

House Public Testimony
HB 286 Operating Budget FY19
HB285 Mental Health Budget FY19

Compiled emails
March 1, 2018

xFrom: Carly Williams [mailto:cywilliams@aisdk12.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2018 2:43 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Early Childhood Funding

Hello,

Thank you for your support of early childhood funding in the past. I'm writing to ask you to continue to fund Best Beginnings. Because of Best Beginnings children in my community are able to receive books from Imagination Library, by getting these books in their homes we are helping them prepare for kindergarten and beyond!

Please continue to support PreK grants, Parents as Teachers, and Best Beginnings. Early Childhood funding makes a difference.

Thank you,

--

Carly Williams
Centennial Library
Annette Island School District
PO BOX 07
Metlakatla, AK 99926
(907) 886-6000 ext. 2269

xFrom: [REDACTED] @aol.com
Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2018 1:48 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Alaska's Budget

IF THE STATE IS HAVING TROUBLE PAYING FOR ESSENTIALS, THEN IT'S LONG OVERDUE TO PHASE OUT THE PERMANENT FUND DIVIDEND CHECKS. IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE IN THE 80'S WITH THE FIRST OIL PRICE CRASH AND IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASIER TO DO BACK THEN.

ALL THESE CHECKS HAVE BEEN DOING FOR THE LAST 20YRS IS ATTRACTING LOSERS WITH LOTS OF CHILDREN THEY HAD NO BUSINESS HAVING IN THE FIRST PLACE TO ALASKA. AND EVERY YEAR WE GET MORE OF THEM. AND THE CRIME RATE IN ANCHORAGE HAS BEEN GROWING ALONG WITH THEIR ARRIVAL.

I HAVE NO INTENTION OF PAYING AN INCOME TAX SO THEY CAN COLLECT THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN FREE MONEY EVERY YEAR AND COLLECT GENEROUS WELFARE BENEFITS AS WELL. AND THE PFD IS FREE MONEY, IT'S NOT MONEY OWED TO PEOPLE JUST BECAUSE THEY LIVE HERE. MAYBE IF THE PFD DRIED UP THEY MIGHT LEAVE THE STATE, AND AT THE VERY LEAST, NO MORE WOULD COME UP HERE TO GET A FREE RIDE.

YOU HAD BETTER START THINKING LONG TERM ABOUT WHAT KIND OF A POPULATION YOU WANT LIVING IN ALASKA. A PRODUCTIVE ONE , OR A PARASITIC ONE. I GREW UP IN CALIFORNIA, I HAVE NO INTENTION OF LIVING IN ANOTHER CALIFORNIA.

NANCY CUDDEBACK
ANCHORAGE

xFrom: Mary Ver Hoef [mailto: [REDACTED]@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2018 9:53 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: I support Payroll tax to help State Budget

Hello Alaska Legislators:

I am writing this Public Opinion letter to let you know that I support re-instating a modest Alaska State Payroll/Income Tax to help balance our state budget. This worked for our state back in the 60's and 70's; it is a more fair financial burden than reducing PFD.

I am an active voter and have been an Alaska resident for 46 years - I am very concerned about the fiscal strength of our state. A modest tax would really help us now.

Another good thing about a Payroll/Income Tax is that it will tax the thousands of out-of-state, often seasonal, non-residents who come to Alaska to work.

I also support the reduced Permanent Fund checks in order to keep our state fiscally solvent. But if a Payroll/Income Tax can be enacted and is bringing in sufficient funds, the PFD checks could be similarly increased.

Medical costs are very high in Alaska, and it would be good to eventually move toward Medicare for All, but until that time we must use other methods to fund state government. Our State budget has been cut to the bone and can't support more reductions.

I strongly OPPOSE the proposed large sum PFD dividend ~ we must keep that PFD principal as strong as possible for future Alaskans and to support our state.

PLEASE work on re-instating Alaska State Payroll/Income Tax!

Sincerely,

Mary Ver Hoef

Fairbanks, Alaska

xFrom: Dave Atcheson [mailto: [REDACTED]@hotmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2018 9:35 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: UA Budget

Dear House Finance Committee:

In my 30 plus years in Alaska I have been witness to a university system that has steadily improved to the point where its graduates are in high demand and its reputation has blossomed, today highly regarded in many disciplines around the world.

To see cuts continue to the point where our currently well respected university is rendered a mere shell of its once great self, and where our children automatically venture out of state for a decent education, would be a disgrace. Please do not let that happen. We have had a bright future, that has grown ever brighter due to your support. It is so important to our society, to our state, and to our children, to have a first class university system. To see that unravel, and to one day have to try and rebuild the institution that is University of Alaska back to where it once was, would be a shame, and in the long term wasteful. The progress the university has made, what University of Alaska has become, is being eroded, and could take years, as well as an untold amount of resources and money, to build back again. So, please fund the UA system to the fullest extent possible.

