



UNALASKA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Police-Fire-EMS-Communications-Corrections

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UNALASKA, ALASKA

March 3, 2016

Representative Bryce Edgmon

State of Alaska

Representative.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov

Dear Sir:

The community of Unalaska is proactive about emergency preparedness, and we have to be. We are located in a volcanic region, with a very real potential for earthquakes, tsunamis and other multi-hazard events. The Aleutian Islands are also well known for frequent storms, which reach hurricane force several times each year.

KUCB is the only media service in Unalaska, and its signal reaches our entire population. In the event of an emergency, KUCB plays a vital role in the dissemination of information from first responders and officials involved in the management of emergency response.

Our emergency plan includes reaching the community over KUCB Radio. We practice our plan each year during a community-wide disaster drill, and the local radio station is an active participant in this drill. When the situation is not a drill, our citizens rely on KUCB to relay essential, time-sensitive, information. We've worked with KUCB over the years during various multi-hazard events to include multiple tsunami advisories and warnings. Already this year, we've turned to KUCB to announce extreme weather warnings and travel advisories.

We are aware that the State of Alaska is facing a fiscal crisis resulting in difficult budget decisions. KUCB and the public radio stations across the state have weathered a deep cut to their state operating grants in FY16. Another large cut could dismantle the emergency response network that is vital to keeping Alaskans safe during emergencies.

Sincerely,

Zac Schasteen

Chairman, Aleutian – Pribilof Local Emergency Planning Committee

From: [Elise Davis](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Operating Budget #256
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:18:07 PM

I was unable to attend the public testimony today in Nome, Alaska, but wished to share my thoughts.

I have been an educator, principal, and parent in the Bering Strait School District and in Nome. Currently, one of my children attends a preschool with a certified teacher. Chances are, my kid would be just fine if there was no certified teacher, but that is not the case for so many of her classmates and peers. The data shows substantial delays in language for a great number of children in this region. A preschool classroom with a certified teacher is substantially different than one without.

When I was a principal, there was no Head Start program in our community. Children entered Kindergarten without knowing their numbers, colors, alphabet, or basic prepositions. It is SO hard for children to thrive in an environment that they can't understand and that has expectations they can't meet.

There are some terrific preschool aides and daycare professionals here in town, but the activities, language, and enrichment they provide is not the same as the people who have completed education programs.

I recognize Alaska is experiencing a fiscal crisis and I don't have any solutions, but I do know that there is a terrible disparity in language skills and school readiness between children entering the public school system and whatever we can do to lessen that disparity does have a positive impact on their entire future.

Sincerely,

Elise Davis
Nome, Alaska

From: [Jessica Clary](#)
To: [Sen. Pete Kelly](#); [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Representative.Dan.Sadler@akleg.gov](#); [Sen. Anna MacKinnon](#); [Sen. Gary Stevens](#); [Sen. Johnny Ellis](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Cathy Munoz](#); [Rep. Lance Pruitt](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#)
Subject: UAA's Potential Budget Cut
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:25:22 PM

To Alaska's Senators and Representatives,

The potential budget cuts to UAA have raised considerable concern for the students and faculty currently attending and/or employed at UAA. I felt the need to send an e-mail to the individuals that I knew could make the difference between the success of UAA or the failure. I can say from my own personal experience and with talking to my fellow peers that UAA already doesn't have as many services as do universities in the lower 48. I am currently enrolled in the Health Sciences program on the Health Education track. Myself and my peers find it to be considerably difficult to find the courses that we need as it stands. I cannot imagine how much more difficult it would become should there be even more cuts to the university. I am scheduled to graduate in December, and I am concerned about classes being offered so that I can continue with that plan. I am currently paying out-of-state tuition, and I do not feel even at this point that I am getting my money's worth. I feel if the budget cuts are executed to UAA that UAA will lose more students to universities out-of-state and become a university that people are just unable to take seriously. If I was looking into colleges as a freshman, after hearing everything that is going on with UAA, why would I still choose UAA? The simple answer is that I wouldn't. Students do not go to college to earn their education because they want to be fearful of having their programs cut, or having classes they need not being offered but every other year. Also, these budget cuts may affect the employment of student advisors which to me is mind blowing. Students rely on these individuals to help make sure they are on the right path to graduation. My advisor for example, Travis Hedwig, is amazing! He is very supportive of his students, he does whatever he can to advocate for students, and he is an incredible professor! Losing someone like that because of a budget cut is a serious disservice to not only students, but to UAA as well. We need more professors like him not fewer. I gave up going to radiology school back in my home state to go to UAA, and I am feeling regretful of that decision because my journey here has been such a rocky one. Please consider all of the people that will be affected by these cuts including the students, the faculty, and the community. Please consider the jobs that will be cut and how those individual's families are going to be disrupted from that. Please consider the single parents, such as myself, who are doing everything they can to earn an education to provide more for their children. Please address this issue as if you, your child, your husband/wife, or your family would be directly affected, not as just someone who gets to make the decision affecting so many lives anonymously. Please feel free to contact me for any further clarification or questions. Thank you for your time.

Best,

Jessica Clary

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: no-reply@plan4alaska.com
To: Governor.Bill.Walker@akleg.gov; [Rep. Cathy Tilton](#); [Rep. Jim Colver](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Shelley Hughes](#); [Rep. Wes Keller](#); [Sen. Bill Stoltze](#); [Sen. Charlie Huggins](#); [Sen. Mike Dunleavy](#)
Subject: Plan4Alaska.com Budget Challenge
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:26:21 PM

As you make important decisions this year to create a sustainable budget for our state, I share my Budget Challenge solution so you know what's important to me.

[View Mine!](#)

From: [Doniece Gott](#)
To: ["lfscdog+senateschedule@akleg.gov"](mailto:lfscdog+senateschedule@akleg.gov)
Subject: SFC GOV and LEG 3:30 Subcommittee Meeting DELAYED
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:28:18 PM

The Governor and Legislature Budget Subcommittee-Closeout meeting will be delayed by "a few minutes".

Doniece Gott
Senate Finance Committee Assistant
465-3753
Capitol Bdlg. Rm. 506

From: [Doniece Gott](#)
To: ["lfscdog+senateschedule@akleg.gov"](mailto:lfscdog+senateschedule@akleg.gov)
Subject: SFC GOV and LEG 3:30 Subcommittee DELAYED 15 minutes
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:32:01 PM

15 minutes. Not "a few" minutes. Probably 10 now.

Doniece Gott
Senate Finance Committee Assistant
465-3753
Capitol Bdlg. Rm. 506

From: [Randy Brand](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: FY 2017 Operating Budget
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:32:53 PM

I would like to urge the legislature to fully fund the UAF Engineering building. If we are unable to complete that project we will still have the expense to maintain the building without receiving any of the benefits.

Randy Brand
907-322-8898

From: [Andrew Lee](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)
Subject: UAA budget cuts
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:14:31 PM

To whom this may concern,

Hello, my name is Andrew and I am a student currently enrolled at University Of Alaska Anchorage. I ask that you consider any budget cuts thoughtfully, and with compassion. It's understandable that any state has to consider options for budget cuts, due to economic hardships, but there must be another solution than sacrificing our youths education. It's a blessing in itself to even HAVE a university here in our home of Alaska. Granted, there is two other universities here in Alaska, but the city of Anchorage and its residents are more valuable than one might assume. Anchorage is located near the bay, which has a harbor and is one of our major distribution ports of Alaska. It also generates revenue with the summer tourist season that boosts Alaska's Economy. These are just two reasons as to why Anchorage's education system is vital to Alaska's growth. I could truly go on and on about reasons as to why budget cuts should not be taken from our educational systems, but I don't want to take too much of your time. I will say this however, I truly enjoy my time at UAA and would love nothing more for the school, other then to receive proper funding for its students, staff, and community. I'm aware that this isn't the proper formatting for a letter, nor does it have the best vocabulary, but that's just one more reason as to why school funding is absolutely necessary for this economy, and country to grow. If we want to get ahead, we have to educate the youth, which is the next generation of Alaskans.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Ps, please do not reply to this email. I sent it as a request from our UAA staff. Thanks!

