

From: [Sen. Anna MacKinnon](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: FW: FAST funding
Date: Friday, March 16, 2018 12:48:06 PM

From: mark Dickson [mailto:Marksd@gci.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 5:41 PM
To: Sen. Anna MacKinnon <Sen.Anna.MacKinnon@akleg.gov>
Subject: FAST funding

Dear Senator MacKinnon,

I am an Alaskan resident and I reside in Homer. I am writing to express my support of HB233 and SB116; two companion legislative measures to extend Alaska's Education Tax Credit program. I support these pieces of legislation as currently written. The Education Tax Credit program is a mutually beneficial partnership for private industry, educational institutions, Alaskan communities, and the Legislature.

Alaska's Education Tax Credit program was first established in 1987 by the Legislature to encourage private businesses to make charitable contributions to support schools in Alaska. The program's effects have gone far beyond benefits to the educational institutions receiving funding; the program has had positive impacts on urban, rural, and tribal communities, on workforce development, on federal and state agencies, and on the business climate in Alaska.

The Education Tax Credit is directly benefitting the Southcentral Alaskan communities. The program provides opportunities for student tuition and research project support producing opportunities for local students to receive the necessary skills and knowledge to support our local workforce. Furthermore, it provides funding to educational institutions for students and faculty to enhance their capacity to do research. For example, Alaska Pacific University is actively conducting research on Pacific halibut, Sockeye Salmon, Rockfish, and Pacific Razor Clams, in and around the Homer area. These are all species important to Southcentral Alaska. This research is paramount the longevity of our environment and our economy and as a resident and active fisher/ hunter it's great to see the benefits these educational opportunities have on students and residents.

Without these funds, such applied educational opportunities, and the consequent benefits to Alaskan communities, would be financially prohibitive and unavailable to students.

These contributions and benefits also assist the legislature by reducing the amount of fiscal appropriations that may be needed to support educational institutions and academic programs and natural resource management agencies in our State.

The Education Tax Credit program is a win-win for the educational institutions, children, communities, and businesses in Alaska and it is critically important that we extend this program. The current program is due to sunset on December 31, 2018; HB233 and SB116 will extend it through January 1, 2025.

I respectfully request that you support HB233 and SB116 as currently written by passing these bills in this legislative session. The Education Tax Credit program has helped many young Alaskans prepare for life and their future in the job market, while at the same time providing our State with a stable, qualified and well-prepared work force. Research and education in Alaskan fisheries, marine biology, and environmental science programs are critical to maintaining a healthy state economy.

If you have any questions or require anything additional from me, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mark Dickson



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