Thank you,

Dave Atcheson

[REDACTED]
Sterling, AK 99672

907-398-[REDACTED]

xFrom: [REDACTED]@thiele.com
Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2018 9:19 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Pittman-Robertson federal grants

I totally support funding additional staff to help with grant administration of Pittman-Robertson federal grants. Way back when, I worked with fish and game and the field work seemed much more important to me than trying to "dot the I's" -- but the fieldwork didn't happen at all without the grants!

We now have the luxury to volunteer in the state parks and for other groups – where we can really see the impact of low funding.

Would add more but we are traveling at the moment.

Jim
Anchorage

xFrom: William Scott [mailto:naturesventures@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2018 6:42 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Trail for Anchor point

Hello I own a business in AP and I believe that a trail in the state park is very much needed. It would provide access to the ocean and keep people off the narrow road that lead to the ocean. In the busy months of the summer it is very unsafe for families using the area. So this idea of a upgraded trail will be very positive for the community.

Thank you
William E Scott IV

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Bill and Leah Scott
Anchor Point
www.naturesventures.com

xFrom: Lynn Dusek [mailto: [REDACTED]@acsalaska.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2018 3:46 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Funding for Early Childhood Services

Dear House Finance Committee,
Thank you for maintaining early learning funding in our state budget.
I ask that you please continue to support funding for early childhood resources within the FY19 state operating budget. These resources give young children in Alaska the opportunity to succeed in school and life.
As an early childhood educator at both the elementary and college level, the need for high quality learning environments for children birth to five and their families is extremely important throughout the state of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Lynn Dusek

Kenai Peninsula College
Early Childhood Education-Adjunct Professor

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
Pre-Kindergarten Instructional Coach
Retired Kindergarten through 3rd grade teacher

xFrom: The Jangs [mailto: [REDACTED]@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 28, 2018 7:20 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: House Finance Committee Public Testimony

Thank you for your support of early childhood funding in the past. I am writing as a volunteer who serves on the Anchorage Imagination Library Advisory and Family Engagement Teams. I witness firsthand the huge impact that Best Beginnings and Anchorage Imagination Library truly has for local families at our outreach events. Families are so thankful for the books and resources we provide for the earliest of learners, which in the long run help prepare Anchorage children to succeed in school and in life. We are grateful to be able to get literacy tools into the hands of parents and caregivers. I would ask that you please continue support funding for Pre-K grants, Parents as Teachers, and Best Beginnings.

Thank you for your time,
Andrea Jang
Anchorage



One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 200 • Juneau, Alaska 99801

Tel (907) 586-1325 • Fax (907) 463-5480 • www.akml.org

March 2, 2018

House Finance Committee
Co- Chairs Rep. Seaton and Rep. Foster
Alaska State Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99811

RE: HB 286 – An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs; capitalizing funds; amending appropriations; making supplemental appropriations; making appropriations under art. IX, sec. 17 (c), Constitution of the State of Alaska, from the constitutional budget reserve fund; and providing for an effective date.”

Dear Co-Chairs Seaton and Foster,

On behalf of the Alaska Municipal League, I would like to comment on HB 286. While municipalities have seen their Community Assistance cut in half in the last couple of years, we have attempted to accept that new amount without submitting requests to see that funding go back up to \$60 million per year. The main reason for that is due to the fact that we promised, back in 2008, when the Community Assistance (Revenue Sharing) program was re-formulated, we were thankful to share in the “gain,” and would also be willing to share in the “pain.” To that end, we have not expected to see a return of the \$60 million Community Assistance dispersal.

However, we were disappointed to see that there was no backfill of \$30 million into the current program, leaving municipalities in a position of seeing a dispersal of \$20 million in FY20. If no backfill deposit would have been provided in FY 20’s budget, Community Assistance would fail to exist. Knowing that there is pending legislation restoring that fund, leads us to be acceptable to HB 286.

This letter, therefore, turns its subject to HB 321, the Supplemental Budget. We would like to thank House Finance for backfilling \$30 million from the Alaska comprehensive health insurance fund into the community assistance fund.

The Alaska Municipal League truly values your support for Alaska’s municipalities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Kathie Wasserman'.

Kathie Wasserman
Executive Director



March 1, 2018

House Finance Committee
2017-18 Alaska Legislature

Re: Operating Budget, Adding Additional Funding to ADF&G for Grant Administration

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

Cook Inletkeeper has been working for over twenty years to protect Cook Inlet and the life it sustains. At the core of our work is the knowledge that healthy habitat and clean water are the bedrock of our communities, economies, and cultures in Alaska.