Andrew Lee

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Dawn Harris](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of funding for AYFN
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:39:31 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of continued funding for the Alaska Youth and Family Network. I am the parent of a child who fell into drug addiction. He was remanded to go to ARCH (Adolescent Residential Center for Help) in Eagle River via the Department of Juvenile Justice and successfully completed their program in eight months. While in the program, he was visited by Sonny Minhaus of AYFN. My son really liked Sonny and felt supported and understood by him. As a result of the sessions with Sonny, my son requested services for aftercare with AYFN and was assigned to Lee Breinig, who met with my son once a week for a couple of hours. Lee was a great resource for him and provided a mentoring relationship that was healthy and supported. Lee offered him counsel and support any time he needed it. As a parent, it was difficult for me to understand the hardships of being a teenager with lots of negative peer pressure. Our relationship was strained and I also needed support. AYFN and Lee also provided me with support and took a neutral stance on the differing points of view that parent/child relationships undergo during tough times.

Our communities in Alaska are all suffering from the drug, alcohol and a subsequent crime epidemic. If the next generation of citizens don't have anywhere to turn for help, our society will continue to disintegrate at an even more rapid pace. The consequences of this include, individuals that are unable to function in the workplace, provide a healthy environment for their children and could ultimately cause our judicial system to collapse. A healthy economy, where the ability to provide a strong fiscal system, is dependent on the citizens who can function in a healthy manner, work a job, and give back to our communities.

I personally believe that the Alaska Youth and Family network can play a major role in helping to get this problem turned around. Please continue funding this important and vital community resource.

If additional testimony or comment is needed, I can be reached at (907) 715-6726 or djharris@mtaonline.net

Thank you for your consideration in this manner,

Dawn Harris, Wasilla, Alaska

From: [Joe Kashi](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)
Subject: Kenai Peninsula College Council budget resolution
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:08:16 PM
Attachments: [Kenai Peninsula College Council 2016 budget resolution.pdf](#)

Dear Representative Neuman:

At the request of Kenai Peninsula College Council chair Hal Smalley, I am forwarding the attached college council resolution to you for your consideration during budget deliberations. This resolution was adopted unanimously.

Thank you for your time and attention to this.

Yours very truly

Joe Kashi



**A Resolution Urging the Alaska Legislature
To Approve the University of Alaska FY2017 Budget
As Submitted by Governor Walker**

Whereas, the University of Alaska Board of Regents and the individual campuses of the University of Alaska previously recognized that the State of Alaska would be in a fiscally constrained environment; and

Whereas, affordable in-state post-secondary education, especially job-training by community campuses, has been nationally identified as among the most important factors in combating statewide economic difficulties and ensuring Alaska's future by enabling Alaskan students to remain in-state for their post-secondary education and future employment; and

Whereas, the University of Alaska is by far the largest and most significant institution providing post-secondary education and work skills training in all areas of the State of Alaska and is the only in-state university affordable to most Alaskans, and, further, provides a necessary foundation for the State of Alaska's efforts to enhance and develop its economy in the 21st Century; and,

Whereas, for the past several years, campuses of the University of Alaska have already undertaken a variety of pro-active program and budgetary reviews to identify programs and services that could be appropriately transformed, reduced or eliminated in the budgeting process, as well as identifying programs and services that are performing well and providing strong financial returns for funds expended; and

Whereas, much of the budgetary and program review done by the University of Alaska used nationally accepted budgetary and program review standards and methodology; and,

Whereas, the pending University of Alaska budget as submitted by Governor Walker reflects this ongoing careful prior program review, program prioritization, and resulting budgetary decisions while balancing the other needs of the State of Alaska in light of current fiscal constraints; and

Whereas, post-secondary education becomes a particularly critical means by which residents of the State of Alaska can improve their job skills and employability at a time when employment in resource extraction industries is adversely affected by global economic conditions; and

Whereas, further program cuts and line item cuts beyond those already identified and proposed as submitted by Governor Bill Walker would adversely affect careful budgetary and program review and realignment already implemented by the University of Alaska and its campuses in an unpredictable manner and further would seriously undermine the core programs of the University of Alaska, |

Whereas, the community campuses such as Kenai Peninsula College are specifically tasked with serving rural and less-populated areas of Alaska, with whom the community campuses have a long and close relationship such that the community campuses are particularly knowledgeable about, and responsive to, the education needs of residents of rural and less-populated areas of Alaska not readily accessible to urban residential campuses; and,

Whereas, budgetary cuts in addition to those proposed by Governor Walker would seriously threaten the viability of many university programs, particularly job skills programs in small, tightly-run rural campuses and leave the next generation of Alaskans without the ability to develop those job skills needed by both industry and our economy as a whole; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE COUNCIL THAT:

1. The Kenai Peninsula College Council recognizes both the current financial concerns affecting all Alaskans as well as the careful prior efforts by the various campuses of the University of Alaska, including Kenai Peninsula College, to realign its programs and services in a manner that results in budgetary savings in a controlled manner, and further urges the Alaska Legislature to approve the university budget as proposed and submitted to it by Governor Bill Walker and further urges the Alaska Legislature to approve, enact, and fund the University of Alaska's proposed 2016-2017 budget as proposed by Governor Bill Walker.

Approved on this 3rd Day of February, 2016 by a vote of 14 Yes and 0 No



Hal Smalley, Chair
Kenai Peninsula College Council

Council Members Voting YES

Marge Hays	Amber Briggs
Mike Frost	Kris Holderied
James Hornaday	Joe Kashi
Sherril Miller	Sara Moore
Wayne Ogle	Walter Partridge
Stephanie Queen	Sonja Redmond
Linda Swarner	

From: [Katie Sunderland](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: MMM&S
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:06:41 PM

To Whom it may concern,

I was unable to attend the local hearings on this issue. But I would like to address a few points.

Alaska is a state that has little food production compared to the amount of food that is coming in from other places. This makes it much more important that the MMM&S stay open with funding from the state until it is operating privately. We have many smaller producers in Alaska that use and count on the services rendered by MMM&S. Many 4H families are counting on it to slaughter their market animals. Alaska is at a pivotal point in its economy where it is not only about growing our capabilities of local food production, but also industry expansion in general. We need this market to have the opportunity to become viable and thriving. I believe that seeing it into privatization is not only Ag forward, but also is the responsible choice for the state to secure our ability to thrive more independently as Alaskans. This will create more jobs and infrastructure. It will allow growth in the Agricultural market place. It will bring stability over time to the this industry.

Please all for one year increment funding of MMM&S. This will show the Ag industry and Alaskan's as a whole that the Legislature understands and supports the future of our food system.

Katie Sunderland

Alaska Rural Rehabilitation Corporation

248 E. Dahlia Ave

Palmer, AK 99645

Phone(907)745-3390,

Fax (907)746-3555

katie@arrc.us

From: [Kendall Nordin](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Please protect public radio funding in Alaska
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 2:51:17 PM

To the House Finance Committee,

I apologize for not being able to call in during one of the open phone sessions, but I will be at work during that time. Thank you for listening and considering this important citizen input.

In a previous career, I worked in DC on helping to pass the FCC regulations that reinstated Low Power FM Radio licenses. We fought in a broad coalition with groups as diverse as conservative Christian communities and Jazz fanatics in large cities. We all knew that radio, and truly local radio is a fundamental tool for communities to function well. Here in Skagway we rely on KHNS for weather, road conditions, water conditions, tsunami warnings, local news, community announcements, native programming, and entertainment. With prohibitively expensive cable tv and internet rates, it's also our only free source to world wide, national, state, and first nation news. If it disappears, so does our tether to each other and our lifeline to the larger communities we belong to -- the State of Alaska & the country as a whole.

By gutting the funding for public radio, we will lose all of our federal matching grant and therefore our ability to use the public airwaves in the Upper Lynn Canal to our maximum advantage. As our communities are so spread out, this will diminish our ability to connect with our fellow citizens, leave us without good information and reporting on local affairs, and will hinder our ability to participate in the important decisions of this area democratically. I also firmly believe that those actions ultimately lead to a halting of any comprehensive progress towards local economic growth, which our state desperately needs.

I am not unaware of the current budget crisis we face in Alaska. But when priorities have to be defined, protection of free access to local information on the public airwaves should be without question near the top of the list.

Thank you again for spending your valuable time listening to and weighing our concerns.
Kendall Emery,
Skagway, Alaska.

