
From: BARBARA GERARD <Barbara.Gerard@matsuk12.us>
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 8:52 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support for HB 350

Dear House Finance Committee,

Please support the passage of HB 350, but remove the moratorium totally, plus add in charter schools as part of the school bond debt reimbursement for school construction and major maintenance. Currently, charter Schools have no revenue source for school construction costs other than using a large portion of the funding from the BSA to pay for rent payments and school construction costs.

Please help your charter schools! These children and their families shouldn't have to sacrifice teachers so they can be in a school building. These families are taxpayers shouldering the burden of the other school's bonded buildings, yet their own children do not benefit from those taxes. Please even consider a match for charter schools! For example, a charter school would pay half of the school building construction costs (from our BSA funds operational budget), the state would match that amount.

Thank you for your time and consideration! If you have any questions, please let me know. As a principal of a charter school, I am very familiar with these challenges and hope you are able to find a workable solution!

With Warm Regards,

Barbara Gerard, Principal
Academy Charter School



Superintendent's Office
10014 Crazy Horse Drive
Juneau, AK 99801-8529
(907) 523-1702

April 19, 2022

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Dr. Bridget Weiss, Superintendent of the Juneau School District. I am writing in support of HB 350 and ending the moratorium on School Bond Debt Reimbursement. Thank you for hearing this bill.

Schools in the Juneau School District and districts across the state continued to be affected by the increasing backlog of deferred maintenance. This year alone, we had a serious water leak that could at least somewhat be attributed to our inability to keep up with building maintenance efforts. This resulted in an elementary school being completely unhoused and relocated to a community site for a few months. Each year we delay maintenance needs, there is an exponential impact that will undoubtedly cost districts and the state more and more in the years to come. HB 350 is the answer to return to a manageable approach to maintaining healthy facilities for our students and staff.

Many of our schools in the Juneau School District, which are over 30 years old, need new roofs, updated plumbing, and need to be renovated to accommodate the needs of students and teachers who are using the buildings today.

Our students deserve safe learning facilities. HB 350 will help school districts move in the right direction to update school buildings and begin to work on our long lists of deferred maintenance. I ask you to support HB 350 and for finding a way to prioritize our Alaskan educational system.

Respectfully,

Bridget Weiss, Ed. D.
Superintendent
Juneau School District



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Superintendent

Clayton Holland, Superintendent

148 North Binkley Street Soldotna, Alaska 99669-7520

Phone (907) 714-8888

April 20, 2022

House Finance Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for HB 350: School Bond Debt Reimbursement

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District supports HB 350, and we urge you to pass this bill, this session.

Forty-two schools on the Kenai Peninsula educate over 8,000 students in 17 diverse communities, and our deferred maintenance projects are varied and necessary. Many KPBSD schools are on the road system, while others are only accessible by boat or plane.

The average age of our school facilities is 46 years. Our oldest facility has portions that are currently 87 years old, and 38% (16 schools) of our schools have building sections exceeding 50 years. Our district includes schools in urban, rural, and remote areas; 42 schools include just under 1.9 million square feet of classrooms, and a replacement value slightly greater than \$713 million dollars.

Aging facilities and building systems take additional effort to maintain especially in a large spread out school district like the KPBSD, and this is why DEED recommended school districts create a renewal and replacement schedule. Spending hours and funds to repair what should have been replaced is not efficient. Thus, developing and implementing a major maintenance program helps fund the replacement of these important systems and structures that provide a safe location for learning.

It is a positive step for many school districts in Alaska to maintain their aging school buildings. Failure to address the deferred maintenance backlog increases the backlog of work, and with the addition of inflation, the financial burden to the borough and taxpayer.

A 2021-2022 legislative priority from our Board of Education is to review and reconsider the state's bond reimbursement program moratorium and ensure the existing state's bond reimbursement program is funded. Passage of HB 350 would lift the moratorium adopted with HB 106 in April of 2020.

Thank you for moving HB 350 forward this legislative session. For many months, we have worked collaboratively with the Kenai Peninsula Borough to identify priority projects to include in a much-needed local bond package for the October 4, 2022, election. HB 350 would assist passage of this bond, and protect the investment in our school buildings through continued maintenance and construction, ensuring the safety of the children and staff who attend them every day.

Sincerely,

Clayton Holland
Superintendent