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**From:** Billeen Carlson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 24, 2025 2:57 PM  
**To:** Senate Education; House Education; Senate Finance Committee; House Finance  
**Subject:** Regarding Governor Dunleavy's Education Reform Bill

I am writing to express my deep concerns regarding **Governor Dunleavy's proposed education reform legislation** and its disproportionate negative impact on **Indigenous, rural-remote, and Title I students**. While the bill introduces initiatives aimed at increasing educational options, its implementation risks deepening **existing inequities in Alaska's education system** rather than resolving them.

## Key Concerns with the Bill

### 1. Expansion of Charter Schools and Open Enrollment Policies

- The bill allows municipalities, the University of Alaska, and the State School Board to authorize charter schools, diverting public school funding and resources away from already underfunded rural and Title I schools.
- Open enrollment policies favor students in urban areas who have access to transportation while leaving remote and rural students behind due to financial and geographic limitations.

### 2. Increased Funding for Correspondence Programs

- Correspondence education expansion does not account for **Alaska's digital divide**—many students in remote villages lack internet access, making this solution **inaccessible to those most in need**.

### 3. Teacher Retention Incentives

- While retention bonuses are necessary, they may **disproportionately favor urban schools** where recruitment challenges are less severe.
- This could **worsen the teacher shortage in rural and Indigenous communities**, where stable, qualified educators are most needed.

## A Call for Fair, Inclusive Reform

Rather than passing legislation that **favors urban and well-resourced schools** while leaving Alaska's most vulnerable students behind, we need an **education policy that prioritizes equity**. Any education reform in Alaska must:

- **Ensure equal access** to high-quality education for rural, remote, and Indigenous students.
- **Guarantee long-term funding** for tribally run schools rather than a **limited-scope pilot program**.
- **Invest in infrastructure improvements** for correspondence programs, ensuring **internet access and digital resources** are available to all students.
- **Prioritize rural teacher retention** with **targeted, sustainable incentives** that address the **unique challenges** of educators in these communities.

I urge you to **oppose this bill in its current form** and advocate for amendments that protect **all Alaska students, regardless of their geographic location or socioeconomic background**. Thank you for your time and dedication to ensuring a **fair, effective, and inclusive** education system for our state.

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**From:** Bridget Paule [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 23, 2025 10:43 PM  
**To:** House Finance; House Education  
**Cc:** House Rules; Rep. Carolyn Hall  
**Subject:** Thank you for moving education funding forward!

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for moving the education funding bill forward to the Rules Committee. **I am strongly in favor of increasing the BSA and I'm very willing to reduce my PFD distribution and, in addition, to pay taxes if needed, to make that happen.**

We need this bill to pass this school year, sooner rather than later, so I encourage Rules Committee members to follow their colleagues' example and expedite this bill. I will be writing to the relevant Senate committees with this same message.

As step-parent to a junior high school kid with special needs in the Anchorage School District, I've seen the incredible difference that small class sizes with experienced, skilled staff with adequate time, can make for a child.

Up until this year, our boy wanted to go to school each day. We live close enough to his elementary that he would walk there or, more often run because he wanted to be there. He was succeeding behaviorally and academically because of the School Based Behavioral Services program (SBBS), which is now at risk of being cut due to budget shortfalls.

Now that he's in 7th grade, where there is very little special ed support, I see the chilling effect of this lack of support. His middle school is too crowded and simply lacks the staffing and staff experience of the elementary SBBS program. Our kiddo doesn't even get to attend PE because the class size is over 150 students and his disability makes it impossible for him to succeed in that setting without staffing that just isn't available. Anyone with a preteen boy will recognize that PE is maybe the most important class they could have!

I'm under no illusion that increasing the BSA will increase special ed services but it might mean that we can preserve the little that we have and perhaps lay the ground work for improving the situation in the future. Your support of increasing the BSA is one step toward keeping such essential services for my child, not to mention providing the school experience we want for all the rest of our kids.

Given the current threat to federal education funds, increasing the BSA significantly is even more important now than ever. This funding will ensure our schools have the resources to better meet their mission of public education for all, regardless of means or background. And, as we all know, a well-educated and informed populace is the strongest base for a resilient, functioning democracy.

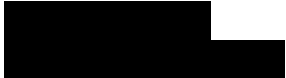
Finally, as the bill moves into Rules and toward the inevitable political negotiations, I urge all of you to please not compromise the quality of our childrens' education. However urgent it is to fund our schools, please do not trade funding for any concessions that will dilute or weaken our public education system. We don't need more measures, testing, teacher evaluations, curriculum oversight, charter or

homeschool options/support - there is plenty of all of that (well, maybe we need to add back a civics class requirement). And we sure don't need vouchers! We just need adequately funded, good quality neighborhood schools and the willingness to pay for them.

Once again, thank you for your important work toward funding public education for all Alaska's children.

Sincerely,

Bridget Paule

A black rectangular redaction box covering the address information.

Anchorage AK 99517

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**From:** Melany Wilson <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 22, 2025 10:50 AM  
**To:** House Finance  
**Subject:** Vote for SB69

Dear House Finance Committee members,

Please vote for Vote for SB69

Sincerely,

Melany Wilson

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**From:** Tracy Fischbach <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 22, 2025 9:53 AM  
**To:** House Finance; House Education  
**Cc:** Rep. Carolyn Hall  
**Subject:** Fully Fund the BSA instead of approving a large PFD

Dear members of the House Finance and Education Committees,

I am writing to let you know that I would like you to **fully fund the BSA as proposed, even if that requires a significant decrease in the PFD.**

I know people have said that we cannot afford it, but the Governor has proposed a \$3800 PFD, so it appears the Governor is ok with spending a lot of money. I am asking you to spend it on education instead of this PFD amount.

Education funding benefits us all in the near and long term. I'm not sure I can say the same for the PFD.

Thank you for taking my comment,

Tracy Fischbach  
Anchorage, AK

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**From:** gail mcbride [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 26, 2025 6:48 AM  
**To:** House Finance  
**Subject:** HB78 HB69

House Finance Committee,

Please do not pass HB 78 or HB 69.

Our schools must reduce administrative costs and provide education for our children.

It is wrong to steal the PFD from Alaskans.

Gail McBride  
Fairbanks, Ak