From: [Page O'Connell](#)
To: [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Jim Colver](#); [Rep. Neal Foster](#); [Rep. Paul Seaton](#); [Rep. Liz Vazquez](#); [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Rep. Adam Wool](#); [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Rep. Dan Saddler](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Cathy Munoz](#); [Rep. Lance Pruitt](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Rep. David Guttentberg](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Mike Hawker](#); [Sen. Pete Kelly](#); [Sen. Anna MacKinnon](#); [Sen. Gary Stevens](#); [Sen. Johnny Ellis](#); [Sen. Peter Micciche](#); [Sen. Click Bishop](#); [Sen. Mike Dunleavy](#); [Sen. Lyman Hoffman](#); [Sen. Donny Olson](#)
Cc: ["Cc: Deanna Baier"](#); ["Mara Bacsujlaky"](#); [Page Oconnell \(tpoconnell@icloud.com\)](#)
Subject: letter of support
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 2:55:32 PM

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to express my concern about funding cuts to House UA Budget Subcommittee budget to eliminate all UA/UAF research and outreach state funds.

These cuts would greatly affect the important 4-H programs active across the State.

I live and work in Bristol Bay. I see every week the positive effects that the Bristol Bay 4-H Clubs have on the youth and families in our community.

Without 4-H many youth would not receive the diverse educational opportunities they are currently receiving.

The 4-H programs are helping grow strong, healthy children, our most important asset.

Our son has been participating in the 4-H Science Club and 4-H Lego Club; he looks forward to the clubs each week as a very special part of his life.

After attending a local presentation today at the SAFE shelter in Dillingham where Dr. Matt Hirschfeld presented on the topic of Adverse Childhood Experiences, I am again reminded how important these positive, healthy activities are for helping our children grow into healthy, resilient adults.

Supporting early childhood programs such as 4-H provides the largest possible return on the investment you could ask for.

As a behavioral health case manager in Dillingham for the past eighteen years, I have seen the sad and painful effects of what lack of supporting our children can result in. I hope that our legislators will continue to fund UA/UAF research and outreach state funds as well as behavioral health programs.

Respectfully,

Page O'Connell

P.O. Box 717

Dillingham, AK 99576

tpoconnell@nushtel.com

Page O'Connell

Behavioral Health Center, Case Manager

Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation

P.O. Box 1517 Dillingham, AK 99576

phone: 907-842-1230 ext.6721

fx: 907-842-5174

e-mail: poconnell@bbahc.org

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR;

COMMITTEE: HOUSE FINANCE;

Chair, House Finance Chair & all Committee Members

BILL: HB 256 & 257

SPONSER:

DATE & TIME: 03/03/2016 @ 1:00 to 4:00 PM

My name is DENNY KAY WEATHERS, I live on Hawkins Island in Prince William Sound. For the record I **OPPOSE** both HB 256 & 257. Anytime the Governor and/or Legislators perceive an economic downturn "SHORTFALL" (as you call it) you politicians immediately want to increase taxes, or target "The Permanent Fund Dividend Program" (PFD). Oil revenue may be a small part of the State's shortfall but the real problem is not the shortfall it was and still is the Government's overspending. Overspending in the past has created the "SHORTFALL" today.

Unfortunately our leaders cannot seem to operate within a budget, there is still rampant overspending, promises to others and perks. You Politician's have created an enormous debt by the lack of a balanced budget and overspending and the misguided belief that you can get Alaskans to pay for anything you want.

As for dipping into the PFD; since the creation of the Permanent Fund Dividend Program, many Alaskans have become accustom to it, like a yearly income. This maybe their source for buying yearly groceries, paying their rent, heating fuel, gas to get to work, a way to pay off credit cards. When the PFD direct deposit hits the bank in October, watch the sales in Anchorage. Two times I made the mistake of going to Anchorage during that timeframe, hotels were full, restaurants busy and the stores plugged. Good for business though. Money still in Alaska.

When the PFD was set up by Gov. Hammond, it was not for the people as much as it was designed to keep the government from spending the oil wealth recklessly. Alaska does not need any new taxes nor do we need to surrender the PFD. What is needed to stop the shortfall is to **CUT GOVERNMENT** and stop the **OVERSPENDING!**

Thank you for your time. Any questions call me at 907-253-3745 or email me at

DENNY KAY WEATHERS

c/o PO Box 1791

Cordova, Alaska



4014 Lake Street, suite 201
Homer, Alaska 99603
907-235-8177 ext. 5
info@homerswcd.org

State of Alaska House Finance Committee,

It is an unfortunate reality of the financial times of this great state that we are facing the formidable task of increasing revenue, while balancing this out with practical and responsible cuts to services provided. These kind of decisions and restructuring are never easy. We trust in our administration, our elected officials, and the public voice to ensure that all services provided are of value to the people of Alaska, its industries, and its future.

We understand that all state departments have been requested to make cuts to staffing and programs in a manner that provides the greatest savings while minimizing the loss of valuable services to our citizens. It is in this light that we would like to address the invasive species and agricultural pest services provided by the Plant Materials Center. This service is one that is of regular benefit to our office and our many cooperators, so we would like to provide some reflective expression on the value this state service provides to many citizens, as well as the agricultural industry.

The impact of invasive species on agricultural production and forest health has been well documented across the globe. In Alaska, we are in a unique position to be defending a front line that long ago advanced across other states. The economic impact of invasive species across the US is well over \$10 billion a year, and that does not include the indirect impacts to local food webs, forest health, tourism, and other victims of decreased biodiversity. The potential for invasives and agricultural pests to significantly impact the agricultural industry in Alaska is a real threat that increases every year as the climate changes and potential vectors increase in frequency and volume. As our statewide economic model watches oil & gas revenue decline sharply, diversification of our economic engines will be a fundamental aspect of our future stability. In Alaska, fisheries, tourism, real estate, and agriculture rank very close behind oil & gas as economic engines, and all four of these have the demonstrated potential to be severely impacted by neglectful management of invasive species. As a cumulative biological factor, this area of resource management is not the kind that can be put on hold. Every season of neglect allows increased spread and establishment of opportunistic species that become exponentially more difficult to manage.

The program brings in enough federal dollars to operate on a \$300,000 budget, while the state pays only the salary of one individual. It is our sincere opinion that the position of Invasive Plants and Agricultural Pest Coordinator is of a value far greater than the potential immediate savings in payroll for the state. In actuality, it is the promotion of this type of service that could help to stabilize the economic downturn in our state and diversify our financial resources.

Homer Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors

"To provide education and leadership in the conservation and sustainable use of soil- and water- related resources through cooperative programs that protect, restore and improve our environment."

From: cpowers@acsalaska.net
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: SENIOR BENEFITS CUT
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 2:19:13 PM

I have already given my testimony via email earlier this week, but just found out that you are paying Senior Benefits to "" NON-CITIZENS" how far can this blow to humanity be?

Maybe you should think about cutting those benefits first..... very shameful....

Cheryl Powers
Kenai, AK

From: [Geoff Carroll](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Funding for Public Radio
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 2:33:17 PM

Dear members of the House Finance Committee,

I understand that the state is under an extremely tough financial situation and you need to reduce expenditures, and I encourage you to do so. However, it seems like a 100% cut in money to public radio is unnecessarily extreme.

Our radio station, KBRW, provides a very valuable service on the North Slope. It is the source of our local and statewide news. It provides important weather information. It brings the community together through programs such as the Birthday Program. We get exposure to the outside world through NPR programs. We are educated by the broadcast of local programs on health programs, search and rescue, and other services. We stay in touch with local government when NSB Assembly and City Council meetings are broadcast.

As a member of the KBRW Board of Directors, I know that the station is operated very efficiently, while still providing a top notch service. We have great support from the community, but still just barely get by financially. If there is a drastic cut in state financing we would have to reduce staff and greatly reduce services.

In short, KBRW is the center and heartbeat of the community. Please provide a reasonable amount of funding so we can continue providing this service.

Thank you,

Geoff Carroll

--

Geoff Carroll
PO Box 1012
7770 Yugit St
Barrow, AK 99723

907-852-5320 home
907-830-9480 cell

My name is Stephen Todd and I have lived in Wrangell for 17 years. I understand the difficult financial situation that the legislature is facing and I know that all of us in Alaska face difficult decisions regarding cuts that must be made. I would like to speak in favor of sustainable funding to public broadcasting in Alaska. I understand that some funding cuts may need to be made. I am asking that the legislature not make the 100% cut to public broadcasting that some have suggested.

