

March 29,2015

Dear Senator:

I live in Petersburg, Alaska. I am writing to appeal the Senate's decision to zero out funding for Public Broadcasting, particularly Public Radio.

What does Public radio mean to residents of isolated communities like mine?

Public radio is the voice in the night when you hear sirens and don't know why. Then you turn on the radio and find out there has been an earthquake and now a tsunami warning. The radio station tells you what happened, and what to do, and where to find shelter.

Public radio is the voice that tells the community that there is an armed person walking the streets of town, but the school is in lock down, and the kids are safe.

Public radio is the voice of the school bus driver calling in to say where there is black ice on the highway, or a tree is down across the road.

Public radio reports the marine forecast and current observations from lighthouses that give the mariner information about conditions on the water, so the wise choices are made.

These are just a few actual examples from the last year or so at KFSK.

Public radio gives an official voice to the police and emergency personnel so they can do what what they need to do in a crisis, and not spend their time and resources responding to questions from the public. People know to turn to the radio. There is no other "official" voice.

Besides emergency services, Public radio broadcasts the Borough assembly meetings, speeches in the Legislature, or in Congress so people can be informed of what is happening in their community, their state, and the country. Then they can be informed voters.

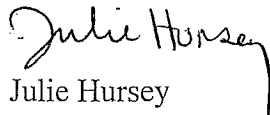
Public radio is the backbone of communication in our community, and communities nearby. Not everyone has access to computers, or can afford internet. Cell towers are not infallible, and service fails regularly. There are areas that cell service does not reach, but people can still hear the radio. Cable television stations don't broadcast news or emergency information of local relevance.

We cannot cut our way out of this budget crisis. If we were going to cut anything, it should have started with tax breaks for the oil companies. Hard conversations about income taxation and the accessing permanent fund have to take place. I believe the time

has come for both of those measures.

Our public radio station has taken many steps to save money and increase efficiency, from automation, to pooling resources with other stations for engineering and bookkeeping services. We operate on a shoestring budget now, but we are keeping this vital community service going. The cuts suggested by the House and Senate will be devastating.

We need Public Broadcasting in Alaska, because it keeps Alaskan communities, safe, close and informed. I urge you to restore full funding to this essential service.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie Hursey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Julie Hursey

Petersburg, Alaska