



March 7, 2016

Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

The Local Emergency Planning Committee for The Ketchikan Gateway Borough, the City of Ketchikan, and the City of Saxman, assists in preparing for emergencies by maintaining the Emergency Operations Plan. This committee is made up of local officials including police, fire, public health professionals, representatives from the community and the media.

KRBD public radio is now the LP1(Local Provider) of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) system for all of the communities on Revillagigedo Island (Ketchikan Gateway Borough, City of Ketchikan, and City of Saxman), as well as the communities of Craig, Klawock, Thorne Bay, Hollis, and Hydaburg on Prince of Wales Island. Its signal reaches over 20,000 people. In the event of an emergency KRBD plays a vital role in the dissemination of information from first responders and officials involved in the management of the emergency response.

The State of Alaska is facing a fiscal crisis resulting in difficult budget decisions. KRBD along with the other six CoastAlaska stations expected and indeed realized a deep cut to state operating grants in FY16. It is our understanding that current budget proposals include even deeper cuts for FY17.

The Ketchikan Local Emergency Planning Committee needs KRBD to remain strong in order to continue to serve its mission to keep not only Revillagigedo residents informed, but several of the communities on Prince of Wales Island. In the event of an emergency KRBD is a reliable 24 hour multiplatform media source that citizens can rely upon to receive life-saving time sensitive information that is a necessity in emergency situations.

Public radio is an integral part of many communities throughout Alaska and we urge you to support public broadcasting by keeping funding reduction for public radio stations to a minimum. Large cuts to radio stations will significantly impact the services provided by public radio and in our case potentially dismantle the emergency response network vital to keeping Alaskans safe during emergencies.

Abner L. Hoage

Abner L. Hoage, LEPC Coordinator