As a partner of both state and federal agencies that administer programs to study, manage and repair habitat, we know how critical federal grant money is to sustaining these programs. As a partner, we also understand the time it takes to administer federal grants.

I write today in support of funding additional staff at ADF&G and DNR to enable grant administration of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration program and the Dingell-Johnson Act.

Cook Inletkeeper does not benefit directly from these specific programs, but we believe that the State of Alaska should not leave federal money on the table for such critical programs.

Sincerely,



Carly Wier
Executive Director

PSPA
PACIFIC SEAFOOD PROCESSORS ASSOCIATION
Est. 1914

March 1, 2018

Representative Seaton, Co-Chair
Representative Foster, Co-Chair
House Finance Committee
Juneau AK, 99801

Re: Support for FY19 ADFG operating budget and amendments

Dear Co-Chairs Seaton and Foster:

The Pacific Seafood Processors Association (PSPA) supports the FY19 ADFG operating budget as amended by the House Finance Committee. These amendments are necessary to restore a small subset of inseason management and assessment projects cut or significantly under-funded since FY16. Loss of these projects directly reduces Alaskans' access to fisheries, which in turn reduces employment, income opportunity, and tax revenue for the state and coastal communities. These projects have historically been funded by the state because they are critical to achieving the mission of the Commercial Fisheries Division to manage fisheries in the interest of the economy and consistent with the sustained yield principle.

Harvesters, processors, and communities have been very concerned about the level of cuts to the Department of Fish and Game budget in the past several years, particularly in the Commercial Fisheries Division. There has been about a 28% cut in UGF to the Commercial Fisheries Division since FY15. With fewer basic assessment projects in the water, such as weirs, towers, and aerial surveys to obtain the biological data needed to manage the fishery and optimize yield, there is more uncertainty in ADFG management and thus more conservative management. This equates to less fishing opportunity, through shorter seasons and/or lower limits, to address additional uncertainty.

Alaska is dependent on a fishing economy, and the seafood industry is Alaska's largest private employer, directly employing about 57,000 people in Alaska. These are not just seasonal jobs. Alaska's fisheries support over 41,000 full time jobs on average, and remote coastal communities are most dependent. Over 21,200 rural Alaska residents were directly employed by the industry in 2015, accounting for 15% of all rural working age adults (McDowell report, Sept 2017). In light of significant Pacific cod stock declines in 2018 across the Gulf of Alaska, lower halibut quotas, and in anticipation of lower than average returns of pink salmon, maximizing fishing opportunity is critical to coastal constituents.

The salmon and herring fisheries projects restored in the budget amendments have a statewide impact with little relative impact on the budget. Per the documents submitted by ADFG to the House Fish & Game Finance Subcommittee, ADFG comprises a very small percentage of total agency UGF (1.4%). While these amendments represent a very limited increase to the proposed budget, these investments directly serve to maintain and improve a fishing economy, support Alaska jobs, and generate tax revenue from those fish. While these amendments do not restore the multitude of assessment and inseason management projects lost in the past few years, they certainly help. PSPA strongly supports the ADFG operating budget as amended, in support of a healthy and sustainable fisheries economy.

PSPA is a group of nine seafood processing companies that purchase fish from harvesters and provide markets in 18 communities across Alaska. We are fully invested in Alaska and the fisheries management system that supports a healthy seafood industry (harvesters, processors, support services, transportation sectors), which in turn supports the Alaska economy. Seafood continues to generate about \$5.2 billion in total annual economic activity in Alaska every year.

Thank you for your public service. PSPA appreciates your leadership and the efforts of the House Finance Committee to invest in fisheries management for the state of Alaska and the communities and businesses on which our economy depends.

Sincerely,



Nicole S. Kimball
Vice President – Alaska
PSPA

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February 28, 2018

To: House – Finance Committee

From: Wayne Aderhold – Homer

Ref: HB – 286 / Operating Budget/ University of AK

I appreciate the recent increases to the University's budget.

Having sat through recent presentations by both President Johnson and Chancellor Gingerich, I am convinced that the Regents have trimmed their request "to the bone".

At the very least, please hold the current \$336 million budget ... but if possible, I would like you to see your way toward **approving the Regent's requested amount: \$341 million.**

Our campus in Homer depends on an adequately-funded University in order to keep our economy "fueled" with properly-trained citizens (in both academic and craft-related studies).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Aderhold".

Wayne Aderhold – Member, Kachemak Bay Campus Citizens Advisory Board

Homer, AK 99603