAS) Plan, feeding real-time emergency alerts to individuals and organizations.

For many rural residents, public television, the Alaska Rural Communication System (ARCS) and public radio are the only available over-the-air signals. Programming includes many hours of Alaska news and weather, critical information in many rural communities. They also provide children's and educational programs and live coverage of important Alaska events such as the Iditarod, high school basketball tournaments, and the AFN Convention.

Since 1982 the AFN has televised its annual convention to every village in the ARCS system across the state. The largest meeting of its kind in Alaska, the Convention is our annual business meeting, with some 4,000 to 5,000 delegates and other participants gathering to address the critical issues of our time. Most of our constituents are unable to attend because of work or financial limitations. It costs a lot to fly from a village to Anchorage or Fairbanks. Consequently, AFN brings the convention to the villages via satellite television through ARCS.

A key part of any democracy is keeping citizens informed and engaged so they can participate in the process that leads to the decisions that affect us all so greatly. Like the AFN Convention coverage, the gavel to gavel program carried on ARCS helps Alaskans across the state see what's going on in Juneau.

AFN recognizes that the way out of the state's fiscal crisis will be difficult. AFN continues to call on the legislature to pass a comprehensive and fair fiscal solution. Cutting all public television funding places a disproportional burden on Alaska Natives and all rural Alaskans.

**AFN urges the Senate Finance Committee and the entire Alaska State Legislature to maintain funding for these critical services at the FY17 levels, as proposed in the governor's FY18 budget.**

Attachments:

Fact Sheet on Alaska Public Broadcasting  
AFN Resolution 15-43



# ALASKA PUBLIC BROADCASTING: CRITICAL SERVICES FOR RURAL ALASKA

Public broadcasting in Alaska is a system of independent locally owned and operated non-profit businesses that provide over-the-air non-commercial public service television and radio programming to unserved and underserved audiences throughout Alaska. Twenty-six radio licensees, four television licensees and one statewide radio news network, the Alaska Public Radio Network (APRN), collaborate in a system that reaches 95% of the state’s population.

The Alaska Rural Communications Service (ARCS) and Satellite Infrastructure are State of Alaska owned and operated services that are integral and complimentary to the public broadcasting system in Alaska. ARCS is an Emergency Relay Network, a key component in Alaska’s Emergency Alert System (EAS) Plan, feeding real-time emergency alerts to individuals and organizations.

For many rural residents, public television, the Alaska Rural Communication System (ARCS) and public radio are the only available over-the-air signals. Programming includes many hours of Alaska news and weather, critical information in many rural communities. They also provide children’s and educational programs, and live coverage of unique Alaska events such as the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention and the Iditarod.

Alaska’s Satellite Infrastructure is a statewide delivery platform for video, audio and data. Additional public service video and audio streams including PBS, University of Alaska TV, and Gavel to Gavel Alaska, are embedded in the signal that distributes ARCS.

For many bush residents, ARCS is the only available over-air television signal. ARCS programming includes many hours of Alaska news and weather, a highly sought after resource in bush communities. ARCS provides children’s and educational programs from PBS, popular commercial broadcasts, and live coverage of unique Alaska events such as high school basketball championships, the Alaska Federation of Natives Annual Convention and the Iditarod.

The ARCS Digital Conversion Project is in the process of upgrading the transmitters from analog to digital. Digital Conversion equals better service with improved video and audio quality, increased content via the multichannel nature of digital service, and decreased electrical cost to the communities. Digital ARCS greatly expands public service programming, enhancing the life, health and safety of rural and bush Alaska residents.

The proposed zero-out of all public television funding:

- Cuts the ability for ARCS to carry PBS, Gavel Alaska / 360 North, and University TV / FNX, on the ARCS digital television transmitters in the villages.
- Undermines the new digital ARCS Digital Conversion Project currently being rolled out statewide.

The proposed cut to satellite funds by \$160,000:

- Effectively ends use and management of the satellite system to provide statewide distribution of public television and radio content to the ARCS system.
- Threatens use of ARCS as an emergency communications platform statewide.
- Eliminates ability to distribute public radio and television signals statewide to translators in rural communities

The Alaska Federation of Natives urges the Alaska State Legislature to maintain funding for these critical services at the FY17 levels, as proposed in the governor’s FY18 budget.

