

**HB**

**278**

**(FILE 2)**

**PUBLIC**

**TESTIMONY**

<TARGET><BILL>HB 278</BILL><SUBJECT>HB 278 (FILE 2)  
PUBLIC TESTIMONY</SUBJECT><COMM>SF28</COMM></TARGET>

Deena Mitchell's Testimony to the Senate Finance Committee, April 10, 2014

- Mr. Chair, members of the Finance Committee, my name is Deena Mitchell and I am one of the co-founders of Great Alaska Schools Anchorage. I am here today with a few other Great Alaska Schools leaders to speak to you on behalf of our coalition of over 2,000 Alaskans.
- We appreciate you taking the time to hear from the public.
- In roughly two months, Great Alaska Schools Anchorage has gone from an idea to a movement. Our meteoric growth is just one indication of how passionately Alaskans feel about education funding.
- We know that the Session is reaching its critical last few days, and your time is valuable, so we did not mobilize our general membership to testify this morning.
- Instead, we are delivering to you petitions signed by over two thousand Alaskans, from 30 communities across the state, expressing their support for Great Alaska Schools' message of increasing the base student allocation.
- So please recognize that the comments from me and the other Great Alaska School leaders represent those of thousands of Alaskans on whose behalf we address you this morning.
- The bottom line is that Alaskans support our public schools, want to see them fully staffed, and can be quickly mobilized if there is a threat to their children's education.
- We know that you face a tough decision having to balance a deficit budget and a loud and growing call for more education spending.
- We are Alaskans who are asking you to prioritize education spending over other funding demands. Despite the fiscal climate, Alaska is a rich state. We have boosted education funding during past times of deficit spending, with great results, and we are asking you to carry forward that same bold vision today.
- The foundation formula likely needs to be updated. Let's take the time to do that thoroughly and carefully, to strengthen the formula and provide equitable allocation of funding to our schools statewide.

- For those legislators who want to see real education improvement, we ask you to take advantage of this movement of parents and enlist our help in identifying and implementing improvement.
- However, such a conversation can only happen if our schools are fully funded and fully staffed. If not, then any shortcomings in the system will be blamed entirely on the lack of funding. You will not see any improvement, and in fact we will likely backslide.
- So we come to you with an offer, as parents and as consumers of the education system. Increase the BSA \$400 this year, \$125 in each of the two following years, and we will work with you during those three years of stable funding to identify ways to improve the system.
- Without this three-year commitment of reliable funds, we will continue to expend most of our energies on securing the necessary funding.
- We Alaska parents are looking for a true partner in support of our great Alaska schools, and we need our state to be that partner.
- Thank you.

## Coalition of Parent Leaders of Alaskan PTAs, PTOs, and PTSAs: PETITION

**Increase Alaska's base student allocation by at least \$404, inflation-proof the base student allocation, and provide forward funding to our schools.**

#	Name	City	State	Zip Code	Signed On
1	Alison Arians	Anchorage	Alaska		2/25/2014
2	Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/25/2014
3	Celia Rozen	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/25/2014
4	Jenna Bridges	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/25/2014
5	karen Crowley	Anchorage	Alaska	99501	2/25/2014
6	Alyse Galvin	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/25/2014
7	Tina Bernoski	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/25/2014
8	Christina Wright	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/25/2014
9	Amy Johnson	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/25/2014
10	Regan Brooks	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
11	Katrina White	Eagle River	Alaska	99577	2/25/2014
12	Amey Tamagni, VIP PTA Unit Alaska	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/25/2014
13	Amber Schmidt	Anchorage	Alaska	99577	2/25/2014
14	Robert Klieforth	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
15	Corrina Rinella	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
16	Andrea Shearer	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/25/2014
17	KC Elliott	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/25/2014
18	Suzanne Smerjac	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
19	Tanya Iden; Aquarian Charter School Parent	Anchorage, AK	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
20	Hilkka Bold	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
21	Linda Janidlo	Anchorage	Alaska	99511	2/25/2014
22	Marti Pausback	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/25/2014
23	Lisa Mounds-Craft	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/25/2014
24	Elaine Todd	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/25/2014
25	Heather McEntyre	JBER	Alaska	99506	2/25/2014
26	Susan Anderson	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/25/2014
27	Kimber Rodgers	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
28	Valerie Whitmore	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
29	Thea Bemben	Anchorage	Alaska	99503	2/25/2014
30	Tiffany Patzke	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/25/2014
31	Kristin Sholton	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
32	Colleen Richards	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/25/2014
33	Bright Nygard	Anch	Alaska	99507	2/25/2014
34	Monica Inman, Fire Lake Elementary, PTA	Anchorage	Alaska	99577	2/25/2014
35	Amanda Trozzo-Packer	Eagle River	Alaska	99577	2/25/2014
36	Sara Malenfant	Fairbanks	Alaska	99712	2/25/2014
37	Amy Downer	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/25/2014
38	Lori Gales	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/26/2014
39	Christina Eubanks	Anchorage	Alaska	99518	2/26/2014
40	Tasha Hazen	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/26/2014

41	Ann Loyd	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/26/2014
42	Anna Goddard-Vaughan	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
43	Anna Mayra	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/26/2014
44	Ronnie Rosenberg	Fairbanks	Alaska	99712	2/26/2014
45	steve anderson	Anchorage	Alaska	99577	2/26/2014
46	Michael Nichols	Eagle River	Alaska	99577	2/26/2014
47	Mary Kretzschmar	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
48	EMILY BECKER	ANCHORAGE	Alaska	99508	2/26/2014
49	Christy McMurren	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
50	maryellen Robinson	Nenana	Alaska	99760	2/26/2014
51	Aaron Poe	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	2/26/2014
52	Robin and Patrick Wittrock	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
53	Trudy McMullen	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/26/2014
54	Kimberly Stryker	Anchorage	Alaska	99577	2/26/2014
55	Kristin Dahl	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/26/2014
56	Alison Annis	Eagle River	Alaska	99577	2/26/2014
57	David Varney	Eagle River	Alaska	99577	2/26/2014
58	Annette Heckart	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	2/26/2014
59	Tina Baurick	Anchorage	Alaska	99577	2/26/2014
60	Heather Mouw	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/26/2014
61	Shannon Crosson	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/26/2014
62	Julie Jordan	Anchorage	Alaska	99577	2/26/2014
63	Jannet Galloway	Anchorage	Alaska	99501	2/26/2014
64	Michelle Kuehn	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
65	Patrick Galvin	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/26/2014
66	Jenada Johnson	Anchorage	Alaska	99518	2/26/2014
67	Vondelette Gaither	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/26/2014
68	Percy Johnson	Anchorage	Alaska	99577	2/26/2014
69	Lynne Jablonski	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	2/26/2014
70	Cassie San Miguel	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
71	Johnse Ostman	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/26/2014
72	Nicole Lantz	Anchorage	Alaska	99501	2/26/2014
73	Mel gibby	anchorage	Alaska	99501	2/26/2014
74	Angie Lantz	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/26/2014
75	Joann Mitchell	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/26/2014
76	Jan Maurer	North Pole	Alaska	99705	2/26/2014
77	Angela Watts	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/26/2014
78	Willow Monterrosa	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/26/2014
79	Jeannie Carey	Anchorage	Alaska	99501	2/26/2014
80	Shanna Zuspan	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/26/2014
81	craig medak	Anchorage	Alaska	99503	2/26/2014
82	Monette Tyree	Anchorage	Alaska	99523	2/26/2014
83	Sean Tyree	Anchorage	Alaska	99523	2/26/2014
84	Noelle Holt	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/26/2014
85	Lea Filippi	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/26/2014
86	Kevin Tritt	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/26/2014
87	Emily Alsup	Seward	Alaska	99664	2/26/2014

88	Anthea Ohana	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/26/2014
89	Molly McGee	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/26/2014
90	Jackie Morrison	Anchorage	Alaska	99522	2/26/2014
91	Susan Laughton	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/26/2014
92	Lisa Kozler	Anchorage	Alaska	99501	2/26/2014
93	Elizabeth Soto	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
94	Melanie Dittrich	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/26/2014
95	SUSANA TORRES-HAURI	Anchorage	Alaska	99509	2/26/2014
96	Susannah Olnes	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/26/2014
97	Katherine Blewett	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/26/2014
98	Lisa Fletcher	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/26/2014
99	Iori Fitzpatrick	anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
100	Jeff and Jessica Rigby	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/26/2014
101	LuAnn Piccard	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
102	Joan Wasserman	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/26/2014
103	Fabrette Campbell	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	2/26/2014
104	Richelle Lay	Eagle River	Alaska	99577	2/26/2014
105	Kjirsten Langland	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/26/2014
106	kymber dixon	anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/26/2014
107	Claudia van Emmerik	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/26/2014
108	Scott Anaya	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/26/2014
109	Heather Siegel	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	2/26/2014
110	Savanna Brady	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	2/26/2014
111	Alice Knapp	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/26/2014
112	Jose Martignon	anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/26/2014
113	Jennifer Hall Jones	Anchorage	Alaska	99508-4862	2/26/2014
114	David Sanders	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/26/2014
115	Julie danielson	Eagle River	Alaska	99577	2/27/2014
116	Andrea Ward	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/27/2014
117	John Randolph	Juneau	Alaska	99801	2/27/2014
118	MaryBeth Printz	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/27/2014
119	Michael Casey	Eagle River	Alaska	99577	2/27/2014
120	Kate Stockly-Meyerdirk	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/27/2014
121	Helen Armstrong	ANCHORAGE	Alaska	99502	2/27/2014
122	Kim Johnson	anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/27/2014
123	Bryn Borders	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/27/2014
124	Katie Bisson	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/27/2014
125	Jennifer Lockwood	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/27/2014
126	Araceli Mayers	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/27/2014
127	Kari Olds	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/27/2014
128	Sacie Lambertson	Winchester	Kansas	66097-4128	2/27/2014
129	Alexa Filanowicz	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/27/2014
130	Frederick Johnson	Anchorage	Alaska	99520	2/27/2014
131	Salley Kim	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	2/27/2014
132	Jennifer Kueter	anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/27/2014
133	Caroline Storm	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/27/2014
134	Andrea Mocerri	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/27/2014

135	Lisa Johnson	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	2/27/2014
136	Brianne Moats	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/27/2014
137	Emily Schutte	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/28/2014
138	Amanda True	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/28/2014
139	Amanda Seldomridge	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/28/2014
140	Connie Jones	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/28/2014
141	Stephanie Damrill	Anchorage	Alaska	99501	2/28/2014
142	Rachel Faulkner	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/28/2014
143	Wendy Woolf	Indian	Alaska	99540	2/28/2014
144	Dawn Bell	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/28/2014
145	Merri Rowe	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/28/2014
146	Gretchen Stoddard	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/28/2014
147	Brandy Davenport	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/28/2014
148	Bradley Hodges	Fairbanks	Alaska	99709	2/28/2014
149	Rachelle Sanderson	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/28/2014
150	Pete Schaub	Anchorage	Alaska	99517	2/28/2014
151	Linda Lundstrom	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	2/28/2014
152	Rachel Weaver	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	2/28/2014
153	Shelby Theriault	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/28/2014
154	Gloria Christenson	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	2/28/2014
155	merri shunk	anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/28/2014
156	Tom Hancock	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	2/28/2014
157	jeanne mcdonald	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	2/28/2014
158	Teresa San Miguel	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	3/1/2014
159	Jennifer Meyer	Anchorage	Alaska	99504	3/1/2014
160	Susan Ritter	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	3/1/2014
161	Charles Bingham	Sitka	Alaska	99835	3/1/2014
162	Charles Bingham	Sitka	Alaska	99835	3/1/2014
163	Keith Nyitray	Sitka	Alaska	99835	3/1/2014
164	Laura Harris	Anchorage	Alaska	99508	3/1/2014
165	Sue Armstrong	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	3/2/2014
166	Tonia Burrough	Anchorage	Alaska	99516	3/3/2014
167	Valerie Baffone	Anchorage	Alaska	99515	3/3/2014
168	Michael Dobesh	Wasilla	Alaska	99687	3/3/2014
169	Jacquelyn Forsyth	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	3/3/2014
170	Angie Kearns	Anchorage	Alaska	99502	3/3/2014
171	Lori Guyer	Anchorage	Alaska	99507	3/3/2014

