

Monday, March 30, 2015

Dear Senate Finance Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Jean Ellis of Petersburg; I am representing myself in regards to HB 72, FY 16 General Operating Budget. I am in support of full funding for Public Radio. In the more populated parts of our state public radio might be seen as in competition with private radio stations. However in the more remote portions of our state, such as my home town of Petersburg, we have no local TV and KFSK public radio is our only radio station. We depend on them for information on everything from local news and weather to tsunami warnings in case of an earthquake. They regularly broadcast our local Assembly and School Board meetings. As a former Board member I would often come home and find a phone message from a constituent who had been listening on the radio. Petersburg residents give generously to KFSK however our community is too small to fully support KFSK. We are dependent on State and Federal funds to keep this vital information link in our community. As others have testified, cutting state funds will also cut federal funds as they are tied together. Please fully fund this vital communication link for the remote areas of Alaska. Thanks for your consideration.

PETERSBURG LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY
(Please Write Clearly and Legibly)

YOUR FULL NAME: Elizabeth Hart Circle one: Support Opposed

REPRESENTING (ORGANIZATION OR SELF): self

BILL #: _____ Subject: House Bill # 72

COMMITTEE NAME: Senste Finance Com HEARING DATE: 3/30/15

I am opposed to the senate Finance Committee proposed 100% cut to Public Radio. This cut would eliminate public broadcasting in most of rural Alaska. This is a disproportionate cut to an already minimal sector of the state budget. Rural Alaskans depend on public radio for news, information, emergency broadcasts & weather reports in remote areas. Our local radio station, KFSK in Petersburg, is our only source for daily local news and information. KFSK is the local emergency broadcaster, providing public service announcements not available elsewhere. KFSK involves multigenerational community members. KFSK provides a healthy outlet for children, teens and adults in the form of volunteer programs, of which there are five shows daily. KFSK, like most of Alaska's public radio stations, already operates on a bare bones budget, having reduced employees by 2/3 over the past 20 years, with almost no decrease in service. KFSK would be unable to operate with the current level of service and programming under the proposed cut. Please reconsider a more equitable budget distribution, allowing a vital means of communication to continue. Small communities in Alaska do not have a viable alternative to Public Radio for emergency services, there is no local cable programming in rural Alaska.

Thank you for submitting my written comments to the record.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Hart