

From: [Michael C. Hawfield](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Budget concerns about proposed Public Radio cuts
Date: Tuesday, March 31, 2015 6:30:30 PM

Dear Finance Committee members, like many of us throughout Alaska I am deeply distressed at the proposed massive cuts to public radio. As you well know, we here in coastal Alaska are particularly dependent on the only general broadcast opportunity that brings up-to-date maritime weather and, more importantly, emergency broadcasts of natural events like earthquakes and tsunamis. The commercial stations are simply not set up to respond to these events. Further, also, are the many ways public radio serve folks with in-depth news, personal messages to remote fishing families, and access to local government (borough and municipality) meetings. The proposed cuts would do such damage to our small staff/volunteer stations that much, if not all, of these services would go away. The impact is not only a safety issue, but also a civic issue inasmuch as local government needs public engagement made possible by such stations as KBBI broadcasting the bi-weekly city council and borough assembly meetings as well as election activities and “town square” meetings on any number of issues.

Obviously, again as you well know, this list of citizen-oriented, public service activity by our public radio outlets could go on and on. It’s too precious and too important to suffer the massive assault this budget measure envisions. To be sure, all segments of the public sector need to buck up to the demands of the financial crisis our state is in, but this needs to be done with caution, with balance, and with the health and welfare of the population front and center. Public radio is critical and must not bear the brunt of belt-tightening.

Thanks for all you do for us,

Michael

Michael Hawfield



Associate Professor of History and Political Science

Kachemak Bay Campus, Kenai Peninsula College/UAA

907 235-1611