# Coalition Comments

Name	City	Zip	Signed On	Comment
Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	If we truly want quality public education we need to provide adequate, reliable funding for our schools. -Valerie Buckendorf, Rabbit Creek PTA President, Anchorage, AK
Celia Rozen	Anchorage	99515	2/25/2014	We must raise and inflation-proof the BSA now and going forward, to prevent our schools from further cuts.
Jenna Bridges	Anchorage	99515	2/25/2014	Bayshore Elementary PTA President
karen Crowley	Anchorage	99501	2/25/2014	The quality of education will suffer if staff is decreased or force to seek employment in from other venue due to rising costt of benefits that the District is unable to maintain or meet. additional
Alyse Galvin	Anchorage	99508	2/25/2014	Steller Parent Group supports this!
Amy Johnson	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	Education is important for all children, not just those whose parents are able to be involved in their education. The public education provided to children in this country is something most children in the world never have the chance to receive. We should support it by funding it to the best of our ability.
Katrina White	Eagle River	99577	2/25/2014	The BSA MUST be increased and inflation-proofed and schools need forward-funding in order to ensure a quality public education for every child in our great state. -Katrina White, Fire Lake Elementary PTA President, Eagle River, AK
Amey Tamagni	Anchorage	99507	2/25/2014	To continue funding our most important resource- Children. , VIP PTA Unit Alaska
Amber Schmidt	Anchorage	99577	2/25/2014	Fire Lake Elementary School PTA Treasurer
Robert Klieforth	Anchorage	99517	2/25/2014	All our accomplishments pale in comparison to educating the next generation.
Andrea Shearer	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	In order to provide quality education for our children each year, the BSA must be increased and inflation proofed.- Bear Valley PTA Treasurer and mother of 3 boys

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Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	If we truly want quality public education we need to provide adequate, reliable funding for our schools. -Valerie Buckendorf, Rabbit Creek PTA President, Anchorage, AK
Kimberly Elliott	Anchorage	99502	2/25/2014	My child attends Bayshore Elementary and I am on the PTA Board. I devote my free time to ensuring that my child's school is the best it can be. But we need the base student allocation raised to ensure that our school has the resources it needs to continue being a good school. Please do not hold public schools hostage over the ideological beliefs of -some- Alaskans. We are a community, and we are only as strong as our weakest link. We need good schools to ensure that Alaska is a competitive state with competent employees ready for the jobs of the future.
Suzanne Smerjac	Anchorage	99517	2/25/2014	I believe that all schools need a funding increase after 4 years of flat funding, which amounts to major cuts because of inflation. Our schools are at their tipping point and are starting to have to cut into critical programs that ensure children's success. I have a child attending Aquarian Charter School.
Tanya Iden; Aquarian C	Anchorage, AK	99517	2/25/2014	Strong schools = a strong economy, a strong community, a better world. Public education is the hallmark of our democracy. EVERYONE deserves a high quality education. Visionary leaders understand this basic concept. Act now to sustainably fund our schools.
Hilkka Bold	Anchorage	99517	2/25/2014	I have 2 children attending Aquarian Charter School. I am a strong public school advocate. I believe that high quality education is the key to a bright future. All children should have access to great schools, where the teachers are compensated for their important work, and facilities are conducive to learning. This can only be achieved through adequate funding. The BSA needs to be increased and maintained to reflect current education costs.

Name	City	Zip	Signed On	Comment
Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	If we truly want quality public education we need to provide adequate, reliable funding for our schools. -Valerie Buckendorf, Rabbit Creek PTA President, Anchorage, AK
Linda Janidlo	Anchorage	99511	2/25/2014	Supporting the best education we can provide for our students is the best investment we can make in our future. Our young people deserve that from us and our whole community will benefit from it in every aspect of our lives.
Lisa Mounds-Craft	Anchorage	99515	2/25/2014	PTA President Romig Middle School Anchorage Alaska
Heather McEntyre	JBER	99506	2/25/2014	As a temporary member of the Anchorage community, I feel my child should have the best education possible. Limited funding and budget cuts are not conducive to such. As a military spouse, the constant relocating and mobility of life is hard enough, we must have faith that the communities we migrate to provide quality education for our children.
Thea Bemben	Anchorage	99503	2/25/2014	Because public schools are about the most important thing we can spend our money on. They are the bedrock of a productive and healthy society. I went to the ASD, my kids go there, and I want our schools to be excellent now and into the future.
Tiffany Patzke	Anchorage	99515	2/25/2014	I believe the BSA needs to at least be increased to meet inflation. That just makes business sense. Forward funding needs to be provided to maintain the forward momentum our city's public schools have been showing. In addition, no monies should leave the public school sector to fund private schools.
Kristin Sholton	Anchorage	99517	2/25/2014	I feel strongly that education should be this state's number one priority. Additionally, no sound business approves their budget without knowing what's available in the way of funds. ASD shouldn't be required to do so.
Bright Nygard	Anch	99507	2/25/2014	Bright Nygard Hanshew PTA President Trailside Elem, Bowman Elem, & Service High PTA Member/committee

Name	City	Zip	Signed On	Comment
Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	If we truly want quality public education we need to provide adequate, reliable funding for our schools. -Valerie Buckendorf, Rabbit Creek PTA President, Anchorage, AK
Sara Malenfant	Fairbanks	99712	2/25/2014	Our future is the education of today's youth. Pay now or pay later.
Pili Goddard-Vaughan	Anchorage	99507	2/26/2014	Because our children's' education should not be compromised, our state will be stronger for it
Anna Mayra	Anchorage	99515	2/26/2014	This is the only fair and logical way to insure adequate and perhaps even exceptional education for our citizens. Inflation is a reality. Educators are not magicians--they cannot do more with less and less funding. We need to provide consistent, adequate funding for our students now and into the future.
steve anderson	Anchorage	99577	2/26/2014	Additional funding (to keep pace with inflation) is needed to allow ASD to cover reasonable school costs and staff: To maintain and continue improving the education of our children.  Steve Anderson Ravenwood Elementary PTA Treasurer
Michael Nichols	Eagle River	99577	2/26/2014	Fire Lake Elementary, Eagle River, AK
Emily Becker	Anchorage	99508	2/26/2014	Education is less expensive than ignorance.
Aaron Poe	Anchorage	99502	2/26/2014	President of Sand Lake Elementary PTSA
Pat and Robin Wittrock	Anchorage	99507	2/26/2014	It is our duty to prepare the children of the State of Alaska for their future and ours. Flat funding hurts their education. The ASD is doing great things to help our kids graduate, but they need continued support to achieve their goals.
Kimberly Stryker	Anchorage	99577	2/26/2014	We have a very serious responsibility to ensure that children are well educated. Children are our most precious resource.
David Varney	Eagle River	99577	2/26/2014	Education is critical, and it deserves adequate funding and support.
Annette Heckart	Anchorage	99502	2/26/2014	Our kids are our most important resource. Education needs to be a top priority!  Vice-President, Sand Lake PTSA

Name	City	Zip	Signed On	Comment
Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	If we truly want quality public education we need to provide adequate, reliable funding for our schools. -Valerie Buckendorf, Rabbit Creek PTA President, Anchorage, AK
Heather Mouw	Anchorage	99515	2/26/2014	I am part of the Ocean View PTA and am in full support.
Shannon Crosson	Anchorage	99516	2/26/2014	President, Tomo No Kai ~Friends of Japanese Immersion
Jannet Galloway	Anchorage	99501	2/26/2014	The impact of the loss of staff will be compounded exponentially in years to come. Fairview PTA Treasurer
Patrick Galvin	Anchorage	99508	2/26/2014	Public education is not only important to my kids, but also to the long-term health of the Alaska economy. Protecting education funding is a vital investment in our collective future.
Jenada Johnson	Anchorage	99518	2/26/2014	We need you to invest in Alaska's future - our children. Please increase the BSA at least a min. of \$404 and inflation proof it. The success and future of OUR Children are counting on YOU to do the right thing. Alaska's Children deserve to receive a quality education by teachers and staff that have the resources and facilities needed to perform their duties as educators. No more flat funding our schools . Please provide forward funding to our schools in the future. Government Hill Elementary PTA President and Parent
Johnse Ostman	Anchorage	99508	2/26/2014	I have two young children. One currently in the municipal school system and one beginning next year. Both are bright and engaged children that need to be given the best opportunity to learn and grow from the earliest age possible. This is not a selfish request. I believe that excellent education is a fundamental right for all children. Without this investment in our children and their education, we will end up with the same uninformed meatheads that we have in charge right now.
Angela Watts	Anchorage	99508	2/26/2014	My children attend our neighborhood school and while the school works hard to provide a great education, increased and stable funding would create an even better learning environment.
Willow Monterrosa	Anchorage	99504	2/26/2014	Education needs to be a TOP priority in Alaska
Jeannie Carey	Anchorage	99501	2/26/2014	2 children at Government Hill Elementary

Name	City	Zip	Signed On	Comment
Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	If we truly want quality public education we need to provide adequate, reliable funding for our schools. -Valerie Buckendorf, Rabbit Creek PTA President, Anchorage, AK
craig medak	Anchorage	99503	2/26/2014	Alaska's students are Alaska's future, what could be more important?
Noelle Holt	Anchorage	99504	2/26/2014	"The current BSA of \$5,680 is not adequate to meet the State's responsibility for safe and public access to public education in Alaska"
Lea Filippi	Anchorage	99517	2/26/2014	PTA member. Parent of a student enrolled in the Spanish Immersion program at Government Hill Elementary School in Anchorage.
Anthea Ohana	Anchorage	99508	2/26/2014	I have two young children who need to have a safe, supportive educational environment.
SUSANA TORRES-HAUF	Anchorage	99509	2/26/2014	because child don't cut and my child is one of this great students
Jeff and Jessica Rigby	Anchorage	99508	2/26/2014	An educated populace is our most valuable resource. Kids, not cuts!
LuAnn Piccard	Anchorage	99507	2/26/2014	Charter schools do great things with very limited resources. These funds will help make investments in the classroom, where they are most needed and belong.
Richelle Lay	Eagle River	99577	2/26/2014	I have two children in Alaska's public school system and have seen what schools have been going through the last several years. Personally, all of my transportation and utility bills for my own family have gone up over the last several years, and I'm sure schools' costs have as well, but without added funding, this starts to become impossible to cover without a big effect on our children's education. To not increase the BSA along with inflation has become very detrimental to our state's education system. Please add to the BSA, and inflation-proof the BSA formula to stop the insanity that occurs every year with school district budgets. School district officials could be doing other much more productive things for our children with their time.
Kjirsten Langland	Anchorage	99516	2/26/2014	Our children all deserve an exceptional education. There isn't a more important use of our tax dollars.