Our local public radio station in Wrangell is KSTK. A 100% cut in State funding to KSTK would potentially cause our station to be shut down. This 100% cut in funding would cause KSTK to fail to meet the minimum for non-federal funding, and thus would make KSTK ineligible for funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. This crescendo of a lack of funds could mean the end of our station here in Wrangell - as well as possibly shutting down 6 other public stations across the state.

KSTK is a crucial part of the fabric of this community. When folks from Wrangell want to know what events are happening in the legislature and across the state, we turn to KSTK. When there are emergencies that endanger us, KSTK lets us know. When our kids play sports in a distant community, Wrangell can be there because our public radio station takes us there. When our borough government meets, KSTK allows us to be in on the conversation. When there is news that is specific to Wrangell, that has a direct effect on us, our public radio station explains it. When a neighbor needs a hand, KSTK lets us know. KSTK helps hold the community of Wrangell together. Without it we would have no daily, local source of radio which helps keep this community informed, safe and whole.

A 100% cut in funding to public radio would be disastrous for KSTK - it would be disastrous for Wrangell - and it would hurt Alaskans across the state that depend on their public radio stations as we do here. Small villages and towns like Wrangell do not have the community resources to recoup the losses of a 100% cut.

If you must make further cuts to funding public broadcasting – please consider making these cuts much less drastic. Please consider a budget that funds public broadcasting at a sustainable level. Wrangell counts on our public radio stations to be there for us. Please fund public broadcasting at a level that will allow it to continue to serve these essential services to communities across Alaska. Thank you for considering this testimony.

Stephen Todd
PO Box 1844
Wrangell, AK 99929

From: [Dave Anderson](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: KBBI Emergency/disaster service letters
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 2:02:04 PM
Attachments: [KBBI-Kenai Peninsula Boro Assembly Resolution.pdf](#)
[03-02-16 KPBOEM Support LTR.pdf](#)

Dear Representatives,

Attached are letters of support regarding KBBI Homer Public Radio emergency/disaster response services. Some recent disaster examples are noted. KBBI has been providing comprehensive public service information since signing on the air in August 1979. We have invested in backup propane generators and fuel storage capacity to provide service in the most extreme circumstances. The 100% cut proposed for public broadcasting will have a huge impact on our ability to maintain these vital services, and the other local station does not provide adequate services. Also, a cut of this magnitude would decrease our Non-Federal Funding Support, a critical component of our budget on which federal CPB funding is calculated. A dark station or repeater cannot serve our coastal and rural communities and residents. Your job is not easy this year. Your support for essential services should include public radio. Thank you

Dave

David S. Anderson

General Manager

KBBI Homer, Alaska

907-235-7721 x222

www.kbbi.org/

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**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
COMMENDING RESOLUTION**

**A RESOLUTION COMMENDING KACHEMAK BAY BROADCASTING, INC.
AND PICKLE HILL PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS
OF SERVICE TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE KENAI PENINSULA
AND WEST SIDE OF COOK INLET**

WHEREAS, Kachemak Bay Broadcasting, Inc. (KBBI) and Pickle Hill Broadcasting, Inc. (KDLL) have provided local, state, national and international news and entertainment program services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to Kenai Peninsula residents from Cooper Landing to Nanwalek, and Tyonek to the west side of Kodiak Island.; and

WHEREAS, Peninsula-wide live broadcasts of Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly meetings are possible through this collaboration that includes Seward on meeting nights; and

WHEREAS, KBBI and KDLL have presented local information for many life threatening disaster situations, including the recent January 24, 2016 earthquake; the Funny River fire in 2014, the Caribou Hills fire (2007) and Tracy Avenue (2004); as well as the St. Augustine volcano (2006) and Redoubt volcano (2009) eruptions; and

WHEREAS, KBBI's ability to simulcast broadcasts to KDLL listeners has been an important information avenue for a number of emergency situations; and

WHEREAS, KBBI and KDLL services also include local news and information programs, and local and marine weather; and

WHEREAS, Local volunteer DJs share their love of music throughout the week; over 800 local residents from ages 16 to over 70 have hosted live music shows on KBBI and KDLL; and

WHEREAS, Through the Bush Lines and Information lines, KBBI brings vital personal and practical information to residents on and off the road system; and

WHEREAS, KBBI and KDLL also air international and national news and entertainment programs from National Public Radio, Public Radio International, American Public Media, and the BBC; and

WHEREAS, Alaska news is represented by Alaska News Nightly, Alaska Morning Report, Alaska Economic Report, and Talk of Alaska, provided via satellite from the Alaska Public Radio Network;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF
THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH:**

SECTION 1. The 2016 Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly commends the quality of service and community involvement of KBBI and KDLL, and thanks them for enriching the lives of Kenai Peninsula residents living along the shores, mountains, and bays of Cook Inlet for over 30 years.

SECTION 2. This resolution become effective immediately upon adoption.

**ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
THIS 23RD DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2016**




Kelly Cooper, Assembly Member, Co-Sponsor


Willy Dunne, Assembly Member, Co-Sponsor


Mike Navarre, Mayor, Co-Sponsor


Blaine Gilman, Assembly President


John Blankenship, Borough Clerk



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
Office of Emergency Management

253 Wilson Lane, Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Office: (907) 262-4910

Direct: (907) 262-2095

Fax: (907) 714-2395

bhanson@borough.kenai.ak.us

MIKE NAVARRE
BOROUGH MAYOR

March 2, 2016

Dave Anderson, General Manager
Kachemack Bay Broadcasting
Homer, AK 99635

RE: Support for Continued Funding of KBBI and KDLL Public Radio

I am providing this letter in support of efforts by KBBI and KDLL to obtain continued funding support from the State of Alaska.

The proposed cuts of up to 100% to Alaska public broadcasting will cause irreparable harm to the services these stations and other Alaska stations provide to communities of all sizes.

My support is in recognition of how seriously KBBI considers their service during emergencies and natural disasters. Residents in every corner of the Kenai Peninsula Borough including the Kachemak Bay area, communities on both sides of Cook Inlet and the west side of Kodiak Island benefit from broadcasts of emergency messages and critical information in times of disaster. The stations have assisted in providing vital information during wildfire, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, flooding, and tsunami emergencies, including the January 2016 earthquake, Funny River fire (2014), Caribou Hills fire (2007) Tracy Avenue fire (2004), the St. Augustine volcano (2006) and Redoubt volcano (2009) eruptions, with regular reports on wind direction and ash fall and steps to protect homes and businesses.

KBBI's ability to simulcast broadcasts to KDLL listeners has been an important information avenue for a number of emergency situations.

KBBI is a participant in broadcasting Emergency Alert System information, which is critical to our Coastal communities, often the only way some citizens can get critical disaster or emergency information.

Respectfully,

Scott Walden, Director
Kenai Peninsula Borough
Office of Emergency Management

From: [Julie Decker](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Cc: ["Julie Decker"; "Jeff Jabusch"](#)
Subject: Support for public broadcasting in the Operating Budget
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:56:13 PM

Dear House Finance Committee:

As a community member in Wrangell, and also a member of the Wrangell Borough Assembly, I would like to support funds for public broadcasting, such as those utilized by our local radio station – KSTK Wrangell.

I understand some have proposed a 100% cut to public broadcasting across the state. If the 100% cut goes through, seven Alaska stations will fail to meet the minimum for non-federal funding support that is required to be eligible for Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) funding. ***As 100% cut will result in the following stations being either crippled or no longer existing at all: KSTK Wrangell, KFSK Petersburg, KHNS Haines, KCUH Valdez, KDLL Kenai, KYUK Bethel and KYUK Bethel TV.***

I appreciate the difficult financial circumstances and decisions facing the Alaska Legislature, however, **public radio in rural Alaska is a foundational form of communication, covering everything from safety issues such as weather broadcasts and emergency alert systems, to local news and Assembly meetings.**

Wrangell does not have the ability to recoup this loss through community resources. KSTK can probably weather a substantially less severe cut, but a 100% cut will remove these essential services from rural communities, which cannot and will not be replaced by any other commercial services.