Alaska Public Broadcasting Corporation	Television grants
\$ 46,700	\$ 633,300
Radio grant	Satellite
\$ 2,036,600	\$ 879,500



**ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES  
2015 ANNUAL CONVENTION  
RESOLUTION 15-43**

**TITLE: URGING GOVERNOR WALKER AND THE ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE TO ENSURE THAT THE ALASKA RURAL COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE, SATELLITE SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC BROADCASTING BE FULLY FUNDED TO CONTINUE OPERATIONAL SERVICE**

**WHEREAS** the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 165 federally-recognized tribes, 146 village corporations, 12 regional corporations, and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

**WHEREAS** the mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

**WHEREAS** the Alaska Rural Communications Service (ARCS) provides free, over-the-air television service to approximately 185 rural and isolated Alaska communities and remains a primary, affordable information source for many users; and

**WHEREAS** ARCS, a television service formerly known as RATNet, is owned and operated by the state of Alaska, and the state relies on it as part of its emergency broadcast system; and

**WHEREAS** the state of Alaska has operated ARCS in partnerships with rural village community organizations and urban television broadcasters for over three decades; and

**WHEREAS** ARCS continues to provide a valuable service to bush Alaska, especially the most vulnerable and at-risk residents in remote areas, as a free-to-watch over the air television service; and

**WHEREAS** ARCS delivers vital weather and emergency information, as well as news, public affairs, entertainment and educational programming in some of Alaska's most remote and economically depressed regions; and

**WHEREAS** through an fiscal year (FY) 14 Capital Appropriation, the state of Alaska is in the process of converting all ARCS's transmitters in the villages from analog to digital; which AFN Convention supported via Resolution 2012-34; and

**WHEREAS** the satellite infrastructure delivers ARCS, public broadcasting, and University services and emergency alerts to residents statewide; and

**WHEREAS** the Digital Conversion Project delivers improved and increased programming to ARCS viewers with no additional operating costs, implements new electronics to replace aging equipment, and maximizes use of the ARCS satellite infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS** the state of Alaska's initial investment in RATNet produced three decades of service to bush and rural Alaska that continues as ARCS today; and the new digital ACRS technology increases availability of public broadcasting content and services to many residents for the first time; and

**WHEREAS** public broadcasting in Alaska provides over the air non-commercial public service programming to un-served and underserved audiences throughout Alaska; and

**WHEREAS** public broadcasting provides an unparalleled level of local public service programming including local news; weather and marine conditions; community information; emergency, health and safety information; music and public affairs programming; and live event coverage; and

**WHEREAS** public broadcasting serves bush and rural communities where commercial service does not exist. Service in the bush is provided by originating stations based in bush and rural communities and by urban stations with equipment in remote areas; and

**WHEREAS** public broadcasting's public safety mission is reflected in participation in the statewide Emergency Alert System (EAS), which for many is a primary source of local, statewide and national emergency declarations; and

**WHEREAS** public broadcasting's education mission is reflected in the high quality of its children's programming, educational outreach in the community, and lifelong learning opportunities for all ages; and

**WHEREAS** public broadcasting's local service mission is characterized by local ownership, local control of programming, deep community engagement; strong partnerships with many community organizations; and

**WHEREAS** the collaborative relationship between the state of Alaska, the public communications services it supports, and the residents in rural and urban Alaska communities who depend on those services every day, represents a unique and valuable partnership worthy of strong support.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the delegates of the 2015 AFN Annual Convention that AFN urges Governor Walker the Alaska State Legislature to ensure the Alaska Rural Communications Service, Satellite Services, and Public Broadcasting are fully funded so that residents in bush and rural Alaska continue to receive these fundamental radio and television services.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution shall be the policy of AFN until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.



SUBMITTED BY:  
COMMITTEE ACTION:  
CONVENTION ACTION:

COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES  
PASSED  
PASSED AS AMENDED



*Julie E. Kitka*

Julie Kitka  
President

March 17, 2017

Attn: Senate Finance Committee

**Please maintain the State of Alaska's present funding level for Alaska Public Media.**

- This is the most effective way for the Rural Population of Alaska to stay *Informed* and *Aware* of what happens in the state *(and around the world)!*
- Being informed and aware of *all* the Cultures of Alaska *(and the world)* exposes each of us to different ways of doing things.
- THAT enhances our individual problem solving abilities...
- Those infinite ways of resolving issues multiply our world view... therefore:
- WE HAVE A BETTER CHANCE TO FIX THE CURRENT PROBLEMS FACING *OUR STATE* because we have more ways to look at the issues.
- Rural Alaska *DESERVES* an equal opportunity to participate in Statewide problem solving.
- The *remarkably broad spectrum of programming* supplied by APM via satellite feed and our local broadcasting station KUCB feeds us the knowledge we need.
- An *Aware & Informed* population enhances *YOUR ability* as a *legislator* to help make decisions that benefit *all* of us.
- I live in Unalaska and *depend* on Alaska Public Media, ARCS & the Satellite delivery System to keep me connected to the rest of Alaska and the world. *(I can only afford a small monthly donation to KUCB but I do make certain that my donation takes place!)*