Name	City	Zip	Signed On	Comment
Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	If we truly want quality public education we need to provide adequate, reliable funding for our schools. -Valerie Buckendorf, Rabbit Creek PTA President, Anchorage, AK
Kjirsten Langland	Anchorage	99516	2/26/2014	Our children all deserve an exceptional education. There is not a more important use of our tax dollars.
Heather Siegel	Anchorage	99502	2/26/2014	Education is key and my son attends Aquarian Charter School
Alice Knapp	Anchorage	99508	2/26/2014	The Anchorage School District is doing a great job even though it is faced with so many challenges. Forward funding and inflation proofing public schools should be a priority so school districts around the state can focus on their main job which is providing the best possible education to our kids.
Jose Martignon	anchorage	99517	2/26/2014	for the education of the childre and to be able to have more teaching programs for them
Jennifer Hall Jones	Anchorage	99508	2/26/2014	Commitment to education requires backbone. It means we value the effort required to keep our minds and spirit alive.
Julie danielson	Eagle River	99577	2/27/2014	The quality of education our children receive will directly affect their future. Overcrowding and understaffing is detrimental to our school systems.
K Johnson	Lakewood	80232	2/27/2014	my kids need the funding! our future in Alaska needs this funding!
Bryn Borders	Anchorage	99517	2/27/2014	Concerned parent, wife of teacher

Name	City	Zip	Signed On	Comment
Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	If we truly want quality public education we need to provide adequate, reliable funding for our schools. -Valerie Buckendorf, Rabbit Creek PTA President, Anchorage, AK
Araceli Mayers	Anchorage	99508	2/27/2014	I became an American Citizen after I say the Pledge of Allegiance every morning in my daughter's kindergarten classroom at Aquarian Charter School, I realize how important was for me, my family and my friends to be part of this amazing Pledge and believe in this country. My daughter and all the kids at her school are surrounded by amazing Teachers and staff, but they need all you can do to support them, so they can do their job. We have to have strong foundation on our kid's education, they are the future of this country, but we can not do it with out your help and if Public Schools do not get what they need, our Kids will not get what they need to succeed. Thank you.
Kari Olds	Anchorage	99516	2/27/2014	Bear Valley Elementary PTA President
Sacie Lambertson	Winchester	66097	2/27/2014	We have grandboys in two Anchorage HS and a daughter active in the PTAs of both so we know the issues and highly approve of well funded schools which helps to make the best education possible. A good education is important to our grandsons' future.
Caroline Storm	Anchorage	99515	2/27/2014	An educated populace is our most valuable resource. Kids, not cuts!
Lisa Johnson	Anchorage	99502	2/27/2014	Important because education is crucial to our future.
Brianne Moats	Anchorage	99515	2/27/2014	Our children deserve a quality education. I think teachers already have a tough job due to class sizes and other limitations due to budget. I think this is going to cause increased stress to both the teachers and students. I also think decrease staffing is a safety concern. Please continue to invest in our future by providing quality education to our children. Thank you!

Name	City	Zip	Signed On	Comment
Valerie Buckendorf	Anchorage	99516	2/25/2014	If we truly want quality public education we need to provide adequate, reliable funding for our schools. -Valerie Buckendorf, Rabbit Creek PTA President, Anchorage, AK
Amanda True	Anchorage	99515	2/28/2014	So we have a higher Teacher to Student ration to better aide in the teaching to our children. It seems more and more there are way too many students per teacher and they are not getting the help they need to succeed.
Connie Jones	Anchorage	99507	2/28/2014	I have a niece in the Anchorage School District, and want her to receive the best education ever. I am also a teacher in the district and with a lower budget teachers will be displaced and laid off. The lay offs will result in increased class sizes and less success for our students.
Rachel Faulkner	Anchorage	99507	2/28/2014	We are looking to lose fantastic teacher at Abbott Loop elementary. Large class sizes will harm our children!
Wendy Woolf	Indian	99540	2/28/2014	Our students are our most important resource. Investing in our students education is investing in Alaska future.
Dawn Bell	Anchorage	99507	2/28/2014	3rd grade Teacher Abbott Loop Elementary
Pete Schaub	Anchorage	99517	2/28/2014	I have children in the ASD.
Shelby Theriault	Anchorage	99516	2/28/2014	I have a child in the school district and I am a currently displaced teacher with 11 years of service to the school district.
merri shunk	anchorage	99507	2/28/2014	Children are our greatest resource
Tom Hancock	Anchorage	99507	2/28/2014	We need to make education a priority and not a shortfall.
Susan Ritter	Anchorage	99502	3/1/2014	The State of Alaska must commit to supporting student education K-12.
Laura Harris	Anchorage	99517-232	3/1/2014	My children attend a charter school which we love. It is painful to see all the schools struggling with lack of funding.
Sue Armstrong	Anchorage	99507	3/2/2014	WPG member for Winterberry Charter School
Valerie Baffone	Anchorage	99515	3/3/2014	We need to keep our public schools strong. Without this increase the classroom challenges wll just get worse and kids will be denied opprotunities to do well.
Michael Dobesh	Wasilla	99687	3/3/2014	I want the best educational opportunities for my grandchildren.
Lori Guyer	Anchorage	99507	3/3/2014	PTA President at Trailside Elementary School.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 2:01 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Sen. Bill 278

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Sunni Hilts [<mailto:ehhilts@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 07:07  
**To:** Norm Wooten  
**Subject:** Sen. Bill 278

Sent from my iPad  
Senator,

My name is Sunni Hilts and I am currently serving as President of the Association of Alaska School Boards. I will be brief as I know your time is short as the end of the session is rapidly approaching.

There are many elements to CSHB278 so I will limit my comments to one section. School board members take seriously our stewardship of public money. You have frequently heard our pleas for additional funding inside the foundation formula due to increasing costs.

These costs include supplies, transportation, utilities, services – and yes – even salaries. Let me emphasize that districts all across the state have negotiated responsibly with our employees to bring in contracts with lower COLA's than ever before. School boards and our staffs recognize the looming state deficit and we want to be part of the solution. But the fact is that increasing costs are requiring us to eliminate programs needed to ensure student success.

Please give serious consideration to increasing operational funding inside the formula so that we can provide our students with a truly great education.

Thank you, Senator for your work on behalf of Alaska's students.

Respectfully,

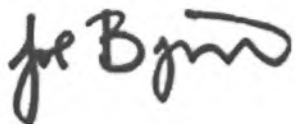
Sunni Hilts

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 2:03 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: HB278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** Darcy Mueller [<mailto:DMueller@KPBSD.k12.ak.us>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:29  
**Subject:** HB278

Dear Senator,

I apologize for the lateness of my email—it is difficult to dedicate the time to keeping up with the legislature while educating students.

I implore you to vote **AGAINST HB278**—or at least **remove the teacher tenure portion**. It is a very important issue that I think needs much further discussion.

I am not a raving supporter of tenure, but I know it is for different reasons than of those legislators who have been supporting moving it to 5 years and a day. I do not feel the issue is identifying poor-quality teachers in those first 3 years. Most teachers who are in their beginning years are the most motivated. Does the university system accept and push “bad” teachers through? Absolutely, I witnessed that myself with a teacher-to-be in the cohort I was in—he was forced to quit the MAT at UAS, and then apparently entered the MAT at UAA and graduated. Universities are a business and they will take money from their patrons. Should administrators “catch” these “bad” teachers that make it into the work force? Yes—if the administration is competent and doing their job. However, in my experience thus far, quality administrators seem to be hard to come by.

One big issue facing school districts in regards to tenure is identifying tenured teachers who are complacent, implementing a plan of improvement, and ousting them if they do not step up their performance—it should not be as hard as it is to fire teachers that are not doing their job.

I know the bill has concessions for rural schools; however, holding the acquisition of tenure at 3 years and 1 day will not impact teacher retention. What makes teachers stick around is quality of life. If the salary is not enough to where you can fly out a couple of times a year, or you are not able to access fitness facilities, fresh foods, or safe and reliable daycare or even just safe out-of-school time, then teachers don't want to stay. I left the bush one day short of tenure because I couldn't afford to live by myself when splitting up with my daughter's father; moreover, knowing that there was not a safe option for infant daycare in the community. I still consider Nome my home, and felt more job satisfaction than I have ever felt here in Homer. When I was leaving Nome, one of my former students who was in pre-Med school said, "I'm sorry to hear you are leaving, but you are too good of a teacher to be in Nome." It broke my heart; that was where I needed to be and could not stay.

I think tenure is important solely because within schools districts there is usually a "us against them" attitude between teachers and district administrators. Teachers (most of them) pour their heart and soul into their students and if they are not able to rely on having a job, it makes it very difficult to invest themselves for an uncertain future.

Please remove the tenure portion of HB278 or oppose the whole bill altogether because of that piece—ultimately it is what is best for Alaskan students and the future of education in this state.

Thank you for your time,

Darcy Mueller

Homer Middle School, 4 years

Formerly at Nome-Beltz Jr./Sr. High, 3 years

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 11:20 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: CS for HB278

Public testimony



*Joe Byrnes*

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** john nielsen [<mailto:johnnielsen.asmp@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 11:03  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** CS for HB278

I have been working with high risk students for almost 20 years. I believe the revisions proposed will have a profoundly negative impact on being able to work effectively with this population.

John Nielsen

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:01 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Request

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** Marty K Rutherford [<mailto:martykelseyrutherford@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 08:54  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Request

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am an Alaskan and a parent, although my daughter is now in college and not now dependent upon the Alaska K-12 school system. However I firmly believe that the future strength of our great state is dependent upon well-educated children who will take our place in future years. The children now in our school system will soon become the businessmen & women, legislators, educators and home-makers of Alaska.

It has been my privilege to know many Alaskan teachers and as I've grown older I've been continually impressed by the knowledge, passion and commitment of our educators. It is their direct contribution to our children that will provide "learning" and result in educated students, capable of taking their place in society. It will not be books alone, or beautiful schools, or competent administrators that will affect our student's future, it is the teachers. And it is for this reason I urge you to use some of Alaska's great wealth in the appropriate fashion. **Please increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$400.00 statewide, in this year's operating budget!**

I think it appropriate to add that I am a lifelong Alaskan Republican, the daughter of a lifelong Alaskan Republican, who also was the son of a lifelong Alaskan Republican. I am, and my Family has always been, fiscally conservative. However I believe it is not appropriate to support a huge Capital Budget at the expense of operating budget items such as the BSA. Please, be prudent in where you place your priorities. Alaska will not become a greater state because of better highways nor beautiful buildings, but it will become a great state if we have educated children!

Marty Kelsey Rutherford

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 12:32 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: HB278

Public testimony



*Joe Byrnes*

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** Robyn Schroeder [<mailto:rlschroe@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 13, 2014 18:32  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** HB278

Dear Senator Kelly,

You've stated your support of Alaska families and quality education. I'm now asking you to put those words into action this week in Juneau.

Alaska teachers are one of our most valuable resources. They give their all to ensure this generation of Alaskans grow up to be tomorrow's leaders. They have already been insulted and beleaguered by many statements coming out of Juneau. Please show your support and give them something to hang on to. HB278 does nothing to keep "bad teachers" out of the profession, it only penalizes beginning teachers for choosing to work with our state's children. Tenure does not protect failing teachers, it only provides the very basics of due process to professionals who are on the front lines. Please show your support and toss out this bill.

Additionally, I request you take another look at the BSA for the coming year and into the future. We all know that a flat budget is actually a budget cut. With increasing health care, insurance, and other costs, cuts are unavoidable -class sizes are increasing and the quality of education in the state is decreasing. Your decision on BSA will affect children throughout the state this year and into the future. Please show your commitment to a quality education for all Alaskan children and increase the BSA.

Regards,

Robyn Schroeder

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Carol Shurson <carolshurson@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 9:49 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** SBA

Please put students first! We must have 400, 125 and 125

KENAI LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kenai\_LIO@akleg.gov

Phone: 907-283-2030 / Fax: 907-283-3075

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME:

GARY SUPERMAN

REPRESENTING:

BAR OWNER - ALASKA CHACE

BILL # or SUBJECT:

SB 209

COMMITTEE:

FINANCE

DATE:

4/11/14

I'VE PERUSED ALL THE FISCAL NOTES FOR THIS BILL. A LOT ARE ZERO AND THE REST ARE MINISCULE. DCCED IS MISSING, WHICH CONTAINS ABC BUDGET. MORE THAN LIKELY, ENFORCEMENT WILL END UP IN THEIR LAP. BE THAT AS IT MAY, THE SMALL FISCAL NOTES REFLECT THE FACT THAT THIS LAW IS ALREADY IN PLACE. THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY GOV. EDICT IN THEIR OWN BUILDINGS, MUNICIPAL CODE CHANGES, OR BY OWNER CHOICE.

