

**From:** [Sen. Pete Kelly](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** SFIN Public Testimony FW: Public Testimony for the Senate Finance Committee  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2015 1:32:43 PM

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Please find the following public testimony below

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**From:** Bridgette Whitcomb [mailto:whitcombb@sitkaschools.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 30, 2015 1:03 PM  
**To:** Sen. Anna MacKinnon; Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Public Testimony for the Senate Finance Committee

For the record my name is Bridgette Whitcomb and I am a constituent here in Sitka. I am emailing regarding the Senate Finance Committee and want to make the following point:

Cutting budgets to schools means cutting important programs and vital positions. If districts receive less funding, there will be less teachers in the classrooms and paraprofessionals supporting children that need it the most. Children are central concern of mine every day in the classroom. In Chetty et al 2010 (attached) data was analyzed from Project STAR, IRS income data, college attendance, and overall life skills to determine how students are effected by high quality classrooms and low class size. The following is an excerpt the study that will help explain my feelings and when you are thinking about long term financial planning for Alaska.

Smaller classes (which raised test scores by 4.8 percentiles) are predicted to raise earnings by  $4.8 \times \$76.7 = \$368$  (2.3%) at age 27. This calculation implies a present value earnings gain from class size reduction of \$9,460 per student and \$189,000 for the classroom. Calculations analogous to those in Krueger (1999) imply that the average cost per child of reducing class size by 33% for 2.14 years (the mean treatment duration for STAR students) is \$9,355 in 2009 dollars.<sup>45</sup> Our second calculation suggests that the benefit of reducing class size might outweigh the costs.

Their studies found that reducing class size and increasing quality of instruction all directly relate to future earning power and overall life quality of students. But I do not need an academic study to know what I work in every day.

I spend at least 1500 a year on my classroom and work over 50 hours a week planning, grading, setting up, and teaching my classes during the school year. My textbook are from 2008 and outdated. I am constantly reading research and ordering college level textbooks to create meaningful, scientifically accurate lessons in my class. This is how a create a high quality environment for my students. If class sizes are increased due to budget cuts, which is an inevitability, then I will not be able to continue to create such a high quality for my students. The money and time I put forth is directly related to the number of students that I have. This is true of almost all the teachers that are employed in this state. We give everything to our students and if the budget cuts are made to the places we should be investing in first, then everything will simply not be enough.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard.

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