So, again - Please - I URGE YOU to make certain that Alaska Public Media including ARCS & the Satellite Infrastructure system stays fully funded!

Sincerely,



Laura M. Homacki, DC, MSACN

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Doris Ward <doward@aptalaska.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 1:47 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** SB22 - Don't cut funding for public media

Dear Lawmakers: Unless you live in rural Alaska you can not begin to understand how important public media is. I depend on broadcasting for news about Alaska, what matters close to home. We have an excellent station KHNS in Haines that brings us local news as well as state and national news. I lived here before we had such local coverage by this station and, believe me, this is better. Please do all you can to support funding. Doris Ward, Haines

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Nina Chordas <nchordas@fastmail.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 2:04 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** public media funding

To the members of the Finance Committee:

I'm writing to urge you to restore funding for public media in Alaska. I number myself among the thousands of Alaskans who rely on our public broadcasting entities to keep us informed about what is going on in our great state. Stories put together by local reporters around Alaska cannot be matched for their in-depth coverage and analysis of issues and events that impact all Alaskans. Whether reporting on our current budget crisis or this year's Iditarod race, Alaska's public media radio and tv stations are simply the best sources we have for local and state coverage. They are an investment worth protecting and preserving.

Sincerely,

Nina Chordas  
629 W 11th Street  
Juneau, AK 99801  
503-278-1818

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Nina Chordas  
nchordas@fastmail.net

## **Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Alicia Stearns <aliciaestearns@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 2:11 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Alaska Public Media

Attn: Committee Members

Please do not cut funding for Alaska Public Media. The news, cultural programming, disaster information are so critical in small communities and it is a glue that binds our town together. Please don't be short sighted and let this disappear from Alaska!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Alicia Stearns  
Wrangell, Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

## **Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Don and Sylvia <dstripp@earthlink.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 2:20 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** SB 22 Public Radio Funding

Please think twice before making a decision about cutting or reducing funding for public radio.

My wife and I are retired senior citizens, living on a fixed income, in the small, isolated community of Petersburg. We have one radio station, KFSK community radio, that we depend on for news, weather, information and emergency service announcements. KFSK is partially supported thru memberships and, fundraising activities, but will not be able to survive in its present form, without the support of the state government. It is my understanding that KFSK has taken a 39% cut over the past two legislative sessions. Please continue to support public radio in rural Alaska.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Don and Sylvia Tripp, Petersburg, AK

## **Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Cathy Cronlund <meggie@aptalaska.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 2:30 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Public Radio

Dear Members of the Finance committee:

KFSK is the soundtrack to which life in Petersburg happens. Local politics, news, community events, high school sports, emergency information... it all comes over our small but wonderful radio station,

and that's not even mentioning the music programs, many of which are produced by adult volunteers and youth of our community.

KFSK presents a quality product, while being financially efficient and frugal.

All the other Public Radio stations throughout Alaska perform the same functions for their respective communities. Alaskans are tied together by the cooperation of these stations. Public Radio is the best way to keep

up with what is happening in the the various corners of our far-flung state.

Don't destroy a good thing which has taken decades to build!

Sincerely,

Cathy Cronlund

Alaska resident since 1969  
Petersburg resident since 1976

## **Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Cindi Lagoudakis <trembladakis@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 1:41 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** SB22 General Operating Budget comments

I will try to keep comments brief and highlighted by subject for easy reference:

### PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Public broadcasting in Alaska is woven into our life fabric, encompassing 30 radio stations and 4 public TV stations that provide coverage throughout the state. As a business model, public broadcasting is an economic bargain. In Petersburg where I live, volunteers donate well over 3,000 hours annually of program development, on-air time, fundraising efforts, special segments and organization of community events. Services include the only source of daily local news in our area, vital broadcasts of up-to-date fisheries and weather information, OJT training for youth, essential emergency notices and engagement with our senior population--including as on air hosts. As the State seeks to shift costs to local municipalities, fundraising for this and other non-profits will necessarily decline. In a mostly rural state such as ours, there is not overlap in organization function. Reductions in funding will have affects on communities that will be negative and dramatic. Over 1/3 of our local funding comes from federal grants, also now being threatened. This loss of funding not only affects the ability to disseminate public information, but will result in the loss jobs and of support for families in our community. In a town of 3,000, every job counts. Multiply that impact across Alaska. Alaska's public radio and television were cut by 16% last year. Many of these stations are the only source of news in their area and provide the only contact with emergency broadcast notices. If that doesn't seem significant, imagine cutting your personal budget by that amount, only to be told that this year you'll have to give up more. The State MUST start adopting real and significant measures, not for making more cuts that negatively affect quality of life in the most fundamental ways, but of raising revenue.

### REDUCTIONS IN PRE-K, BEST BEGINNINGS and other PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING

These are proven, effective programs to boost the education and welfare of our young citizens; and to yield life-long benefits. This is the last place we should be seeking cuts. Eliminate all per diem for legislators first; then you can make further cuts to education. I'm joking, of course, but it is not a laughing matter. These types of cuts are critical and will have future repercussions.

### DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES CUTS

As has been said many times, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. I do not support cuts to our most vulnerable citizens. Cutting programs that seek to reduce or eliminate future health costs by implementing preventative measures now is extremely short-sighted.

### ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAY SYSTEM CUTS

When the legislature can demonstrate that ANY single road in Alaska is producing at least A PENNY of revenue going into the General Fund, then we can talk about cuts to the ferry system. It is ridiculous to try to justify cuts because costs outweigh revenue. Roads generate ZERO revenue. Providing transportation statewide and to ALL CITIZENS is part of ADOT's mission. We are a maritime state with over 6,000 miles of coastline. The coastal areas are where many of our non-road system communities are located. Cutting the system beyond the quick will not generate good results and does not meet the agency's mission. There are ways to generate additional revenue from our ferry system, but the ADOT and the Legislature seem determined not to allow that to happen. The ferry system needs more creative, nimble management, internet availability for passengers, better schedules and more reasonable fares.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/SEXUAL ASSAULT FUNDING

Had we not wasted all that money on studying controversial road projects or funding an expensive legislative office in Anchorage, we could have provided this critical funding many times over. Alaska has a tragic and embarrassing record on these issues. We need to do all we can to address them.

If the Legislature gets one message and one message only, it is to RAISE REVENUE. We cannot afford to keep wasting time cutting and slashing, and turning Alaska into a quagmire of insufficient funding that results in failed programs and decaying infrastructure. No matter how much we cut it will not be enough to balance the budget, but it will be more than enough to have tragic, negative consequences in our health, safety and security, economy and quality of life for years to come. Please take serious and significant steps immediately to generate sources of income that will allow us to maintain and grow our wonderful state.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Cynthia Lagoudakis  
Petersburg, Alaska

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Gene Eggleston <gke@wildak.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 1:34 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** No More Cuts!

Dear Senators;

STATE PARKS; Alaskans love our state parks and know how important they are to our quality of life. Our state parks provide unmatched beauty and a variety of recreational opportunities from the marine environment of Southeast Alaska through the most populated section of the state in Southcentral Alaska up to the rugged interior in Fairbanks and out to Western Alaska with the largest state park. NO MORE CUTS, our State Parks and communities that house them are suffering. We want to see our Parks funded, staffed & maintained for Alaskans and our tourists.

ALASKA PUBLIC MEDIA is essential. Our public radio and television are our lifelines for our rural & urban communities. Alaska Public Media provides free over-the-air and online non-commercial public service programming and community –based services to unserved and underserved audiences throughout Alaska. We strongly support our public media and hope that our Alaskan Senators will do so as well. NO MORE CUTS.

Gene Eggleston

P.O. Box 722

Delta Junction, AK. 99737

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Dave Long <hainesrealestate@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 1:21 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** support public radio

Please continue to fund public radio in Alaska. It is an essential means of communication for all reasons in our rural community. Not everyone is on the grid here, and sometimes all power and internet may be lost. The radio gives us a way get emergency information across the region and in effect increase public safety in our community and state.

Thank you!

