

**From:** [Brad & Barb Keene](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Cc:** [Sen. Natasha Von Imhof](#); [Rep. Chris Tuck](#); [APS@frontiertutoring.com](mailto:APS@frontiertutoring.com)  
**Subject:** SB 103 – Alaska Performance Scholarship  
**Date:** Monday, April 10, 2017 10:41:02 AM

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To the Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

As a parent of two high school students at West High School and grandparent to six more students in the state of Alaska, I am writing to urge you to maintain the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) and withdraw Senate Bill 103.

We are long term Alaskans of more than 30 years. Our children have grown up here and now our grandchildren are growing up in Alaska.

One of our students is a Foster Child in our home and has a deep desire to better himself by obtaining a college education. At his young age he looks to a future that will get him and his family out of poverty. He has few options as far as finances from his family, so he has worked harder than any child I know to get good grades and qualify for scholarships. He plans to study in Alaska and stay in Alaska in the Engineering or Petroleum field.

The Alaska Performance Scholarship not only has far-reaching educational and social impact for our residents, but also funds the future economic prosperity of our state.

- **APS incentivizes superior high school academic achievement:** In the most recent comprehensive APS survey study, nearly 60% Alaska high school graduates reported that the prospect of receiving APS motivated them to achieve better grades, regardless of whether they ultimately received APS funding (APS Survey Report, 2015). Producing a better educated workforce is a strategic investment in strengthening Alaska's economy.
- **APS graduates are significantly more prepared for college than their non-APS counterparts:** Although the SB 103 sponsor statement complains that 26% of APS recipients take remedial coursework in college, it neglects to recognize that between 2013 and 2016, non-APS students have enrolled in remedial coursework at 2.2 – 3.2 times the rate of the APS cohort (APS Outcomes Report, 2016). A 55% - 67% reduction in need for remediation is clear evidence of APS's academic impact.
- **APS motivates our highest-performing high school graduates to remain in Alaska for college and their careers:** Based on an analysis of the high school class of 2011 (the first APS cohort) five years after high school graduation, APS recipients were 25% more likely to be Alaska residents than other non-APS high school graduates (APS Outcomes Report, 2017).
- **Without APS, more of our best and brightest high school graduates will leave Alaska for better opportunities:** APS competes with similar or more generous programs available at many out-of-state institutions. For example, Montana State University offers up to \$11,500 per year, and Washington State University offers up to \$11,000 per year, in scholarships for out-of-state freshmen who meet certain SAT/ACT score and other requirements.

SB 103 proposes to divert resources from a program that has consistently demonstrated positive educational outcomes to a patchwork of unproven experiments. While it is clear that Alaska has more work to do in improving its education outcomes, SB 103 is based on flawed logic. By removing the critical incentive APS provides for students to engage, SB 103 will at best blunt the effects of the potentially meritorious investments in the classroom it is intended to fund.

Our best and brightest college-bound students are choosing to stay in Alaska and contribute their talents to our state because of the investment we make in the Alaska Performance Scholarship today. Tough economic times only make a stronger case for us to maintain it.

Sincerely,  
Bradley and Barbara Keene  
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Please retain this letter in the public record.