Thank you for your consideration.

Julie Decker

P.O. Box 2138

Wrangell, AK 99929

juliedecker@gci.net

From: [Josephine Stiles](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Cc: [Rep. Neal Foster](#); [Sen. Donny Olson](#)
Subject: HB256 Written Testimony from Nome
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:55:12 PM
Attachments: [1235_001.pdf](#)

Hello,

Attached please find written testimony from Myra Murphy from Nome.

Thank you!

Josie Stiles

Nome Legislative Information Officer
103 Front Street, State Office Building
P.O. Box 1630
Nome, Alaska 99762
Phone: (907) 443-5555
Josephine.Stiles@akleg.gov

"Supporting Democracy, Assisting Concerned Citizens & Promoting Government Participation To Shape Alaska's Future"

From: [Jeff Samuels](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Rep. Dan Saddler](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Cathy Munoz](#); [Rep. Lance Pruitt](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Rep. David Guttenberg](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Mike Hawker](#)
Subject: House Finance Committee- from a concerned citizen
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:39:28 PM

Dear Members of the Alaska State House Finance Committee-

I writing you today to urge you all to set your partisan politics aside and put your heads together to resolve our budget crisis before the end of this legislative session.

You talk about cutting the "fat" from the budget before they will consider revenue. But you are well into muscle and bone when you are cutting relatively low cost education and social services programs for the low income young and old- populations that cannot speak for themselves and can ill afford any more cuts to their services.

I support Governor Walker's balanced budget proposal of cuts and revenue, though it involves sacrifice on everyone's part. The Rasmuson Foundation's research shows that the majority of state residents also support a balanced approach. Do not be swayed by the very vocal minority who yells "Cuts, Cuts, Only Cuts!" They are not thinking clearly of the long term financial and social health of our state. By, far, we have the lowest per capita tax burden of any state in this country. Individually, we can afford to pay more for the essential functions of operating this vast and complex state.

Please sit down at the table together now to hash out these problems. In an increasingly polarized political world, why not be the legislature that can show the rest of the country how to thoughtfully navigate a crisis to do real good for the future your state? If you can be cooperative, I think you will be surprised at how well you will be appreciated by most of us come election time.

Sincerely,

Jeff Samuels
PO Box 1981
Girdwood, AK 99587
907-382-0099
jeffdsamuels@yahoo.com

From: [Gregory Kalal](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Funding for 2016 Potato Program
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:50:01 PM

I presently grow certified seed potatoes outside of Trapper Creek on 80 acres. Last year I produced over 30,000 pounds of certified seed. This seed was sold to over 20 greenhouses in Alaska, several large native corporations, and many home and family gardeners. This seed was transported by several large common carriers in Alaska. My seed was purchased from the Plant Material Center's seed program for \$15.00 per pound. It is then inspected by division of Ag personnel for \$200.00. I have both Mat-Su and Alaska business licenses.

I purchase my seed thru the Plant Material Center because it has less viral burden, better adapted to growth in Alaska, several varieties that can only be bought there and because it is what my customers want. Closure of the Potato Program would force me out of business because of the unavailability of clean seed and the desire by customers for seed that is not chemically sprayed to prevent viral infection by insects as required in the lower 48 states that have potato programs.

Thank you,

Gregory Kalal DDS

8621 Witherspoon Cir

Anchorage AK 99504

907-339-1966

From: [Karl and Robyn Hagerman](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: HB256
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:50:53 PM

2016 Alaska legislators,

Making public funding decisions during fiscally lean years is recognizably an arduous process, but not insurmountable. There is no one solution to the budget shortfall. Ideally, you will assess, review and make changes based on facts for the betterment of ALL Alaskans. I imagine that there will be budget cuts as well as revenue generated from taxes. I support a state income tax which would allow for revenue to be collected from all who make an income in Alaska.

I support a state sales tax with the stipulation that communities that don't already have a city sales tax in place, must do so or forfeit a prorated portion of state funding per Alaskan in that community. I don't mind paying taxes for the things I see as quality of life, but I would like to see equity of taxes among all Alaskans. I realize that this might not generate as much revenue as dipping in to the permanent fund, but I believe you have to level the playing field and create equality in order to bolster support for taking away something from each Alaskan. Otherwise, some are paying more to live here than others.

I believe you should repeal the state mandate that communities exempt property tax on the first \$150,000 for senior citizens or at least change it to those seniors who prove a financial need for such an exemption. The state has not reimbursed the communities for the senior property tax exemption in the 26+ years I have lived here. In Petersburg, there are a number of senior citizens who are not experiencing financial hardship. This would add to local communities coffers and remove some of the financial burden the state has placed on communities. In addition, I believe that the state could institute a real property tax on items such as boats. This tax could be remanded back to the Alaskan communities where the boat is located. If it is a state tax, then communities would not compete with one another for residents on a tax basis. In Petersburg, commercial fishermen threaten to live elsewhere if the local municipality were to tax boats.

I implore you to review carefully the proposed cuts to public broadcasting and the true impacts to Alaskans who benefit from public broadcasting. I do not believe that you should make across-the-board cuts. Alaska is a diverse state with different needs for each region. Remote areas like Southeast Alaska, rely heavily on public radio for local weather, news, and emergency broadcasting of information. It is my understanding that if you cut state funding at 100%, public radio stations will lose their federal funding as well thereby decimating the public communication service. Such a cut is devastating to our local radio station, KFSK, and to the Alaskan listening audience.

Perhaps communities that have other sources for local news and emergency broadcasting, may be able to field a 100% cut. But in Petersburg, public radio is all that we have and it is not equitable to the Alaskans who live in remote regions to have a vital piece of the community and life style here severed. Internet and cable TV are not always available, affordable and/or essential in rural and remote areas. Public radio is essential, available and affordable to residents in rural and remote areas.

I hope you will carefully review the proposed cuts as well as the need for proposed expenditures with an eye, heart and thought for how cuts/expenditures/taxes impact all ALASKANS in each region.

Sincerely,

Robyn Hagerman
Petersburg, Alaska resident

From: [Brian Houseman](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: UAF Budget Concerns
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:51:50 PM

To the Representatives on the House Finance Committee:

I am a student and student employee of the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

I have personally benefited from a robust UAF budget as a graduate student whose research has been funded by the UAF College of Science and Mathematics. I will soon finish my graduate degree and eventually enter a job that pays much more than the career-track job that I had before starting in my graduate degree program. More importantly, my chances of taking a job in Alaska rather than another state are significantly greater due to the fact that I have spent the last 2.5 years specifically researching the ecological effects of increased fire severity across Alaska's boreal forests. A well-funded budget from the state for UAF has contributed to very important research within the state and a significantly well-prepared work-force that intends to continually power the state's economy. I believe this is true not only within my discipline but also many other departments within UAF.

My academic and professional success in the state of Alaska would not have been possible without a robust UAF budget. I would likely never have invested my time in Fairbanks without support from UAF. If the UAF budget were compromised in a way that reduces student opportunities (i.e. reducing funding that supports programs which make higher level education possible for Alaskans) then I would expect fewer individuals like myself to enroll in graduate programs within the UA system and instead seek higher-level education and subsequently employment outside of the state.

I understand cuts must be made to the UAF budget and I agree with the necessity of budget cuts. I'm simply asking that funding for UAF and the UA system be restored to Governor Walker's original proposal levels.

Thank You,

-Brian Houseman

An Open Message to the Members of the House Finance Committee

I appreciate this opportunity to provide my opinion to the members of the House Finance Committee. I understand the torturous experience you are faced with and ask that you consider the unique and “bare bones” grant situations in rural Alaska. As I know you know, the remote regions in the state have always worked with less when compared to the financial situations created and supported by the sheer number of the population in our larger sister urban areas.

In the rural areas, the state funded programs support the **ONLY** services available to the vulnerable people (those in poverty, in addition, in the criminal justice system, in volatile home situations, in substandard housing, our veterans, our Elders, our children, the people with mental health treatment need, etc.) and for rural Alaskans in general. The jobs funded by the state grants support the economy of rural Alaska and with no funding and subsequently no jobs, a “domino effect” begins to unravel the support of the rural communities.

