

From: [John Clough](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Opposition to elimination of funding for public broadcasting
Date: Tuesday, March 31, 2015 8:23:20 AM

My name is John Clough and I am writing you today in opposition to the proposed elimination of state funding for public broadcasting.

I served as a member of the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission for over eight years, with an extended period as Commission Chairman. As an APBC Commissioner I worked closely with every public broadcasting organization in the state, with an emphasis on funding and collaboration issues. Funding for public broadcasting in Alaska is analogous to a three legged stool, with the legs being state funding, federal funding and member/corporate support. Because much of the federal funding is conditioned on matching state dollars, elimination of the state's entire contribution will be magnified and will have even more devastating effects on the system. A stool with one leg missing and another substantially weakened simply cannot stand.

Public broadcasting plays a vital role in connecting all Alaskans, offering news stories and programs from every community in the state. In many rural communities it is the only readily accessible news source and is a linchpin in the state's emergency preparedness system. Total elimination of state funding will almost certainly result in the closure of numerous stations (especially in rural communities) and the loss of the vital ARCS television network. Because public broadcasting services in Alaska are so interconnected and collaborative in nature service in the urban areas will be drastically effected as well.

As an informed citizen I know that the drop in oil prices has enormous revenue implications for our state. Cuts in every area of the state budget – including public broadcasting - are unavoidable and necessary. But to target public broadcasting for total elimination is uncalled for and shows a lack of appreciation for how much public broadcasting services are needed here in Alaska. I urge the Senate Finance Committee to restore substantial state funding for public broadcasting services, at the very least to the level approved by the House and hopefully beyond that.

Thank you for considering these comments.

John Clough