

1 March 2021

Dear Senate Education Committee Chair Holland, Committee Members, and all Legislators,

My name is Posie Boggs, testifying on behalf of the Alaska Reading Coalition. Thank you for taking my short testimony today. Thank you to Gov. Dunleavy, Senator Begich and Senator Hughes, Senator Stevens, and Commissioner Johnson for working on for working so long and so hard on improving reading for Alaskan children.

While I could not find a fiscal note for SB 42, I did find one for SB 8. During the first 5 years according to the fiscal note, the cost is \$125 million dollars. It sounds like a large amount but it is not!

What is costly is the yearly costs of students who drop out and those we fail to teach to read. Just the costs of the school districts represented by the Education Member’s districts, Anchorage, Kenai, Kodiak, and the Mat-Su, EACH Year totals \$116 Million Dollars! According to Education Consumers Foundation. To compare to the fiscal note in 5 years, these costs reflect \$581 million dollars of costs in healthcare, public safety, welfare, and education.

If this doesn’t give the State of Alaska the sense of urgency that drives a seismic change in our system of education from preschool to graduation, I just don’t know what will.

Given these costs, there is simply no defensible reason to refuse to move SB this session.

<http://education-consumers.org/research-areas/consumer-tools/efc-cost-calculator/>

Education Consumers Foundation - The Cost of Failure to Teach Reading: Projections From 3rd Grade Reading Scores 2019			
	Total cost of dropouts & unprepared students in this class	Students at 3rd grade Basic and Below Basic	Cost per enrolled student
ALEUTIANS EAST BOROUGH	\$472,000	21	\$22,476.19
ALEUTIANS WEST CENSUS AREA School District: Pribilof	\$683,000	45	\$15,177.78
ANCHORAGE MUNICIPALITY School District: Anchorage/Chugach FOCUS Homeschool	\$72,589,000	3625	\$20,024.55
Bethal Census Area	\$13,964,000	388	\$35,989.69
BRISTOL BAY BOROUGH	\$877,000	35	\$25,057.14
DENALI BOROUGH	\$1,153,000	81	\$14,234.57
DILLINGHAM CENSUS AREA	\$3,063,000	96	\$31,906.25
FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH	\$25,188,000	1195	\$21,077.82
HAINES BOROUGH	\$347,000	18	\$19,277.78

HOONAH-ANGOON CENSUS AREA	\$400,000	12	\$33,333.33
JUNEAU CITY AND BOROUGH	\$6,448,000	325	\$19,840.00
KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH	\$12,403,000	694	\$17,871.76
KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH	\$3,237,000	117	\$27,666.67
KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH	\$3,388,000	181	\$18,718.23
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH	\$28,017,000	1520	\$18,432.24
NOME CENSUS AREA	\$8,527,000	233	\$36,596.57
NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH	\$5,114,000	164	\$31,182.93
NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH	\$6,626,000	183	\$36,207.65
PETERSBURG CENSUS AREA	\$515,000	49	\$10,510.20
PRINCE OF WALES-HYDER CENSUS AREA	\$1,432,900	99	\$14,473.74
SITKA CITY AND BOROUGH	\$1,209,000	90	\$13,433.33
SKAGWAY MUNICIPALITY	\$25,000	12	\$2,083.33
SOUTHEAST FAIRBANKS CENSUS AREA	\$2,146,000	105	\$20,438.10
VALDEZ-CORDOVA CENSUS AREA	\$1,622,000	107	\$15,158.88
WADE HAMPTON CENSUS AREA	\$8,693,000	231	\$37,632.03
WRANGELL CITY AND BOROUGH	\$357,000	26	\$13,730.77
YUKON-KOYUKUK CENSUS AREA	\$7,391,000	468	\$15,792.74
	\$215,886,900	10120	
Senate Education Committee Member Districts total/year	\$116,397,000		
Senate Education Committee Member Districts total over 5 years	\$581,985,000		

Thank you very much.

Posie Boggs

I am a volunteer.

Alaska Reading Coalition We have one goal: Improving reading outcomes for all Alaskan children.

On behalf of the Alaska Reading Coalition comprised of the NAACP-Anchorage, Education Committee, Anchorage School District, Literate Nation Alaska, The Alaska Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, Decoding Dyslexia Alaska, Juneau Dyslexia, Connections that Work, LLC, Future Frontiers Tutoring, The Missing Links, Turning Leaf Literacy Center, and Read Write Alaska.