

From: laura.sievert
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#); [Sen. Peter Micciche](#); [Rep. Kurt Olson](#)
Subject: Operating budget
Date: Tuesday, March 31, 2015 3:47:24 PM

I am sure that the job of cutting the budget is extremely difficult, and that there are many interest groups competing for your favor and attention. I am just an average person from Kenai.

Today I ask you to maintain current funding for education and also for public radio. Legislators from the big cities and the Valley possibly do not understand the major role played by these two things in the smaller towns. They are, in many cases, at the very center of the communities. In the case of public radio, it makes no sense to cut stations to the point that they lose federal grants, which is the level being proposed. Please maintain funding at least to that point.

Schools are always on the chopping block, and the interests of young Alaskans seem to take a back seat to the interests of shareholders of the oil companies. Please begin to think beyond this year, beyond your term of office, and into the next generations as wise leaders do. Do all that you can to preserve education funding, and leave funding for Pre-K in the budget.

I believe it is impossible for the state to cut its way out of present and future deficits, and I urge you not to fear looking at new sources of revenue sooner rather than later. People who have always lived in this state, and those who came to it but are committed to it will be able to take the long term view and not just stand around with their hands out.

I wish you would consider a modest flat income tax (based on federal income tax). In most cases this would not exceed a person's Permanent Fund, and it would tax the thousands of out of state workers that many industries favor. Also, it's time to put the total kibosh on pie in the sky projects like the Susitna Dam and the Knik Arm bridge which in truth serve to mostly enrich the players of each project, consuming many more resources than they will actually save.

Please have the courage to think long term as you make these cuts.

Thank you

Laura Sievert 3329 Beaver Loop Kenai