I SPEAK FOR THE FEW REMAINING BAR OWNERS THAT THIS COUP SEEKS TO RULE. I WON'T GO INTO THE ABSOLUTELY QUESTIONABLE SCIENCE THAT HAS BEEN TWISTED & SPIN TO FIT THE AGENDAS OF PROFESSIONAL ACTIVISTS AND DON'T HAVE TIME IN 2 MIN TO GO INTO THOSE ARCHAIC NOTIONS OF PERSONAL CHOICE & PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS.

THE IMPACT TO OUR BUSINESS WILL BE SEVERE I DON'T MAKE THIS CLAIM OUT OF SPECULATION OR IN A HAPHazard MANNER, 90% OF OUR PATRONS SMOKE. NIKISKI IS A BLUE COLLAR WORKING CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE BOWE-HEADED COMMONERS CAN STILL COME INTO OUR TVERN TO HAVE A COUPLE OF BEERS, SOCIALIZE & LIGHT UP. THERE IS NO ALTERNATE CLIENTELE; WHITE COLLAR, BLUE WORKERS, ETC. I'VE SAID IT BEFORE, YOU DON'T HAVE

7.2

KENAI LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kenai\_LIO@akleg.gov

Phone: 907-283-2030 / Fax: 907-283-3075

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME:

GARY SUPERMAN

REPRESENTING:

BILL # or SUBJECT:

SB 209

COMMITTEE:

FINANCE

DATE:

TO COME IN, WHO WILL MAKE UP A 20-30% LOSS THAT SQUEEZES MARGINS TO NEAR ZERO? AND FINANCIAL WELL BEING IS IRRELEVANT UNDER THE DICTATES OF THIS BILL.

I THINK I'LL CALL THIS THE GREAT ALASKAN BEER HALL PUTSCH OF 2014. WHEREAS THE 1ST BEER HALL PUTSCH (1923 MUNICH) FAILED, THIS ONE HAS MUCH MORE STEAM. SAME ~~FOLKS~~ TYPE OF FOLKS.

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Boggs Family Home <phouse@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 12:54 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** House Bill on Education, now in Senate Finance Committee: Three years of scheduled increases in the BSA (Base Student Allocation): \$400 this coming year, and \$125 for each of the two following years.

**Dear Senate Finance Committee,**

Please do not punish Alaskan children because the Colleges of Education nationwide educate our teachers poorly.

Picture that if the Medical field did not teach doctors to perform CPR? Would we punish our local doctors?

Please base your vote not on Ethos and Pathos but on Logos.

**Please, you simply must** make the CS as supportive of our school children as possible. Avoid a fourth year of cuts to teachers and staff, so our children have adequate class sizes and the support that they need to continue the gains we are making, we need:

- Three years of scheduled increases in the BSA (Base Student Allocation): \$400 this coming year, and \$125 for each of the two following years.

Sincerely,

Posie Boggs and Family.

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:52 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Public testimony on CSHB278, Sections 20 and 48, BSA and "Energy Funding"

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



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**From:** Heather Dael [<mailto:heather.dael@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 23:07  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Public testimony on CSHB278, Sections 20 and 48, BSA and "Energy Funding"

**Dear Senator Kelly,**

I respectfully request your support a substantial increase to the BSA to catch us up from the last four years of flat funding in order to keep our class sizes down. Our district would require an increase between \$250 and \$400 to maintain our class sizes. These funds are necessary to keep up with increasing day to day operation costs such as maintenance, utilities, salaries, textbooks, etc.. Graduation rates are up and drop out rates are down in our district. Staff evaluation, curriculum alignment, and professional development require funds. We appreciate the support you have given our schools in the past (safety and security funds). These designated funds could not be used to keep our class sizes down. Time is quickly approaching for our school district to finalize their budget. I urge you to pass legislation that provides us with a significant increase in day to day operational funds in order to keep the quality of our schools up and the class sizes in our schools down. I support any funding that accomplishes this such as the \$30,000,000 added as one year funding. Again, it needs to be enough to maintain our current quality and class size levels.

Thank you for your hard work for our schools,

Heather Dael

253 Eagle Ridge Road, Fairbanks AK

907-455-7168

[Heather.dael@gci.net](mailto:Heather.dael@gci.net)

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:25 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Public testimony on CSHB278, Sections 20 and 48, I support a significant increase to the BSA and the "Energy Funding"

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** Tammi Ganguli [<mailto:tammiganquli@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 00:21  
**To:** LIO Fairbanks; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Click Bishop  
**Subject:** Public testimony on CSHB278, Sections 20 and 48, I support a significant increase to the BSA and the "Energy Funding"

Dear Senators:

I respectfully request you support a substantial increase to the BSA to catch us up from the last four years of flat funding in order to keep our class sizes down. Our district would require an increase between \$250 and \$400 to maintain our class sizes. These funds are necessary to keep up with increasing day to day operation costs such as maintenance, utilities, salaries, textbooks, etc.. Graduation rates are up and drop out rates are down in our district. Staff evaluation, curriculum alignment, and professional development require funds. We appreciate the support you have given our schools in the past (safety and security funds). These designated funds could not be used to keep our class sizes down. Time is quickly approaching for our school district to finalize their budget. I urge you to pass legislation that provides us with a significant increase in day to day operational funds in order to keep the quality of our schools up and the class sizes in our schools down. I support any funding that accomplishes this such as the \$30,000,000 added as one year funding. Again, it needs to be enough to maintain our current quality and class size levels.

Thank you for your hard work for our schools,

Tammi Ganguli  
2530 Allen Adale Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99709  
907-750-1466  
[tammiganquli@gmail.com](mailto:tammiganquli@gmail.com)

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 2:52 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: HB278

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Murphy\_Sean [[mailto:Murphy\\_Sean@asdk12.org](mailto:Murphy_Sean@asdk12.org)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 14:46  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** HB278

4/8/14

Dear Senator,

My name is Sean Murphy and I am a principal in the Anchorage School District. Please do not implement the portion of HB278 (Section 8, page 3) that would bring back an A-F grading system of school and district instead of the current "star" system – Alaska School Performance Index (ASPI).

We have seen this show before. The entire country just finished a decade-long experiment in standards-based, test-driven school reform called No Child Left Behind.

By any measure, NCLB was a dismal failure in both raising academic performance and narrowing gaps in opportunity and outcomes. But by very publicly measuring the test results against benchmarks no real schools have ever met, NCLB did succeed in creating a narrative of failure that shaped a decade of attempts to "fix" schools while blaming those who work in them. By the time the first decade of NCLB was over, more than half the schools in the nation were on the lists of "failing schools" and the rest were poised to follow.

In reality, NCLB's test scores reflected the inequality that exists all around our schools. The disaggregated scores put the spotlight on longstanding gaps in outcomes and opportunity among student subgroups. But NCLB used these gaps to label schools as failures without providing the resources or support needed to eliminate them.

NCLB proved that the test and punish approach to education reform doesn't work, not that we need a new, tougher version of it. Instead of targeting the inequalities of race, class, and educational opportunity reflected in the test scores, the return to labeling school as possible failing will continue to tear down teachers instead of renewing them.

Thank you for reading this letter, and I hope you will consider my plea to support schools.

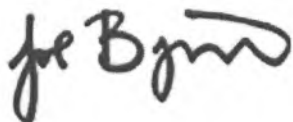
Sean Murphy  
Principal, Wonder Park  
Anchorage School District

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 9:12 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: HB278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** Kristin Ratigan [mailto:kratigan@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 21:21  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** HB278

Senator Kelly,

I write to you in hopes that as part of the Senate Finance Committee, you will seriously consider making changes to House Bill 278. I have concerns with the bill overall, but I would like to draw your attention to two specific amendments:

1) Funding. While the first-year SBA increase to \$185 is more than Governor Parnell was suggesting, it is still not enough to get the job done. As I'm sure you have heard many times over, school districts all over the state have already cut what they can to stay operative. I teach in Eagle River, and my school is losing 6 full-time positions. These are my colleagues - they teach English, math, French, and work in the special education program. While an \$185 BSA increase may allow for one of these teachers to get their job back, what will happen next year when the BSA is only \$58? We cannot afford to lose any more teachers. We cannot afford to cut programs that support students. And we cannot afford to shortchange the young people whom we are educating - they are the ones who really lose when it comes to inadequate funding.

2) Tenure. Less than three states require five years before a teacher can be tenured, whereas most states require 3. Increasing tenure is a bad move for Alaska. Alaska school districts have struggled to recruit out-of-state teachers, and will continue to have this problem if prospective employees don't have just rights within a reasonable time frame. I myself am a transplant who moved to Alaska for a teaching job. I have been teaching for four years, and earned tenure in 2013. However I am afraid that if the tenure requirements would change, I may be at risk of losing my job - not because I will no longer be "safe" from being fired for performance, but because my district will have no alternative but to let go of non-tenured teachers due to budget restraints (see point one).

I am counting on you, Senator Kelly, to speak for your constituents. We can no longer put education on the back burner while other issues take up our time, energy, and resources. The most valuable investment to make for Alaska is in our children and their education.

Thank you for your time. Sincerely,

Kristin Ratigan

**A resolution of the Rabbit Creek Elementary School PTA:  
Supporting a \$404 increase to the base student allocation,  
inflation-proofing the base student allocation, and providing  
forward funding to our schools.**

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska addresses its Constitutional responsibility for public education funding through the school foundation formula which includes a "base student allocation," referenced often as the "BSA";

WHEREAS, funding through the State of Alaska Public School Funding Program is the Anchorage School District's most significant revenue source;

WHEREAS, the BSA is not automatically adjusted for inflation each year;

WHEREAS, inclusion of an annual inflation factor in the formula is necessary to sustain a financial commitment to safe and public access to education;

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska's BSA is a "per-student" payment to school districts, currently set at \$5,680, and has remained the same since 2011;

WHEREAS, based on the inflation rate calculated from the consumer price index for Alaska, the BSA needs to be increased by \$404 to restore the funding level lost to inflation;

WHEREAS, on January 23, 2014, the Anchorage School District proposed its 2014-2015 school budget requiring a layoff of six percent of its teachers and increasing class size, which represent only some of the cuts targeted at closing a \$23 MILLION dollar budget deficit;

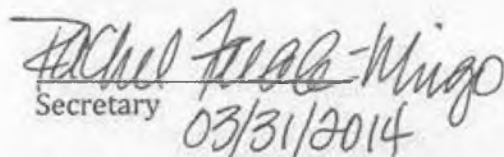
WHEREAS other school districts throughout Alaska are experiencing comparable per student budget shortfalls;

WHEREAS, the current BSA of \$5,680 is not adequate to meet the State's responsibility for safe and public access to public education in Alaska;

WHEREAS, it is critical that the State of Alaska provide forward funding to its schools, to provide the funding certainty to enable school districts to retain teachers and other staff, and to otherwise plan annual balanced budgets;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rabbit Creek PTA supports an increase in the State of Alaska's Base Student Allocation by at least \$404 this legislative year, inflation-proofing the school foundation formula to sustain financial commitment to safe and public access to public education, and forward-funding Alaska's schools.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Rabbit Creek Elementary School PTA this 31 day of March, 2014.

  
Secretary  
03/31/2014

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Harmony Roll <taigatrekkers@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 8:38 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Raise the BSA

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

As an educator with an M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, a parent, and a community organizer, I implore you to raise the BSA substantially! The *ONLY* thing ever proven to consistently improve student success is lower class size. A mediocre teacher can achieve far more with his/her students than a phenomenal teacher overburdened by too many students. The most amazing, conscientious teachers are getting burnt out and leaving the profession all together. We are losing more and more every year, because they can not humanly do all that is needed and are too frustrated with the system to go on. Their hearts and their minds are being stretched to their breaking points.

Education is the most important cost we can afford. It absolutely pays back dividends of the very best kind.

If you truly believe in the idea of Capitalism, that if you work hard you reap the benefits of that labor, than quality education **MUST** be accessible to all children in Alaska.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Harmony Lanen Roll, M.Ed.

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Mike Bronson <bronsonconsulting@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 6:52 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Cc:** Sen. Hollis French; Rep. Lindsey Holmes  
**Subject:** Raise the BSA \$600 effective FY15. Show us the money.

