

**From:** [William Larned](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Funding for AK Public Broadcasting Commission  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 01, 2015 3:27:31 PM

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Dear members of Alaska Senate Finance Committee

Public Broadcasting (PB), including both TV and radio, are critical information and entertainment links throughout the US, but more so in Alaska due to the unique demographic and logistic challenges in this huge mostly rural state. Public Broadcasting's primary mission of bringing intelligent, entertaining and educational programming, reflecting the diverse viewpoints of the listening community, in an unbiased and advertisement-free package satisfies a basic need in our society, which grows increasingly distrusting of information sources. During my 31 years working statewide as pilot/wildlife biologist for the US Fish and Wildlife Service I saw how important PB is to keeping rural communities informed on issues and events critical to their quality of life, and indeed sometimes their very survival. Now as a Director of *KDLL Public Radio* (Kenai Peninsula) I better appreciate not only the critical function of this institution, but also its challenges and precarious financial position. That the Alaska state government is also aware of the value of PB is reflected in its steadfast historic support via the *Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission* (APBC), which is by far the largest single base funding source for most PB stations across the state, including KDLL (just under one third of our annual budget in FY14!).

Now, along with numerous other state programs, APBC is subject to drastic cuts as you and other legislators tackle the heart-rending task of balancing what is left of a radically shrunken budget. I appreciate that there will be severe belt tightening throughout the state's economy, but for KDLL and many other PB stations, near-zero funding of APBC would seriously impact KDLL's ability to serve our communities. KDLL is heard from Cooper landing to Ninilchik, Funny River Road to Nikiski. These outlying communities would lose an important connection to the central Kenai Peninsula, and emergency response such as during the Funny River fire would be seriously compromised. Also, zero state support will likely take our funding down below the financial threshold that qualifies for our second largest grant source: the federal *Corporation for Public Broadcasting* (CPB). Our loyal local underwriters and supporting members will probably do what they can to help, but their resources are already spread very thin and, like you, are trying to be fair to the gamut of struggling organizations.

I hope this information is useful and I won't take more of your time. We sincerely appreciate what you are going through and wish you the best!

Sincerely

William Larned

Member, KDLL Board of Directors