--

Dave Long  
Owner -Haines Real Estate, Licensee in the State of Alaska  
907 303 7030 mobile  
907 766 3599 FAX

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**PETERSBURG LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

**YOUR FULL NAME:** Rexanne Stafford

**REPRESENTING (ORGANIZATION OR SELF):** Self

**BILL #:** SB22                      |and/or **Subject:** Oppose Budget cuts to Public Radio and Ferry System

**COMMITTEE NAME:** Senate Finance

**HEARING DATE:** March 17, 2017

I am a lifelong resident of Petersburg, a longtime volunteer EMT and Member of our local Emergency Planning Committee. Public Radio plays a key role during times of emergencies and is imperative to a successful response. Without the radio keeping the Public informed, puts a heavier burden on Responders.

Also, the AK Ferry System is vital to SE Alaska. It is a medical necessity. Babies are no longer delivered here. Expectant mothers have to travel to cities with more facilities and staff. Ferries provide vehicular transport for these families who are often gone for weeks during a birth.

I urge you to keep the funding in for Public Radio and look to other sources such as a state income tax to increase revenues. I am old enough to remember paying taxes as a young, single mother and never felt it was a hardship. I felt it was my part to pay for this great state we live in.

**Thank you for placing my testimony on the written record.**

## **PETERSBURG LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

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907-772-3741/ phone      907-772-3779/fax

### **WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

**YOUR FULL NAME:** Suzanne Fuqua

**REPRESENTING (ORGANIZATION OR SELF):** Self

**BILL #:** SB22      **and/or Subject:** Oppose Budget cuts to AK Public Broadcasting and AMHS

**COMMITTEE NAME:** Senate Finance

**HEARING DATE:** March 17, 2017

I am a longtime supporter of Public Broadcasting. I hope you will not cut funding for Public Broadcasting in Alaska.

Public media is vital to all of us in AK and especially to the rural population. Statewide PBS and local radio stations keep us informed and in touch with what is happening. It is the most important source for state and local news and events. Our local Public Radio station is also our connection to the statewide Emergency Broadcast System.

Information about what is happening in government, the economy, and the environment keep all of us part of our participatory democracy. Please keep us in the loop by supporting AK Public Broadcasting.

I also hope our AK state ferry system can be kept operating. It is our highway system in SE Alaska.

Before cutting services that are so important to the citizens of this State, please consider other funding efforts. A state income tax could help us all

**Thank you for placing my testimony on the written record.**

Good afternoon Senators, thank you for hearing our testimony.

My name is Orin Pierson, a longtime volunteer and current employee of KFSK in Petersburg.

We know these are tight financial times and we appreciate very much your tireless work to find solutions. We know that cutting costs is necessary. And you know, that since this fiscal crisis began, state funding for public broadcasting has already been cut by over 39%. Your proposed cut now of the entire remainder of state funds for public broadcasting would likely shut down our radio station.

We operate with the smallest possible paid staff, supported by dozens of volunteers. There is not a penny wasted, nor is there a penny to spare, but not for a lack of local support.

We are more generously supported by our community than most public radio stations. But our town is small and can only provide so much, so we financially rely on the your support to perform our essential services. Public radio in rural Alaska is not a commercial business, it is effectively a communication utility. It is our only source of daily local news and community information. We are uniquely dependent on public radio here in rural Alaska. During good times, people listen to the daily community calendar and announcements, to plan their days. And during bad times, when emergencies strike, and emergencies do strike, Senators, the first thing people do here, what our first responders tell people to, what the police tell frightened callers to do, whether the tsunami siren is howling, or there as been a landslide or a terrible accident. For help and instructions, Petersburg turns to public radio. Especially for everyone in rural Alaska, there is no alternative available. Your proposal will shut off our connection to essential communication.

Please, do not harm the people of Alaska by killing their public radio stations.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Derek Poinsette <poinsette.ak@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 17, 2017 4:17 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Cc:** Rep. Sam Kito; Sen. Dennis Egan  
**Subject:** Please DO NOT Cut Funding for Public Broadcasting

KHNS Radio here in Haines is an absolutely essential part of this community. I listen to KHNS every day, and I would bet that most of my neighbors do also. We here rely on public radio for the local news that is produced 5 days a week, statewide news from APRN, national and international news from NPR and other sources, live local DJ's, listener personals, weather, tides, road conditions, emergency announcements, etc. Furthermore, there is no substitute for the intelligent and commercial-free programming that is available via public radio. Without public broadcasting the radio and television dials would be a total wasteland.

Sincerely,

Derek Poinsette

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