Senator Meyer, Senator Kelly and Senate Finance Committee Members,

We want our money. Raise the DEE's budget to provide a \$600 BSA increase effective FY15.

Please feel free to re-allocate from the capital project studies, dam studies, KABATA, tennis courts, LIO upgrades and film subsidies.

Please show your pro-education values by prioritizing the BSA over other state expenditures.

Thank you,

-Mike Bronson

2428 Tulik Drive

Anchorage, AK 99517

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Tim Silbaugh <timsilbaugh@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 1:38 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Raise the BSA by \$400/\$125/\$125 over next three years

Dear Senate Finance Committee,  
Please do right by our children (all 130,000 of them) and our schools and raise the BSA by \$400 this year and \$125 each of the next two years so we can avoid more cuts to teachers and counselors. This issue is so important to many parents, children, educators and business leaders. It defies partisanship. Good education for our kids is imperative for a healthy and vibrant community and economy. The relationship between students and teachers is the most important part of education and it will be diminished by larger class sizes brought on by flat or marginal funding to the BSA.

Do the right thing. Fund the BSA adequately.

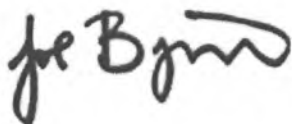
Thank you,  
Tim Silbaugh  
6221 Farpoint Dr  
Anchorage, 99507

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 4:13 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: recently proposed actions on CS for HB278 and SB119

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



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**From:** SHELLY NIELSEN [<mailto:Shelly.Nielsen@matsuk12.us>]

**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 15:46

**To:** Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Fred Dyson

**Subject:** recently proposed actions on CS for HB278 and SB119

Senator,

**The recently proposed actions affecting the CS for HB278 – “Education Bill” and the CS for SB119 – Capital Budget are a step in the wrong direction.**

**This proposed change to the ASPI system from a star rating to a letter grade (A-F) would have a negative effect on the efforts of EED to amend the current star system as part of the USDOE waiver to NCLB.**

**Valley Pathways is an alternative school in the Mat-Su Valley. Its dedicated staff works with the most at-risk population of students in our community, in fact they are beyond "at-risk" and are truly "wounded". I am proud to work here. A letter grade system will unfairly “brand” my school as failing. This would also happen to several alternative schools across the state.**

**I have served MSBSD schools for 26 years and of those years I have worked these last 4 years as an alternative school Tutor/Advisor. I speak from experience; this proposed change would have a severely negative impact on the mission of my school.**

**I urge you to drop the amendment to change the ASPI rating system from a star rating to a letter grade rating.**

**I also urge you to seek input from all the various educational niches working with our precious students. You will be amazed at some of the work and efforts and learn how to better support those in the trenches. May I suggest you visit with the leaders in the ASASA (Alaska State Alternative School Association).**

**Sincerely,**

**Shelly Nielsen**

**Tutor Advisor at VPHS**

**Palmer, Alaska**

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If you believe you have received this information in error, please notify the sender immediately by reply email and immediately delete this message from your system.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Jeanne Fischer <fischerjc22c@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 15, 2014 10:27 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Request

Dear Senate Finance Committee members,

Please support our schools!

Again, to avoid a fourth year of cuts to teachers and staff, so our children have adequate class sizes and the support that they need to continue the gains we are making, we need:

- Three years of scheduled increases in the BSA (Base Student Allocation): \$400 this coming year, and \$125 for each of the two following years.

Thank you for all you do to support our children and future.

Respectfully,

Jeanne Fischer

Retired principal

[here.](#)

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Nancy Pease <nancypease2@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 5:25 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Restore the BSA \$400-125-125

Senate Finance Committee:

Restore the BSA: \$400 this year, \$125 the next two years. This legislature still gets an F for not adequately funding public education. One-time funding provides no stability for our teachers and our schools. Any lesser amount shortchanges our children, "our most precious resource". Education pays off: undereducation results in low-skilled, low-wage workers and higher dependency on social services.

Voters will be watching, and will remember anyone who shortchanges our students.

Sent from my iPad

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Catherine Mannix <mannixalaska@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 13, 2014 2:12 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Revised plea for education funding

I speak to you as an educator, community member, parent, Alaskan and an American. You have the power to improve the educational system in Alaska by increasing the base student allocation by at least \$400. Please use this power to do what is needed to raise the BSA.

I encourage the Finance Committee to seek to develop ways to audit every state and federally funded teacher and teacher assistant position, along with every principal, administrator, and staff person employed with government funds and taxes! Our students deserve the very best our dollars can offer. We must eliminate waste, but the intentions of our Governor, and his supporters, are too destructive to the very fabric of teaching and learning in our Great State.

The social and economic base has changed in Anchorage and it is changing across our state. The challenging issues we face in the urban classroom are probably more similar to rural classrooms these days. Uninvolved, dysfunctional parents, and families, serve up needy children. No parent chooses disability for their child. If we listen to the detractors who want to abandon the children of poverty, dysfunction, or disability, we create an adult population of people who knew they never counted, lacking skills to embrace the future. The social problems will not disappear by running to private charter and private schools. This only creates less understanding, less compassion, and less empathy among our citizenry. We must embrace the public obligation to educate all children for success. We must embrace our city's children, our state's children, who are America's children. You can help to do this by raising the base student allocation and inflation proofing it.

We should not shrink from the challenges, but rise to meet them. Please pursue this funding to address the basic needs of our classrooms. Do not contribute to the erosion of our public education system.

Thank you for your public service to Alaska and its children.

Sincerely,

Catherine Mannix

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Julie Shewman <julie.shewman@yahoo.com>  
**ent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 4:27 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** School allocations

As I understand it, you, members of the Senate Finance Committee, are planning to submit a committee substitute for the House Bill on Education today. Please make the CS as supportive of our young Alaskans as possible. Please stave off a fourth year of cuts to teachers and staff, help maintain reasonable class sizes, and give our kids and their amazing teachers and staff the support they need to be successful. Please support three years of scheduled increases in the BSA (Base Student Allocation): \$400 this coming year, and \$125 for each of the two following years. Please don't try to say that it is fiscally irresponsible to adequately fund our education. Less than \$200 million for education is a far better investment in the future of our state than the \$9 billion in proposed capital expenditures.

I have to wonder why more of our legislators don't understand that.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Julie Shewman  
Mom of three Alaska school children

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Holly White <hmw@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 2:02 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** School BSA Reallocation

Hello..... I have three daughters at three different schools here in Anchorage. One with special needs. Please reallocate appropriate funds to the BSA so that our children can get the best possible education that they can from the schools, teachers, and classrooms that they are currently in. Think of it as Operations Grant! or a renovation or maintenance of the BSA! The BSA needs some renovating just like the library!!!! Thank you for your understanding & actions of priority!!

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Lois Brabson <lbrabson@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 12, 2014 9:10 AM  
**To:** Sen. Anna Fairclough  
**Cc:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** School Funding

Dear Senator Fairclough,

First, thank you for serving Alaska and our community. It is an enormous responsibility.

I write to ask your support securing greater, predictable funding for our schools. My family has recently returned to Eagle River after his 24 year military career. We chose to make Alaska our home, in no small part due to the wonderful, far sighted school system. (After 15 moves, we have seen the fiascos created on outside states.) Alaska districts work so hard to insure success for all students and continue to make great progress. Sadly, we can already see our 7th grader isn't going to have the same opportunities as her one year older sister. I particularly worry about children from marginalized families, that receive life guidance from instructors. The teachers and counselors can only be spread so thin.

Please mark the right decision and support the long term health of our public schools.

Respectfully,

Lois Brabson  
20195 Constitution Dr  
Eagle River AK 99577

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Linda Cramer <voicesintime123@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 8:57 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** School Funding

Please, please fund Alaska students adequately. I substitute music at all levels and have taught in most Anchorage schools over the past few years. It has been heartbreaking to see the number of teacher's aides (especially those who give extra help to children under special education contracts with the school district) and counselors diminish in number. Without that support, and with increases in class size it becomes very difficult for teachers to do much more than crowd control. All the people I work with are behaving heroically. It is so very sad to watch the situation deteriorating district wide. There is less impact in the schools in well-to-do neighborhoods but I can see subtle changes in what the kids are learning even there.

Please increase the per student allocation \$400 this year and \$125 for the following two years. Even better, make the allocation automatically rise with the cost of living.

Thank you,

Linda Cramer

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Laurie Evans-Dinneen <levansdinneen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 2:11 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** School funding

I am writing to voice support for your hard work in making these budget decisions. Please consider this letter of support to the subject of the increase in the BSA.

To avoid a fourth year of cuts to teachers and staff, so our children have adequate class sizes and the support that they need to continue the gains they are making, we need three years of scheduled increases in the BSA (Base Student Allocation): \$400 this coming year, and \$125 for each of the two following years.

I fully support this action. Please call or email if you have questions. Thank you for your time and consideration to our request.

Regards,  
Laurie Evans-Dinneen  
Parent, Anchorage School District  
907-317-2334

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Gail French <gailpfrench@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 9:46 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Cc:** Deena Mitchell  
**Subject:** School funding

If you can throw millions at capital projects, you can fund our school to produce the best work force in the nation. Without a skilled and proud workforce money won't get the job done right.

Skilled Alaskans can do much with little.

Inept Alaskans can do little with much.

Thank you

Gail French, Proud mother of West Anchorage High Graduate currently on track for Civil Engineering degree.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** alison gal <alimusic@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 8:10 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** School Funding

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

First, I want to thank you for the work that you do for our state. This year has been a tough year, especially concerning education issues. I am writing to you today to encourage you to support our kids and our schools. Our schools faced deep cuts last year and even deeper cuts this year. I am concerned that without adequate funding to the BSA, our schools will face even more cuts next year and beyond. I know we all want our children to succeed. We need to have the money for crucial elements of education, including enough teachers to give students the attention they deserve, money for technology, such as bandwidth, hardware and software (this is KEY to 21st century education), money for supplies like paper, staples, etc (doesn't seem like a big deal, but you would be surprised how many teachers buy large quantities of these supplies for the classroom because we can't get it from the schools), and money for counselors & specialist such as ELL teachers. Counselors not only guide students through academic issues, but are on the front lines attending to emotional needs such as suicide (which is a much larger issue than I think most think). ELL teachers, assistants and counselor are crucial for our ever-growing ELL population. In order for ASD to achieve 90% by 2020, we must provide adequate support for these students. They have unique needs and their parents are often unable to academically support or advocate for them because of their own limited knowledge of English.

As I am sure you have guessed, I am a teacher. I am passionate about teaching. But I am also a parent. I am a parent who is very proud of my daughter's school. I would hate to see the performance of her school, or any other school, suffer in quality because our schools are not adequately funded.

Thank you again, for all of your work. And thank you for taking the time to listen.

Sincerely,

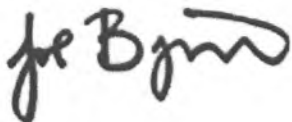
Alison Anteau  
7400 Old Harbor Ave.  
Anchorage, AK 99504

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 1:10 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: school funding

Public testimony



*Joe Byrnes*

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** Gretchen Hopkins [<mailto:hopkins.gretchen@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 13:09  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** school funding

Please, as an educator and teacher in the Anchorage School District, I firmly asking you to make sure that the Base Student Allocation gets voted in at the level we need to continue to have reliable funding for Alaska's Schools. \$400 BSA this year and \$125 for the next two years at least. This lets us catch up with inflation and be able to plan into the future.

Cutting teachers is the worst possible thing for all involved. The amount of students I have in my classroom directly affects the quality/individualized instruction I can deliver.

Thank you for ALL you do and for advocating for our children.