When Governor Walker introduced Expanded Medicaid to Alaska last year, a potential surge in funding potential was celebrated and expected; self-sufficiency was almost visible on the horizon. However, this funding increase has been slow in coming and is not yet realized sufficiently to support the grant-funded services in rural Alaska. A plan to address lowering the grants incrementally over the next fiscal years would allow the Medicaid system itself to meet the need of processing the increased load of applications and payment and allow the rural areas of Alaska to continue to enroll beneficiaries in Medicaid to support services.

In my work as a social worker with families and youth in this region for the past forty years, the state has spent millions and millions of dollars sending the people and children in rural Alaska to services in the urban areas of Alaska and out-of-state, to Texas, Utah, etc., for treatment. This has proved to be costly, clinically ineffective, and programmatically inefficient. Without localized services for the families, adults, and children, nothing changes for the family and the problems continue over generations.

Nome and the Bering Straits Region are stepping up to address the clinical need for localized treatment services. Medicaid Expansion will promote and sustain these programs, but **more** funding and time is needed to reach the entry-level of Expanded Medicaid services.

To be quite clear, without localized treatment services, more costly state-funded services will be utilized, e.g., the correctional centers, Alaska Psychiatric Institute, law enforcement, the court system. To be pragmatic, the State of Alaska will pay one way or the other to support the vulnerable people of the state. We can build more prisons or we can support funding for grant services for this population this year and decrease the budget with the potential Medicaid monies.

- I ask that you plan carefully for the needs of rural Alaska. Our population represents the largest number of vulnerable persons and must be considered uniquely, as opposed to the state at large.
- I ask that you retain the state grant funding without the dramatic budget cuts to allow services to continue as Medicaid grows
- I ask that you maintain Nome’s Youth Facility to allow youths and their families this service, rather than beginning the incarceration pattern of the past (youths are incarcerated in DJJ and then, as adults, begin their cycle of incarceration which never ends).

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions. Thank you.

Myra Murphy MSW
P.O. Box 1062
Nome, Alaska
907-304-1272
Mgmurphy1@mac.com



Legislative Testimony
3-3-2016

Patrick Mayer, Superintendent of The Wrangell public school district

Thanks to the all of you legislators who were able to meet with students, board members and Superintendents during our recent visits to Juneau,

I don't envy you the tasks you have ahead of you as you deal with the state budget.

I have two requests regarding the state education budget.

- 1) Please keep education in the forefront of budget discussions. We are in, of course year 3 of the three year plan that calls for the current year 2015-16 BSA plus 50 dollars. Our costs in districts continue to escalate and our monies in the Wrangell public school district and others across the state are put to good use for our students.
- 2) My second concern is with regard to the Alaska Department of education and early development budget. There are currently significant cuts proposed to the DEED budget for next year.

As districts, we do rely on the support we receive from DEED. I truly believe that the Department of Education's budget has been reduced to a level where if cut any further they would not be able adequately address compliance issues that support our ongoing receipt of federal dollars for such programs as Title I and Migrant Ed. The dollars associated with these categorical programs make up a significant part of our district budgets.

The current budget for DEED in front of house finance contains cuts in travel, phone and mail but in reality if these cuts are imposed they will actually translate into reduction of personnel. Therefore, when we reduce personnel that will have a direct impact on the ability of the department to assist districts.

Thank You

From: [Cindy Sweat](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: FW: Nola Walker can you please disperse? I am unable to to do so.
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:17:04 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: nola walker [<mailto:nolaj@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2016 12:38 PM
To: Cindy Sweat
Subject: Nola Walker: can you please disperse? I am unable to to do so.

Nola Walker
Wrangell, Alaska

March 3, 2016

Dear Esteemed legislators,

I would like to thank you for your service to Alaska during these difficult and challenging times. I don't envy you your task. I am writing to beg you to continue the current bare-bones support to public radio here in rural Alaska. I don't have to tell you how, except for the Anchorage bowl area, Alaska is made up of many small isolated communities. Public radio is urgently needed for our survival as Alaskans. And, occasionally, lives actually depend on it.

Public radio endured significant cuts during last year's budget process. We understood the necessity of the cuts, and we adjusted by every means available to us. KSTK is a very small station in a very small, remote and isolated location. Prior to last years cuts, we were operating on a shoestring. We were doing our best to use our funds and talent as effectively and responsibly as possible in the service of our listeners. Last year's budget cuts left KSTK no other option but to cut all purchased programming. This, unfortunately, makes the listening experience not as desirable to our listeners. But we're still here!

Representative Gattis' proposed elimination of all state support to public broadcasting represents a 45% reduction in funding to KSTK. The cut would necessitate a reduction in staff. Currently, we barely have enough employees to qualify for our Corporation for Public Broadcasting funds. The proposed elimination of state funding would mean that we at KSTK, as well as 6 other similarly situated stations, would cease to exist. Combined, these cuts represent a loss to Alaska of more than \$1.5M in federal dollars.

We feel we provide a significant and valuable service to our listeners. Wrangell's economy, like that of much of Southeast and coastal Alaska, is based on fishing and related industries. Fisherman use KSTK for weather, fishing updates and news. This is only one example of economic impact, among many, to Alaska's work life. The economic and safety aspects of radio is quite significant and can't be overstated. Community infrastructure is required for economic development. If Alaska's economy is to survive post-oil, we must diversify our economy. Radio is an incredibly valuable asset for this daunting task. We're all in this together!

While we at CoastAlaska, and our Coast stations, are working diligently to transition to our new reality, we beg you to not cut us off now. We are a much to valuable asset to waste. Our talented employees, our physical infrastructure, and our appreciation and love of Alaska, enhance Alaska's economy. Our value, now and into the future, significantly eclipses the cost of your support. I beg you to please, please, please continue your support. We need each other!

Most sincerely,

Nola Walker

Sent from my iPad

From: [Jamie Marunde](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Budget Comments - Northway DOT Closure
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:22:25 PM

Dear House Finance Committee,

I am submitting a comment in regards to the proposed budget in which Northway DOT's maintenance station was proposed for closure.

The Northway DOT is an integral station situated at the border of the State of Alaska on the only highway entering and exiting Alaska. They maintain 140+ lane miles of Alaska Highway, 20 miles of bus routes, the border station & port of entry, and a port of entry Airport. The Upper Tanana region believes that in both the short and long term, the costs of closing Northway DOT will quickly overcome any suggested savings. Not only is it a financial loss in failing infrastructure, to tourism, and to businesses utilizing this highway, but it is a loss of most of the permanent jobs here which support the local economy.

As the State faces financial hardship and many hard financial decisions, please ensure that basic infrastructure is maintained. The Northway DOT is extremely important to reducing long term maintenance costs, keeping the border station operable, and allowing business to flow through out Alaska. We Alaskans need this more than ever.

Thank you,

Jamie Marunde
Board Chair, Northway Natives Incorporated
PO Box 516
Northway AK 99764
907-322-4476

From: [Panu Lucier](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)
Cc: [Stephanie Berglund](#)
Subject: Follow up on HB256 Public Testimony
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:25:04 PM

Dear Representative Neuman,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the House Finance Committee yesterday, March 2nd in Anchorage.

As a follow up to my oral testimony, I am also providing my written testimony below which includes several additional points that were omitted in order to honor the 2 minute time limit.

Early learning funds belong back in the state budget

In light of Alaska's fiscal challenges, we recognize that there are tough decisions to be made however cutting programs is not always the best or only solution as we look at long-term impacts that may deepen Alaska's fiscal crisis.

While early learning may not be constitutionally mandated, early learning programs are an essential and concomitant component of the overall system in carrying out the mission of Alaska's public schools. Early learning programs directly prepare incoming kindergartners and first graders with the behavioral and pre-academic skills needed to be successful in school.

Early learning in Alaska:

- Alaska's state-funded preschool program met 10 of 10 of the quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2012—2013.
- A report from the Alaska Department of Education & Early Learning, January 2016, indicated an increase in children's cognitive, Language Arts and math scores as a result of their enrollment in State funded Pre-K. These results are consistent with the data from the start of the pilot in FY12.
- Approximately 10,000 children each year complete the Alaska Kindergarten Developmental Profile, used to assess a child's readiness for kindergarten, while Alaska's state funded Pre-K currently only supports 300 spaces for 4 year olds. This equates to only 3% of the total 3 & 4 year old population.
- The 2014 NIEER State of Pre-K report ranks Alaska 39 of 41 states who provide state-funded Pre-K for 4 year olds and only 9th in state spending. Alaska's budget for Pre-K equates to a mere .05 of one cent of the entire State's budget.

