

From: [Bill Tremblay](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Restore money to needed services
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The Senate heard a presentation last Friday noting that they cannot cut their way out of this fiscal crises and that the State will likely have to deal with the current funding situation for several years. Yet knowing this, the Senate is proposing cuts to vital programs without looking for new revenue. Some call taxes the "third rail" because it would kill someone (politically) if touched. However, let's not forget that the third rail is also what is needed to make a system run in the first place.

I support restoring funds to **Public Broadcasting** to levels proposed by the House. These cuts are still significant to small stations but without the State funds many stations will also loose Federal dollars as these grants are partially provided based on matching funds. It amazes me that during a time when we need to expand the conversation and engage the public, the Senate is willing to silence the only State-wide system capable to reach the most Alaskans. I live in a town of 3,000 (Petersburg) and our station provides critical news and emergency updates to many other communities outside this community. We have over 1,000 members for our station and raise more almost \$80,000 through public donations and more through underwriting by businesses. While we are proud of our community support we also know that we are not the only organization in town who needs support and your budget cuts will affect more than just public radio. This will make it harder for all of us to fund services.

I also support restoring funds to **the Alaska Marine Highway System**. I am a regular user as a round trip from Juneau to Petersburg is normally less than a one way ticket on Alaska Airlines. While people in southeast Alaska have many skills, walking on water is not one of them. This is how many of us get around. The proposed cuts will curtail commerce, reduce school functions, hurt communities, and impact many businesses or agencies moving people in and out of Alaska. If you're looking for funds then pull back the \$40,000,000 for the Kake Road. In the recent public meetings for this project it was very evident that the proposed road isn't going to be used to the extent expected by the proposal. Rather than waste money on a road nobody will use, put it where needed...into the Alaska Marine Highway.

Last, raise some taxes. Everyone should be paying to support schools, not just people in organized communities or boroughs. The State has the responsibility to secure funds from people in unincorporated areas of the State but they don't. Because of this, I think Ketchikan will be successful in the lawsuit against the State for this kind of taxation discrimination.

Second, we need an income tax. The influx of summer seasonal employment is just beginning. We know more than 60% of the ownership of our fishing fleet is from out of State. I expect most staff supporting tourism, federal jobs, and other work are also from outside of Alaska. It's time we collect more than some sales tax and collect some necessary funds for programs and infrastructure that support many of these businesses.

We need to solve these problems together. I'm willing to pay more.

Disclosure; I am the Board President for KFSK Public Radio, Petersburg.

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