

From: [Debra LaRue](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#); [Sen. Pete Kelly](#); [Sen. Anna MacKinnon](#); [Sen. Mike Dunleavy](#); [Sen. Peter Micciche](#); [Sen. Lyman Hoffman](#); [Sen. Click Bishop](#); sen.donald.olson@akleg.gov
Subject: Education Funding
Date: Monday, March 30, 2015 5:42:51 PM

To: The Honorable Senators of the Finance Committee:

Please enter my testimony in the public record.

I believe it is imperative that the legislature fulfill the promise they made last year to fund education for three years while working on a long-term solution to education funding. I fully appreciate that cuts must be made to the state budget, but we must look at the long-term impact of our choices today.

I encourage you to remember the significantly higher cost of reeducating adults for our economy, and in our prisons. Rolling back the advances we have made in education will roll back programs that help our students become productive, involved citizens who continue to grow Alaska's economy. With education funding cuts will come higher class sizes, fewer staff who are able to step in to aid classroom teachers when a student is identified as being at risk of not achieving the standards or at risk of dropping out. There will be fewer before and after school activities that engage learners and keep them in productive activities. Cutting the broadband initiative will hobble schools all over the state. Studies show a relationship between drop out rates and later incarceration rates.

It is so much easier and less expensive to provide a high quality education to our youth than to re-educate a portion of our adult population. While it sounds cliché, our youth are Alaska's future. Our Pre-K to 12 funding is critical to a bright future.

Again, please fund education at the levels that were promised last year.

Respectfully,

Debbie LaRue
Palmer, Alaska