Eliminating Pre-kindergarten programs will have long-term and unintended consequences on Alaska's economic security including:

- **Increased pressure on public education resources.** Fewer than half of Alaska's young children start school with all the skills experts say they need to succeed. If 6% of children are retained a grade each year, it costs Alaskans \$11.5 million. Currently 7,000 children repeat a grade each year in Alaska.
- **Increased high school dropout rates.** Ninety-five percent of public investment in education occurs after age 5. Alaskans can't afford to continue the practice of addressing education gaps in the teen and adult years.
- **Increased prison costs:** eliminating early learning investments increases a child's chances of going to prison later by up to 39 percent; paying for that prison will cost Alaskans nearly three times more a year than it would have cost to provide a quality early learning experience. A portion of the criminal reinvestment funds should be invested in early learning to reverse the cradle to prison pipeline.
- Without funding for early learning in the state budget, Alaska will not be able to **access and leverage the \$250 in federal Pre-K Development Grants** at a 70% federal match through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Quality early learning should and needs to be a part of Alaska's economic infrastructure as a means of creating a literate and prepared workforce. We can invest now or pay way more later. I urge the Alaska House and Senate Finance Committee members to reinstate the \$2,820,000 for Pre-Kindergarten programs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Panu Lucier

Director, System for Early Education Development (SEED)

Direct 907.265.3106

Main 907.265.3100 or 800.278.3723

Fax 907.265.3108 or 877.563.1959

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From: no-reply@plan4alaska.com
To: Governor.Bill.Walker@akleg.gov; [Rep. Cathy Tilton](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Wes Keller](#); [Sen. Bill Stoltze](#); [Sen. Charlie Huggins](#); [Sen. Mike Dunleavy](#)
Subject: Plan4Alaska.com Budget Challenge
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:29:55 PM

As you make important decisions this year to create a sustainable budget for our state, I share my Budget Challenge solution so you know what's important to me.

[View Mine!](#)

From: [Owen, Margaret "Peg"](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: OWL funding
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:33:21 PM

To whom it may concern:

Please restore the Governor's FY2017 total for Statewide OWL funding at \$761,800. This is crucial to providing excellent services to our library patrons. Have a good day.

Peg Owen | Part-time Library Assistant | Kodiak Public Library

612 Egan Way Kodiak, Alaska 99615

907-486-8686 | powen@city.kodiak.ak.us

Kodiak Public Library Hours: M-Fri: 10am-9pm Sat: 10am-5pm Sun: 1pm-5pm

From: [Dana Lederhos](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: HB 256
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:35:59 PM

Dear House Finance Committee,

My name is Dana Lederhos and I am a strong champion of Abused Women's Aid In Crisis' mission and the critical services they provide to our community. AWAIC provides necessary emergency housing and support services to victims of domestic violence and is the only emergency shelter for victims in the Municipality of Anchorage. I understand that the Department of Public Safety subcommittee is currently recommending to the House Finance Committee that the grants line within the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault be funded at \$12,652,700. While this represents a decrease from FY16, it will allow the AWAIC to continue to provide critical services for victims to attain safety and support. Thank you for recognizing the need for these services to victims throughout Alaska by making funding for grants to programs a priority in this challenging budget.

Yours Sincerely,

Dana Lederhos

Anchorage Resident

From: [Cheryl Chapman](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)
Subject: Cooperative Extension Service
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:08:51 PM

Dear Rep. Neuman,

The Cooperative Extension Service, partially funded through the University of Alaska budget request, is not a frill in this state. Perhaps only the public schools have done as much to improve the day-to-day lives and health of ordinary Alaskans, so I was horrified to learn that your committee is considering shutting down this program when everything it touches is a positive.

Through CES I learned how to safely can fish and moose. I learned better budget practices. The agents taught me what wild plants could be safely harvested and eaten and which should be left alone. All us Master Gardeners put in 40 hours of public service each year to start out, and at least 20 hours after that annually (more recommended), plus constantly upgrading our knowledge. To you this may seem trivial, but to the food banks that benefit from our gardens, one small example, the fresh vegetables and fruits we donate aren't trivial at all.

With help from the horticulturist, we work with refugees so they can be self-sustaining and off welfare. CES teaches us how to keep our homes warm and how to adapt them so we can stay there safely as we age. Cooperative Extension trains those who use or sell pesticides to prepare them for the state-required certification. It also trains home cooks who want to go into business. Cooperative Extension conducts regular Strong Women classes to help the elderly improve their balance and cardiovascular and bone health.

If something is leaving foamy saliva all over your flowers, take a stem into a CES office for a free pest diagnosis, and a prescription for what to do about it (spittlebugs; blasts of water from the hose).

If you want interesting reading, you should go online or stop by a CES office and check out the free publications, which include information on how to keep yourself and your children warm in winter.

You may think of Cooperative Extension as exclusive to 4-H, and though the state's young people are important to the program (8,420 4-H members statewide, 11,000 others in other programs for youth in 2014), the list of benefits to us all goes on and on and on.

In our current and probably continuing situation, Alaska's needs and the funds to cover them do not match. We understand that. We understand that there isn't enough to cut to balance the budget, but even if there were, CES is not a good place to start. Please realize that the "T" word is not a bugaboo for Alaskans. We get reality.

Rep. Neuman, I urge you to leave funding for this vital statewide outreach, the Cooperative Extension Service, intact so it can continue to improve the lot of ordinary Alaskans.

Another word for us is, of course, "voters."

Thank you,

Cheryl Chapman

907-727-4706

From: [deborah](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: Cut the State Operating Budget!
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 1:07:20 PM

Dear House Finance Committee General,

I am writing you today because I am concerned about our state deficit.

Right now it looks like we will be running a deficit of \$3.5 billion for the second year in a row.

But please do not raise my taxes in order to fix this problem. Instead, we should cut our state operating budget by at least \$500 million.

I am asking you today to please cut the state operating budget!

Thank you,
deborah
2901 Leawood Dr
Anchorage, AK 99502

[REDACTED]

We all know that substantial corrections to the State's fiscal imbalance must happen this year. The public is primed to help share in this burden. Pass an income tax now, there is no benefit in delay. Arguing for cuts before revenue measures simply means bigger hits to State savings accounts. Everyone realizes that Permanent Fund earnings must be employed in the short term due to the magnitude of the fiscal gap. However, how we use Permanent Fund earnings has enormous implications for the future wellbeing of Alaska citizens.

I suggest that the Legislature appropriate a \$300 dividend this year and devote the balance of this year's earnings to close the budget gap. This is totally within your control. Citizens are prepared for a hit and now is the time to use this political capital. But Alaskans need to know that our crisis isn't permanent; that we will solve our deficit problem!

The important thing is to assure Alaskans that in the long term their ownership share of resource wealth defined by the Permanent Fund dividend will continue to belong to the people. Alaskans have benefited enormously by the dividend distribution but will forego the full value of the dividend long enough to get us through the current crisis. What truly alarms Alaskans is the prospect that their ownership right in resource wealth as defined by the dividend will be stripped away permanently as envisioned by the various endowment-style plans presently before the Legislature.

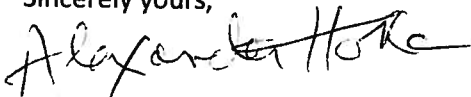
In 1980, our state courageously staked out a claim for each Alaskan that every citizen has an inalienable right to share in the wealth inherent in their land and in their social contract as Alaskans. Remarkably, this claim was promised to all future Alaskans as well. Do we really want to extinguish this bold ownership promise now, in a moment of panic?

The rewriting of statutes which define the people's ownership right to the economic power of the Permanent Fund, as envisioned in the three proposals before you, destroys a remarkable idea, unique among Sovereign Wealth Funds across the globe. Disappearing dividends tied to royalties and dividend caps eroded over time by inflation is insulting to those who understand the power of the Permanent Fund's economic engine.

