

Tanana Chiefs Conference

Chief Peter John Tribal Building

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March 8, 2013

The Honorable Mike Dunleavy

State Capitol Room 510

Juneau, AK 99801

SUBREGIONS

UPPER

KUSKOKWIM

McGrath
Medfra
Nikolai
Taketna
Telida

LOWER YUKON

Anvik
Grayling
Holy Cross
Shageluk

UPPER TANANA

Dot Lake
Eagle
Healy Lake
Northway
Tanacross
Tetlin
Tok

YUKON FLATS

Arctic Village
Beaver
Birch Creek
Canyon Village
Chalkyitsik
Circle
Fort Yukon
Venetie

YUKON

KOYUKUK

Galena
Huslia
Kaltag
Koyukuk
Nulato
Ruby

YUKON TANANA

Alatna
Allakaket
Evansville
Fairbanks
Hughes
Lake
Minchumina
Manley Hot
Springs
Minto
Nenana
Rampart
Stevens Village
Tanana

Dear Senator Dunleavy,

I am writing to ask for your vote against the amendment to the Constitution of the State of Alaska, Senate Joint Resolution No. 9 and House Joint Resolution No. 1. Changing the Constitution of the State of Alaska and using public school funds to pay vouchers to private and/or religious schools will have the most impact on Alaska's rural schools. The schools within the villages are already facing financial problems. The oil & gas prices in the rural areas are significantly higher than urban areas, which leads to higher costs to run the school buildings in the villages. Rural villages do not have tax dollars to pay for the schools. Airline costs for traveling to and from the village as well as freight are extremely high. These financial hardships in the rural regional education attendance areas all have a devastating impact on rural village schools.

Rural schools are already facing the problem of low student enrollment, lack of resources due to high costs of shipping, and high teacher turnover rates. Taking funding away from these rural schools can mean more schools shutting down and students not having the educational opportunities as their urban counterparts. Parents will have to home school or relocate their families and this is hard to do for families who are already living in poverty.

We ask for your most serious attention to this issue, and request that you vote against this amendment. We consider your participation in this matter imperative in fighting for equal rights and education for the students who want to live in their hometown and learn their culture within their communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and thank you for your demonstrated commitment to providing educational opportunity for *all* Alaskans.

Sincerely,

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE



Jerry Isaac, President/Chairman