Gretchen Hopkins  
1750 Dimond Drive, Anchorage, AK 99507  
907-227-8296  
Teacher at O'Malley Elementary  
Parent of a Service High School Student  
and a King Career Center Student

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** gurnard2.excite <gurnard2@excite.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 10:15 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** school funding

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for your careful consideration of issues related to education. Times are tough in many areas of the state, but especially in rural areas. Here in the Pribilof School District teachers and support staff are already wearing many hats, and the situation is worsening. Due to funding issues we are not replacing 2 of our 9 certified positions with full time on island certified teachers, and our administrative staff has also been cut in half just this year. Delivering quality programs becomes more challenging when there are fewer teachers to deliver the core and elective courses. This becomes apparent especially at the upper level classes and extracurricular areas. An effect of being able to afford fewer teachers means high school students begin to think of leaving for boarding schools, which leads to more local funding challenges due to decreased enrollment. Another effect is teacher burnout, and it is already challenging to find highly qualified teachers to come to remote areas.

Our district, like many other rural districts, has tried to be creative in finding ways to save money. Teachers have been asked to remove light bulbs from overhead classroom lighting or not use all the light banks, heaters have been turned down farther, most district travel has been stopped, we have increased fundraising efforts, and we have applied for various grant monies as well as being generally frugal. Please remember as you consider issues for education funding and other issues pertaining to schools that especially in rural areas like mine where costs are high (heating fuel is over \$5 per gallon and milk is \$15 per gallon), we need your financial support to provide the quality public education all students deserve.

Sincerely,  
Tonia Kushin,  
Elementary Teacher & Parent

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Rod Mccoy <rodmccoy123@gmail.com>  
**ent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 3:07 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** School funding

At Chugiak High School my daughter is chair of the math department. They have to cut a teacher that has been with them for twelve years.

Stupid.

Do we not want to do a good job teaching math.

Rod McCoy  
907-317-1610.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Susan Rogers <susanrogers98@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 12:22 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** School Funding

I hope you, like me, support increased funding for public schools. I urge you to increase funding proposed in HB 278. I support increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to \$400 in 2015 and \$125 in each of the following two years. As a recently retired teacher in Anchorage, I have seen staff available to students reduced over the past three years. This has resulted in more crowded classrooms (less instruction, more classroom management), fewer students having access to counselors or coaches who will get them through high school. A continued increase in the graduation rate will be less likely as well. I would not be surprised if some teachers and principals retired rather than to face the additional cuts that are inevitable with the present level of funding proposed in HB 278.

I do think cuts can be made in school district bureaucracies and administration. And there are savings that could result from efficiency in operations, but I do not think cuts in funding that will result in teacher lay-offs are the way to do it. Budgeting within the school district itself is more appropriated.

Thank you for supporting public education in Alaska.

Susan Rogers  
[susanrogers98@gmail.com](mailto:susanrogers98@gmail.com)



Enriching Our Native Way of Life

April 15, 2014

Senator Pete Kelly  
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol Room 516  
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Kevin Meyer  
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol Room 518  
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Anna Fairclough  
Vice-Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol Room 514  
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Mike Dunleavy  
Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol Room 510  
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Click Bishop  
Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol Room 115  
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Donny Olson  
Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol Room 508  
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Lyman Hoffman  
Senate Finance Committee  
State Capitol Room 11  
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Public Education Funding

Dear Members of Senate Finance Committee:

Bristol Bay Native Corporation (BBNC) writes in support of increasing the base student allocation by \$400 in FY 2015, an additional \$125 in FY 2016, and \$125 again in FY 2017.

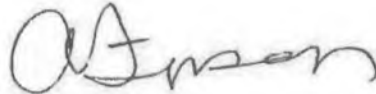
The base student allocation amount has not been raised since 2011. A \$400 increase this coming fiscal year will raise school funding enough to offset the inflation that has occurred over the last three years and will enable schools to retain its current teacher levels and potentially hire back some of the positions eliminated since 2011. The additional \$125 increases sought for FY 2016 and FY 2017 represent 2% increases which will offset inflation and provide a measure of stability to school district funding.

Adequate school funding is a state-wide issue that challenges small schools in rural Alaska as well as large schools in urban Alaska. Accordingly, this should be an issue that unites all of us. While BBNC understands and is concerned by the fact that Alaska faces potential budget shortfalls over the foreseeable future, we do not believe we can afford to underfund our school systems. The surest way to support the long-term economic sustainability of

Alaska is to create superior schools that produce a resourceful, educated and overachieving citizenry and workforce.

Please sufficiently fund our schools. Enact legislation that raises the base student allocation by \$650 over the next three fiscal years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. Ferguson".

April Ferguson  
Sr. Vice-President and General Counsel

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Carma and Jiri <carmaandjiri@gci.net>  
**ent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 5:43 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** school funding plea!

My son is facing a decision of which middle school to go to next year. I have heard such amazing things about the ones he is deliberating on: Steller, Romig, Central. Each time I hear about them though, it is with a caveat – well, with the current funding level, we wouldn't have the same model, it would not be a middle school it would be a junior high. Teachers would not have the time for teams that allow them to work with students more effectively across disciplines. Teachers would not have the time to make it work.

So what is the future for his middle school experience as you make decisions about school funding? And what about for my daughter, who is two years behind my son, how much more degraded will the schools be for her? And what about all the wonderful young people to come? I fear we are spiraling into a pit of degrading schools, which urges some families to seek private funding, then care less about public schools, meaning less funding for public schools, and so on and so on. Imagine your son or daughter in a bad school situation – maybe one that you don't realize or she doesn't realize, until damage is done. They are only young once. Only in 7<sup>th</sup> grade once, 8<sup>th</sup> grade – society can't go back and do it over because we screwed up with these kids, not for these kids. Then, imagine your son or daughter in a great school environment where he is encouraged to do his best and find his place in the world. That's the choice – you know what your constituents are saying, they are saying find a way to fund the schools. I can't imagine your heart saying anything different.

Don't make the wrong decision, and don't hide a small net increase by presenting a larger increase with one hand and cutting grants with the other. I am so proud of our Anchorage schools, I am willing to pay my share, I would so rather my kids attend public schools with all their peers, amongst the diversity of this great state.

Please, don't make yet another cut to the care and skills and knowledge my kids are exposed to and get eight hours a day, five days a week. What a waste that would be. For the 4th year in a row! Please try your very hardest to ensure the Base Student Allocation is increased by at least \$400 this year, and \$125 for each of the next two years after that.

Nothing less!

Thank you for your time,

Carma E. Reed

2041 Borealis Drive

Anchorage, AK 99503

907-274-5259

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Jimmy Lee <goblegoblegoble@icloud.com>  
**ent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 12:37 PM  
**To:** Doniece Gott  
**Subject:** School Funding Supprt

My name I James, and I have a child who attends Alpenglow Elementary School. My family is supporting the \$400 increase in BSA funding for the teachers. Followed by the \$125 increase or the following 2 years. We must make education a priority. Our great state of Alaska has plenty of money, and our schools, teachers, and children should not take a back seat to other issues.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:14 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: CSHB278, Sections 20 and 48, BSA

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



**From:** Margaret Eagleton [<mailto:meagleto@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 08:00

**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly

**Subject:** CSHB278, Sections 20 and 48, BSA

Dear Senator Kelly,

I write to you today to ask you to substantially increase the BSA for Alaska's schools.

I happen to purchase my own health insurance and looking back four years, my premiums have increased by over 30%, and I have not changed age groups in those four years as I am in the very upper part of my current age class. I am sure the school districts' health care costs have increased by some amount near that number, though I do not know that figure specifically. Anecdotally, I have heard from my daughter's principal that health care expenses are one of the bigger challenges for the district, since the contracted salaries are modest, comparatively speaking.

Similarly, I looked at my food expenses over that same period and those have increased by nearly 20%. Of course there are more variables in that number, as perhaps my tastes have changed toward the more expensive, though I feel as though I have been rather consistent with my purchases over the years. Surely you have noticed the food cost increases of late. The school districts have the same concerns.

Given these two areas of substantial increases to expenses that are not direct energy costs, I would ask you to consider increasing the BSA above any amount suggested to correct for the past four years of flat funding. Even a 10% increase wouldn't get the districts to where they need to be. The one-time energy money would be most appreciated, but it wouldn't address these other costs.

I have a daughter starting high school next year in the Fairbanks North Star School District. We were told yesterday that they might not be able to offer honors biology for her with funding issues. As the belt tightens the advanced, motivated students often suffer. Having these bright students bored by school is not doing the future any service.

Please do what you can.

Thank you for your consideration,

Margaret W. Eagleton  
93 Roxie Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99709  
(907) 479-3535

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Denise Brown <dbrown@dgsd.us>  
**ent:** Tuesday, April 15, 2014 9:08 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Senate Finance Committee-

It has come to my staff's attention that the district is having to look at many cuts within our schools, one of which is the Food Service Program. Our district has a large amount of free and reduced students (families) that will be left to fend for themselves for their mid-day meals. How can a district continue to help our community on bare bone finances and let alone all the restrictions and implementations being forced upon us? The food service programs (nation wide) are struggling to make ends meet and in most cases not doing this successfully. Who gets hurt in the long run.....the kids!

Let's face it, a lot of time, energy and \$\$ has been put in place to bring all our schools within compliance within the Nation School Lunch Program.....what a shame to see all that go to waste having NO program for these kids at all.

Please help support us in our journey to keeping our Lunch Program alive.

Thank you for your time.

--

Denise Brown  
Food Service Manager  
Delta/Greely School District  
Delta Junction, AK 99737  
Tel. #907-895-4460 ext. #229

## Senate Finance Committee Testimony on HB 278

Explain the introduction of the 6 Principles

Explain the goal of NEA-Alaska in improving student achievement and the lens of How will this improve student achievement in any bill?

I would like to review the sections of this bill that addresses education.

- |                            |  |  |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Section 1                  | Jury service exemption   | we support                             |
| Section 2                  | Testing out of classes   | we support the Governors' vers         |
| Section 8                  | Letter grade vs Stars  | we support stars                       |
| Sections 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 | Charter Schools  | we support                             |
| Section 18                 | Inclusion of MEHS in testing out   | we support                             |
| Section 19                 | Open application period  | we support                             |
| Sections 20, 21, 22        | BSA increases  | we support the direction taken         |
| Sections 23, 24            | Tenure   | we support the current state statutes* |
| Section 26, 27             | TVEP   | we support                             |
| Section 29                 | Lease by a Charter School  | we support                             |
| Sections 30 through 41     | While we support investment in Education there have been some who question the constitutionality of expanding tax credits to K – 12 for public or private nonprofit agency or school |  |
| Section 43, 45, 46         | Charter Schools  | we support                             |
| Section 44                 | Tenure   | we support the current state statutes  |

Section 47 Statewide Salary and Benefits we support using the money for this to study the foundation formula NOT a statewide salary and benefits study

Section 48 Grants we support

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:40 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Senate Finance on Education

**From:** Dorene M. Lorenz [<mailto:dorenemlorenz@aol.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:33 AM  
**To:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Subject:** Senate Finance on Education

I am testifying as the Chairman of the Board for the Friends of Jesse Lee Home's Balto School. We are creating a statewide residential charter school in a nationally significant historic building that has sat empty for 50 years.

First I would like to thank the State, particularly members of this committee, who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in pioneering this concept to reality.

We have leveraged the State's investment with private funding, federal historic preservation and new market tax credits to develop the capital necessary to rehabilitate our building.

When I first volunteered for the Friends of Jesse Lee Home, and we voted to move forward on the Balto School concept, my daughter was in second grade. Today she is in college.

We have been blessed with statewide and school district support for our school - but raising the capital necessary to develop a project this sophisticated and large takes time, and a lot of planning to properly layer the requirements of different funding sources.

This bill holds several provisions we strongly support:

Sec 29, which allows municipal ordinances exempting property tax on private property used for charter schools. Our federal tax credit funding has requirements of building ownership for the first seven years that could end up costing us significantly in property taxes. Having the ability to set this aside would allow us to put those funds into the educational program.

Sec 30 (8) which allows for transportation costs for students going to residential schools. This is a great equalizer that would make it significantly easier for less affluent students from rural areas to take advantage of our school. Without this accessibility would have to rely on the whims of donations to get those kids to school.

