

From: [Virginia Morgan](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Cc: [Sen. Jesse Bjorkman](#)
Subject: SB 52: Increase Base Student Allocation
Date: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 2:22:05 PM

Good afternoon Senators,

I am writing to you in support of SB 52.

My family has lived on the Kenai Peninsula since the 1940s. My grandparents raised seven biological children, several adopted children, and many foster children in Homer. My mother and father raised me and my two brothers in Cooper Landing. We are products of Kenai Peninsula Borough School District and I am so appreciative to have received the well-rounded education that was available to us years ago. My two brothers and I became an artist, an electrician, and a musician/educator. Unfortunately, as an adult, I have witnessed the funding to public education decline to detrimental levels.

My husband and I have two children. A 20 year old daughter, now attending the University of Alaska Anchorage, and a 17 year old son who attends Cooper Landing School. Many of the opportunities I had as a child, in this same community, are no longer available to my own children. When I was a child, we had a music teacher who visited our small school every week. We lost the music teacher for our small schools years ago, as well as the benefit of visits from an art specialist, reading specialist, and librarian. Cooper Landing used to have a bus to take high school students to Soldotna. That option increased their opportunities for programmatic education and extra curricular activities. Many years of flat funding and cuts to education have taken away so many options for my children.

I have seen my children's choices and opportunities diminish, as education has received flat funding and costs have gone up for health care, utilities, and insurance. Our teachers are being tasked with more and more each year and programs and opportunities for students continue to be cut. School districts have been cut to the bone. There is nothing left to cut. We are currently looking at the possibility of losing pools and theaters in our large communities, and increasing the number of students in classrooms. This is not right. We must invest in education, in our children's future, in OUR future. The outmigration of Alaska's young adults concerns me greatly. Who will be left to care for me as I age? It is imperative that we invest in public education. It is also important that public education funding be predictable and have a mechanism to account for inflation.

I support SB 52, and ask you to, as well. Our children's education must be prioritized, and not depend on the price of oil, the amount of oil produced, or the amount of the current year's permanent fund dividend.

Thank you,
Virginia Morgan
Cooper Landing, AK