If our current Permanent Fund is permitted to grow by inflation proofing alone (say 4% over time), in 100 years, the size of our Fund will be \$2.5 trillion. Do we really want the earning power of a fund of that magnitude to flow automatically into the State's appropriation process? What accountability to the public interest will be guaranteed by the existence of this enormous pot of money? Surely, the expenditure of this incredible wealth will be influenced by special interest lobbying more than by an expression of the will of the people. Imagine the incentive for well-heeled special interests to control the outcome of elections with this wealth as the prize for political winners.

Consider a possible future in which we have found a balance in State budgeting through traditional mechanisms including new conventional revenues and the attainment of an affordable size for state expenditure. What could be wrong with a scenario in which we managed to preserve this remarkable ownership right which we enjoy today? That possible future, if we can achieve it, would surely be a laudable legacy to leave to future citizens of our State.

Sincerely yours,



Alexander Hoke

oahoke@gmail.com





Yukon Koyukuk School District
Administrative & Support Offices
4762 Old Airport Way
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Kerry Boyd
Superintendent
kboyd@yksd.com

Telephone: (907) 374-9400
Fax: (907) 374-9440

March 2, 2016

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

Please consider restoring full funding for the BAG grant. The grant provides increased opportunities for distance learning, improved utilization of the Internet for academic endeavors, better communication among staff members, & improved professional development opportunities.

Without the funding from DEED, YKSD would have reduced bandwidth at each location by at least 1/3 of present levels. This would lead to a decrease in distance learning courses and professional development opportunities for our teachers, and an overall decline in the use of the Internet due to poor performance of the network.

Yukon Koyukuk School District is currently at 10 Megabits at each of our rural schools: Minto, Manley, Huslia, Hughes, Allakaket, Koyukuk, Kaltag, Nulato, and Ruby.

The cost of Bandwidth for these rural schools is \$17,250.00 per month for EACH school.


In comparison, the level of Bandwidth for our Raven Correspondence School in Juneau, Wasilla, Anchorage, and Delta is 30 Megabits.

The cost of Bandwidth for the Raven School offices is \$1,650 per month for EACH school.

Please keep the bandwidth assistance grant in place as the Internet is the lifeblood of our rural schools. Many of our students are not afforded the ability to go home and take advantage of a better broadband connection. The school's Internet connection is their one point of access to the Internet and all of its rich academic learning opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Kerry Boyd
Superintendent

From: [page_julie](#)
To: [Rep. Mark Neuman](#)
Subject: FW: DEBATE VIDEO
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 12:53:17 PM

From: katie a [alvarenga.katiex@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2016 12:03 AM
To: page_julie
Subject: DEBATE VIDEO

[https://ssl.gstatic.com/docs/doclist/images/icon_10_generic_list.png] Funding
MSPDP.mp4<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8ABiJHW0xbRSjBOR09LY1pKX1k/view?usp=drive_web>[X]

From: [ki](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: budget cuts public testimony
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 12:51:22 PM

You need to cut the budget 6% across the board, period! You cannot selectively decide where to cut and shut down funding for some things and keep the status quo for others. Put politics aside for once and cut everything 6% for 3 years. This will get the state to a sustainable budget that it can afford. Historically the Legislature has failed all of us. You never saved for a rainy day and blew millions on projects that failed and now it is reprehensible to hear you all and the Governor considering and talking about an income tax. The legislature got us here, sure oil price is considerably down, but again historically the legislature has wasted and spent millions and now you want us citizens to bail out the State? The house bill you are considering of cutting funding at the PMC which essentially will shut down the potato program is a prime example of you selective cuts trying to weed out your idea of things not important. If you cut everything across the board 6% every program out there will still have funding but reduced equally to all and fair. Your approach to selectively find areas and programs you deem unnecessary is completely absurd. 6% across the board equally lessens the burden on all and is then equal among all. You cannot look for new revenue without cutting the hugely bloated budget. Do what is right for this state and don't single out one department or group and kill a need. Reduce it equally and fairly among all. While many of you feel the PMC is unneeded the PMC provides a valuable need for many. Your cuts to PMC will increase the likely hood of importing seed with deadly consequences to the lively hood of some. You MUST cut the budget but DO SO equally and fairly to ALL. 6% across the board for 3 years will get this great State where it needs to be to sustain itself. YOU MUST put politics aside and do what is right for this Great Land. I will remain vigilant watching and I vote. Do what is right equally and fairly across the board!

thanks for your time and pray you will not kill any one program or department but cut equally and fairly first.

Kevin Irvin
Wasilla

From: [Yuhwa Hu](#)
To: [Sen. Pete Kelly](#); [Sen. Anna MacKinnon](#); [Sen. Gary Stevens](#); [Sen. Johnny Ellis](#); [Rep. Mark Neuman](#); [Rep. Steve Thompson](#); [Representative.Dan.Sadler@akleg.gov](#); [Rep. Bryce Edgmon](#); [Rep. Lynn Gattis](#); [Rep. Cathy Munoz](#); [Rep. Lance Pruitt](#); [Rep. Tammie Wilson](#); [Rep. Les Gara](#); [Rep. David Guttenberg](#); [Rep. Scott Kawasaki](#); [Rep. Mike Hawker](#)
Subject: SAVE UAA
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 12:51:15 PM

UAA is the foundation for knowledge and wisdom that gathers young adults that will shape tomorrow's future. To diminish the funds, faculty and staff of this university is to lose the very people who will be guiding the students of today from developing Alaska's economy. Without the education and guidance given by the university there would be a great loss in Alaska's infrastructure and the many opportunities for what Alaska may become. Why is it that the first thing that takes a cut from the government is the very education of young adults who may raise the foundations of this economy? Please reconsider the budget cuts on the university for the loss may be greater than you think.

Thank you for your time
Yuhwa Hu
UAA Sophomore, Pre-Nursing

My name is Diana Kelm. I have been a full-time resident of Alaska since 1969, and a year-round resident for 17 years.

I am testifying here today to urge the Alaska House Finance Committee to continue support for public broadcasting. This method of contact and communication is especially vital in Alaska's rural and isolated communities such as my own here in Haines.

Our public radio station, KHNS, broadcasts to the northern Southeast Panhandle, an area most often served by marine and air transportation and home of numerous commercial fishing vessels. KHNS provides important information and announcements both within and among communities throughout this region. KHNS also informs residents of vital events such as weather alerts, road closures, ferry schedules and any other unanticipated emergencies. I personally also listen to KHNS to learn about local statewide and national news as well.

KHNS enjoys generous public support from community during fund-raising campaigns, evidence that the station is highly valued here. The money is used to purchase network programming and to support a modest staff. Numerous volunteer announcers give of their own personal time literally to keep the programs local and on the air 24/7.

Without state funding, matching federal funds also will be lost. And KHNS could not continue.

From: [Fran Pekar](#)
To: [House Finance](#)
Subject: UA Outreach and Research budget cuts
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2016 12:38:23 PM

I urge you to look closely at this and all cuts to see the implications for Alaskans on the whole. If this budget is cut to the point that the Anchorage CES office closes and the certified potato program is eliminated all Alaskans will be hurt. CES in Fairbanks cannot service both areas with climatic differences. The Anchorage office is at a bare minimum of staffing and uses Master Gardener Volunteers to teach classes, engage community events, and promote local growing conditions. You loose much more than just the CES budget. You loose hours of expertise donated to the program. Potatoes from the lower 48 have many diseases not found in Alaska and therefor are not acceptable to planting in state. As with many cuts you are going too far and need to use income revenues from the PFD and taxes to keep the economy from crashing. Fran Pekar

March 3, 2016

House Finance Committee

Written testimony on HB25

To the Co-Chairs Representatives Neuman and Thompson and the House Finance Committee Members,

I am writing this letter in support of the OWL (Online With Libraries) program. The OWL Program offers bandwidth support for our local library as well as videoconferencing services, equipment and training for library staff. In a rural community this is a great asset and help to the patrons as well as my staff. Many individuals have been able to participate in various classes and workshops through the video conferencing and are able to use the internet to search and apply for jobs, file taxes, etc. This program has enriched our community and for many is the only way they can connect electronically.

I appreciate any support you can give to the OWL Program during this difficult financial time.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify,

Margaret Villarma, Director

Wrangell Irene Ingle Public Library

907-874-3535