Sec 30 (9) Residential housing funding - this really helps our program pencil out. It is a godsend. The removal of the boarding school stipend, however, is very painful. I urge the committee to consider bringing the room & board stipend back into the bill.

Sec 33-40. Broadening the education tax credit to include residential charter schools would allow us to tap into these funding sources to gain capital to complete our construction.

Dorene M. Lorenz  
907.360.8815

# Senate Finance Committee Testimony

## 4/9/14

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*Lon Garrison, President – Sitka School Board*

My name is Lon Garrison and I am currently serving as the President of the Sitka School Board. I am writing to you today regarding CSHB278, education funding and the various amendments that are attached to the bill.

This bill does improve education funding by adding funds to the Base Student Allocation for a period of three years but unfortunately for Sitka it does not make up for our entire budget deficit. For the Sitka School District, we have calculated that we would need a BSA increase of nearly \$500 for FY2015 just to meet all of our current expenditures without having to use any of our reserves or reduction in staff and/or programs. The current proposal in this bill would provide for a \$185 BSA increase plus an additional \$120 per student increase outside the BSA for a total per student increase of ~\$305. This would leave the Sitka School District \$195 short of the \$500 mark. As a result, our district will be forced to either use reserves or reduce programs to balance our budget. Of major concern to us, is our future need for nearly \$2 million to address curriculum, instructional materials and professional development to align to the new Alaska State Standards. We will need most if not all of our reserves to accomplish this if we receive no additional fiscal help from the state for this unfunded mandate.

There are several other sections within the bill that are of concern to the Sitka School District. I will list and address each of those:

**Section 9 – Appeal process for Charter School authorization** – We are not in favor of this amendment and would advocate that sole authorization authority remains with the local district. We believe this to be a local control issue. We do support charter schools, although we currently have none in Sitka, but do embrace the idea of both full support and accountability by local school boards for charter schools. The Board of Education is not a true governing board and it is our concern that neither the Board nor the Department of Education is prepared to act in such a capacity.

**Section 23 & 24 – Teacher Tenure** – The Sitka School board favors the notion to increase the time for teachers to obtain tenure but acknowledges that this can be a detractor for many rural districts that struggle to retain teachers.

**Section 8 – ASPI Rating system** – The Sitka School district opposes the replacement of the “star” system with letter grades A through F. We feel this is a regressive and punitive rating system that does not promote the notion for positive improvement. The Sitka School District uses standards based grading that provides parents and the public with more information about the proficiencies of our students. We believe that ASPI should use the same approach. It is our belief that many small rural schools and alternative schools will be inappropriately harmed and labelled by the use of letter grades.

**Section 15 – Common Core Standards implementation expense** – The Sitka school board stands in opposition to this amendment and believes this to be entirely a politically motivated issue that in fact has no basis. Many districts across the state have looked at both the new Alaska State Standards and the Common Core Standards and found them to be very closely aligned. After significant work by staff and the board, we have adopted the Common Core Standards for math and language arts primarily due to the fact that so much more in the way of instructional materials and professional development and other support resources are available for their implementation. Significant work and expense has already taken place for us to prepare to meet the anticipated full implementation of new standards by 2015 as prescribed by DEED and the conditions set forth in the NCLB waiver that Alaska received. This is a prime example of state and political overreach for issue concerning local control and local preference. We support the new standards and welcome the opportunity to both raise the bar and improve curriculum and instruction so that our students have the opportunity to be globally competitive.

**Section 47 – Statewide Salary Schedule** – The Sitka School Board opposes the idea of a state-wide salary schedule as a further infringement on local control. We are not convinced that the Department of administration would be any more successful in contract negotiations that would result in any cost savings to either the local districts or the state. In fact, we believe this will grievously affect the good working relationship many of us currently enjoy with our local certified and classified staff and it precludes the option for local boards to negotiated contracts that best fit local needs. Furthermore, the additional direct cost to the state to administer and negotiate such contracts carries with it the potential for state-wide work stoppages that might affect all schools when it otherwise may have been a local issue. We feel we risk losing the autonomy to do what we see in our own best interest to those larger districts that may face completely different issues and circumstances. We stand opposed to this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration of these thoughts regarding CSHB278.

Senate Finance Committee public testimony 4/10/2014  
Please accept my testimony in writing - thank you

Hi For the record, my name is Joey Eski, I am the mother of three children that attend Aquarian Charter School in Anchorage and I currently serve as the chair of our school's Academic Policy Committee.

I would like to thank you all for your time today and for the time I was able to spend with many of you and your staff discussing charter schools and their funding earlier this week. As you can imagine, this has been a very exciting legislative session for charter schools - and we thank you.

During this session it has become apparent that charter schools, as they are structured in Alaska, are misunderstood by many, if not most, people. The fact that charter schools are public schools, operating under the complete supervision of the district in which they have been approved has been a strangely difficult message to communicate. Additionally, requests for information regarding how charter schools are funded across districts have revealed that data is not being tracked at the state level and differing interpretations of statute has resulted in varying levels of district support for charter schools across the state. It appears, not only are charter schools misunderstood so is the intent of the charter school law.

I come before your committee today to complement the work that has been done so far to strengthen the charter school laws thru HB278 and to request two additional items be added by your committee:

1. The addition of a state-funded per-pupil facilities allowance for charter schools.  
And,
2. Further clarity and a stated mandate in the statute language defining what monies should be passed thru a by a district to a charter school.

As we researched charter schools across the state it became apparent that the single largest barrier to new charter school start-up and most significant hindrance of charter school sustainability and growth is facilities costs.

Charter schools are working out of a single "operational program budget" covering not only the typically expected school expenses but also facilities expenses. No wonder most are struggling. Establishment and funding of a per-pupil facilities allowance will provide charter schools the ability to sustain and grow programs. I would like to be clear, we are not asking for more than (not even the same as) other types of schools receive We are not asking to "overly" fund charter schools or place them in a position of advantage over other types of schools. A state-funded facilities allowance is an ingenious way to keep charter school doors open without eliminating the need for charter schools to be efficient and frugal.

You heard yesterday from Commissioner Hanely that monies outside the BSA in theory should be passed thru to charter schools. It appears this may not always be the case – In Anchorage, charter schools currently receive the monies that flow thru the education funding formula or adjusted BSA. Other monies, including state monies directed to districts outside the BSA have been passed inconsistently and are at the discretion of the district. Numerous federal dollars and local tax dollars are not being passed thru.

As well as being financially straining, the ambiguity of the law has an additional intangible cost that can't be measured in any of the spreadsheets brought before you. The statute, as written, has the potential to create an "Us v. Them" mentality between districts and charter schools. Charter schools (mostly volunteer parents) can be made to feel as if they are in a fight for resources without any recourse when those resources aren't shared. The negative cost of this cannot be measured. Further clarity and a stated mandate in the statute language defining what monies should be passed thru by a district to a charter school will resolve inconsistencies across the state as well as provide transparency regarding what charter schools and their students are entitled, eliminating misunderstandings and encouraging cooperative relationships between charter schools and districts under which they operate.

You've heard it before, children are our future, when a family and a child are engaged and excited about their education – it's a win for everyone. Public charter schools in Alaska provide the choice in education so many Alaskan families are demanding.

Thank you for your support of charter schools and the hard work I witnessed you all putting in this session.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** kymber dixon <kymberdixon@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 11:04 AM  
**To:** kevin.meyer@akleg.gov  
**Cc:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Student Allocation Funding

Hello -

My husband and I are raising three third-generation Anchorage School District publicly-educated children and we have chosen to have them attend our neighborhood school and be involved there for the benefit of all students. Our neighborhood school is lacking in parent involvement and the time and financial support that other alternative and Charter schools receive from other sources. The school relies almost wholly on the ASD budget and resources.

My children are already in packed classrooms, many years in excess of 30 students. This has sometimes been to the detriment of their ability to learn, but we make education a priority and can supplement their education to ensure they succeed. Our school already lost a part-time aide for the three Kindergarten classes this year, and with parent involvement at a minimum I have noticed a difference.

Some institutions will not feel a significant change with the loss of funding and resources for education. But a school like our neighborhood elementary school will be significantly impacted by further cuts. Public education funding should be a priority for our government to ensure, in our case, a fourth generation of Alaskans can thrive in our great state.

Thank you for the consideration,  
Kymber Dixon

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 3:56 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

From: Don and Carolyn Gray [<mailto:dcgray@mac.com>]  
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 15:54  
To: Sen. Pete Kelly  
Subject: I oppose HB 278

Dear Senator Kelly,

Many doctors have been interviewed regarding work in the Fairbanks North Star Borough over the years. University employees and administrators have considered working in the area as well. One of the first questions they ask is about the quality of the schools and that determines if they are willing to add their expertise to our area.

The educational community has worked beyond the call of duty since before the pipeline on committees, and in the classroom, to write curriculum even when it was not required or provided by the state. We have worked overtime without additional pay and taken classes as required every 5 years to adjust to an ever changing population of students and renew certificates and upgrade qualifications.

There are already procedures in place to ensure that teachers and administrators in the school district meet the highest standards. The tenure provision of employment simply ensures that reasons for dismissal be provided.

Layoffs will ensure that many homes go up on the market for sale precipitating another 1986 scenario. Others in the educational field will not even consider buying or renting. Highly qualified professionals in other fields such as medicine will not consider moving to the area. The community will suffer financially and secondary school students will not even consider going into education. It takes years to develop a qualified work force.

There are other provisions of this bill that have problems as well. Please do not vote for HB 278 or even consider anything similar to it.

Thank you,

M. Carolyn Gray  
399 Hillside Dr.  
Fairbanks, AK 99712

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 9:12 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: HB278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** Luke Almon [<mailto:luke.almon@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 20:35  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** HB278

Senator,

I'm concerned about HB 278 and the impact some of the amendments and lack of adequate funding will have on our public schools.

First amongst my concerns is the proposed grading system. The current ASPI system, which is used in lieu of NCLB, already provides detailed information about a school's quality. Most districts give every school its own version of a report card available at all schools' home webpage. Let me be clear: in no way is my school threatened by any kind of grading system; however teachers see through the grade to what really happens when a human institution is reduced to a letter--schools are given a grade for the socio-economic status which undoubtedly impacts their school's achievement negatively. I think you'd agree it takes more effort to educate an at risk student than it does a well-off student. The new system is unnecessary.

What concerns me more than the amendments is the lack of funding. We appreciate a willingness to discuss adding money to the BSA, but adding at the level in HB278 doesn't allow us to keep the teachers who have been cut or displaced, who are a vital part of our community and the continuity of programs in our school. Let me provide just a few examples at ERHS.

1. Andrea Lang, a choir teacher and director of all our school musical productions has been reduced to a part time position, which effectively means she will be leaving our building and going to another school that has the resources to sustain her full time position. Sure, we might get a part time teacher to back fill her position, but she's a founding teacher at our school and an invaluable contributor.
2. Kim Campbell, a Master's degreed French teacher has been reduced entirely, which means we can no longer offer French to our students. Additionally, she submitted a letter of resignation to ASD because she is weary of being potentially cut or displaced year after year. I know several young, talented teachers who feel the same way. It actually helps her that she has no pension because all of her defined contributions will go with her when

she leaves to teach in the lower 48. The downside? We've lost one of our best who we will never recover. Additionally, we will be unlikely to continue to recruit talent with the current instability, instability which does not need to exist.

3. We have been reduced one full time special education position. What this means in practical terms is that we will have no Social Studies SPED offerings, which means high need students will be placed in larger classes and not provided with the degree of accommodations they would with a dedicated SPED teacher. Add to this that we need to offer 3 different sections of remedial English, but only have the personnel to offer 2, which means kids will be forced to take a class that does not directly address their learning deficits. This is unethical and unwise, but forced upon us.

The above examples are casualties of this year which do not take into account the other 3 positions that were cut, the career resource counselor, special ed counselor, and other vital support personnel who were victims of last year's slashing. These deep cuts are plaguing the rest of the state as well.

You have the power to lead, to do the right thing and to increase the BSA and meet the inflation gap. Every parent and child and community member values a good education. It is the foundation of a healthy community. Although legislators experience short terms in office, the decisions you make will have long term implications, which will be far more costly than being proactive and increasing funding for education right now.

I urge you to consider the long range damage that will undoubtedly be done if the Alaska legislature persists in withholding resources that could be directed specifically toward the people, the *human* resources, which allow our kids to fulfill their given promise. Warm buildings and idling busses are worth little if the people who make them run are left to grovel. The neediest students in our collective population will continue to fall behind while their economically secure peers make strides forward, increasing the gap between the privileged and the forgotten. You have the opportunity to sustain and strengthen the best hope a child has to fulfill his or her potential and become a contributor to our community rather than a drain.

\$400-\$125-\$125 for investment in *and* the future promise of our most precious resource.

Luke Almon  
English Teacher and Department Chair  
Eagle River High School

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"It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."  
Carl Sagan

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 2:03 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Education Bill

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** Kiki Abrahamson [<mailto:kabrahamson@kpbsd.k12.ak.us>]

**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:28

**To:** Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Gary Stevens

**Subject:** Education Bill

Sorry, I was talking so fast during testimony, I was trying to follow the rules of talking only two minutes and on topic.

I support increase in the Base Student Allocation. This procedure ensures fairness to all schools and allows fiscal responsibility in developing budgets and planning.

I applaud all the work legislators are doing to strengthen Alaska Charter School Law, which has historically been labeled as one of the most ineffective charter school laws in the United States.

Sec 29, line 14; it would be wonderful if this was amended to read: **municipality and borough will** classify and exempt...

In a prior house version of Section 17, page 17, line 7 it contained a clause "funds a charter school that has a student count of between 75-149 at the same rate as a school size of 150. It was deleted. I would ask the Senate version to reinstate that clause, or a similar one such as " **a student count of between 100 and 149**"

The three small charter schools in Homer, Nome, and Juneau have extreme difficulties surviving with a lower allocation than traditional schools with a comparable student count. It is also detrimental to the start up of new

charter schools. I read in some of the house bill accompanying testimonies that there was a worry that charter schools would start 'popping up' everywhere. Charter schools don't pop up. They require a significantly higher amount of blood, sweat, tears, and commitment than work in established traditional schools.

Funding and Facilities are two issues that form the base of stress and failure in charter schools that are working very hard to implement successful innovative practices in education and provide choices for families who have students with different learning styles and priorities, while still keeping public dollars in public educational institutions.

Every June, the KPBSD holds a two day academy to address changes and improvements in our schools and district. Last June we addressed our transition into adapting the new Alaska Standards. As part of that presentation we were shown a video that exemplified teaching best practices in line with the new standards. In the video, the math teacher was using red and black plastic squares to teach positive and negative integers. This is a teaching practice that Fireweed Academy has been using for the past 18 years. However, we are very close to fiscal insolvency because our student enrollment is not at 150. As our operating costs increase, our funding does not.

Please consider support for small charter schools. Please request a fiscal note to determine what this increase would amount to for the current state conditions to help guide your decision.

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Jay Farmwald <jayfarmwald@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 5:20 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Public Schools

Please support a minimum net increase of \$400 this year to BSA. Strong Public Education is the fabric of our society.

Jay Farmwald and Rita Norton

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Joseph Byrnes  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 11:41 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: public school and school district grading system

**From:** Bethany Marcum [<mailto:bethanymarcum@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 20:52  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** public school and school district grading system

Senator Kelly,

I was very pleased to see that Amendment 5 was added to HB278 in the House, creating a public school and school district grading system. It's very important that we are transparent to Alaska families about the quality of education being provided by our public schools. This method has been shown to be effective in Florida and other states, and Alaska would do well to emulate this. Please ensure that this amendment stays in HB278. Thank you.

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Bethany Marcum

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Tracie Pierce <pierce\_ak@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 10:24 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Student Base Allocation and Susitna Dam

Please fully fund the Student Base Allocation and drop the Susitna Dam project. Decreasing the amount of available land that can support the wildlife that is to be managed for the benefit of all Alaskans is not appreciated.

Thank you.

Tracie Pierce  
907 229 1858

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** kraig berg <tananakid@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 10:06 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Student funding

To: Senate Finance Committee

Dear Mrs. Costello

I understand that you voted against a larger increase in BSA to fully fund our school. I have two school age children and I believe that our teachers and schools deserve more. These people have done a wonderful job educating my children and not fully funding our schools will drastically impact the quality of their education. We cannot continue to cut teachers and programs because you do not want to increase the BSA to an amount that will keep our education system moving upward.

Thank you  
Kraig Berg  
Anchorage AK

Thank you  
Kraig

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** turner <turner@alaska.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 12:52 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** substitute for the House Bill on Education

The Committee Substitute should be as supportive of our school children as possible in order to avoid a fourth year of cuts to teachers and staff. Our children should have adequate class sizes and the support that they need to counter the negative impact of the deliberate underfunding of public education. Stop following ALEC's agenda & instead do the right thing and support our public schools.

Take time to listen to Diane Ravitch, U. S. Assistant Secretary of Education under George W. Bush.  
<http://www.networkforpubliceducation.org/>

Steve Turner  
Anchorage, Alaska

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Tara Bivins <tarabivins@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 8:09 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Support Alaska's Students

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

Thank you for your work this legislative session! As usual, I know you are dealing with some very difficult issues. I know about balancing and trying to be fair, and I imagine it just gets more difficult as the session speeds to a close.

I'm writing to let you know that I am counting on you to pave the way for success of Alaska's students by increasing the BSA by a minimum of \$400 this coming year and at least \$125 for each of the following two years. As a middle school teacher in Anchorage, I see first hand the impact of years of inadequate funding. One of the most harmful effects of inadequate funding has been the deterioration of progress. As the number of students per class creeps up, and the number of support staff decreases, fewer and fewer students are getting the support they deserve. Every day I look out at my students and think of how much more each of them could learn and become with just a little boost here and there. That boost typically comes from funding that makes it possible for them to have more individual attention (adequate support staff, class sizes that allow teachers to speak with each student each day, supplies and technologies that make it possible to 'see' and 'experience' learning in a variety of ways).

Now our state has the momentum to make something happen for the students - for better or for worse. We must show our youth how valuable they are to all of us and the future prosperity of our great state. Please put our students first and provide them with adequate funding that will afford them opportunities to be their best and carry our state forward into a successful future.

Respectfully,

Tara Bivins  
National Board Certified Teacher  
Anchorage, Alaska

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:48 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Support for our Schools

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** andrea cordano [<mailto:acordano@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 09:41  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Support for our Schools

Dear Senator Pete Kelly,

Thank you for your service and commitment to our state and your communities.

As an educator, a parent, and a concerned citizen I urge you to provide consistent, adequate, funding for our schools and our children.

**Raising the BSA \$400 this year and \$125 the two following years will provide stable, quality education for our children.**

Our daughter turns 32 in seven days. She is a product of the Anchorage School District and a compassionate, successful physician.

Every child needs stability and a connection to a caring and stable adult in order to learn. Teachers, counselors, and school nurses provide this for our young people.

Unexpected displacements cause enormous stress for our students, district staff, parents, and administrators.

Rural students thrive when they know their teacher, principal and coach are returning for a third, fifth or eighth year.

Kindergardeners begin school looking up to and caring for their teachers. The middle school model in Anchorage provides stability, structure and a caring team of four teachers for students 12-14 years. During a time of rapid social, emotional, and physiological development the students thrive knowing a group of four teachers work together to encourage their academic and social growth. They understand their middle school counselor communicates with all their teachers as an important member of their team. Ninth grade year is key to students success in high school. Strong middle school teams are able to prepare students for high school and the crucial ninth grade year. Our strong middle schools are one of several reasons Anchorage graduation rates have gone up 16% since 2004.

Our state has the money to support quality education by keeping up with inflation and forward funding.

Thank You for caring about our students and the future of our state.

Andrea Cordano

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Ryan Stanley <ryan@freeryan.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 12, 2014 6:26 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Support for Small Charter Schools

Members of the Senate Finance Committee...

Thank you for your time on Thursday to testify regarding the funding inequity faced by our school. As you recall, as per AS 14.17.450 charter schools with less than 150 students are funded as if they had 400 students, resulting in a significantly lower ADM than comparably sized neighborhood schools.

Our \$977,000 budget is quite slim when you consider we're an exemplary K-8 public school with a proven program that works. We've met AYP nearly every year, our proficiencies on standard assessments are amongst the highest in the district, and we're on the Governor's list of "high progress" schools. The families of our 110 students are wondering why our school is treated differently; a neighborhood school of the same size gets nearly \$200,000 more a year. Unlike those schools, 10% of our budget goes to the lease of a facility with no gym, cafeteria, or playground. We manage our own budget and pride ourselves on making due with what we have. But, we rely heavily on parent volunteers--a resource that has been shrinking over the years as our school diversity has increased--and we don't want to see our program falter.

I'm writing to ask you to restore Section 14 of SB 139 into the CS for HB 278. The equivalent section was inexplicably removed by House Finance from their version of the bill.

Thank you again for your time and everything you do for Alaska...

-  
Ryan Stanley  
President, Academic Policy Committee, Juneau Community Charter School  
(907) 723-3938

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Diane Moxness <dmoxness@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 9:31 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Support of increase education funding

Senators,

I support the increase funding for the base rate for statewide education. I do not work for or have a child in the school system, but I believe there is no greater need than education. A well funded education system is the cornerstone of economic development.

A well educated work force will attract new businesses to Alaska. A well educated and well rounded work force will ensure that Alaska businesses are competitive on the national stage. "How is the school system?" is one of the first questions a potential employee will ask an employer before taking a position in Alaska. Education funding that does not even keep up with inflation is a huge step backwards.

Please increase the BSA to keep Alaska competitive and support our public school systems statewide.

Diane Moxness  
Anchorage, AK

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 8:55 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Support our public schools

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Stan Fischer [<mailto:stantfischer@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 08:25  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Support our public schools

Dear Senator Kelly,

Our public schools need additional support in order to meet the challenges of educating our students. At the very least, our schools need an increase in the Base Student Allocation that is inflation proof. The future of each of our children is at stake and, consequently, our state and our nation.

We are imploring each of our legislators to do the right thing: Support Our Public Schools.

Stan Fischer  
Anchorage

Sent from my iPad

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Bruce Rein <brein@gci.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 10:06 AM  
**To:** Sen. Anna Fairclough; Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Support Schools

The State representatives failed to meet the needed BSA increase and with the take away of other funding to schools basically only increased the BSA by \$ 85 - At least reinstate the funding to keep the \$ 185 BSA increase intact and I strongly encourage the Senators to increase the BSA even further towards the \$ 400 BSA increase mark! Our kids are the one resource we need to spend money to develop, with the money gained from the exploitation of our other natural resources.

It appears Juneau has gotten it backwards, exploiting youth and paying for resource development!

You have been elected to fix this situation.

Bruce Rein

Alaskan and Voter

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 4:42 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Teacher tenure

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Scott Pollmann [<mailto:scott.pollmann@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 15:46  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Teacher tenure

I would like to ask you to do what you can to keep Alaska tenure at 3 years. Alaska is one of 33 states with a 3-year tenure law. Only four other states have a 5-year probationary period.

This would be a detriment to our teachers like myself on the Alaska bush.

- Scott pollmann

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 4:00 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Teacher Tenure (do not change)

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** William Ernst [<mailto:billyernst@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 15:55  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Teacher Tenure (do not change)

Senator Kelly,

It has come to my attention that teacher tenure may be lengthened from three to five years. I have been a teacher for the past twenty-five years in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. I can assure you that an extension of tenure is unnecessary and ill-timed. Most states in the U.S. have three year tenure for public school teachers. Only three of the fifty states have tenure longer than three years. Alaska would immediately become non-competitive in the quest to draw new teachers to our state. In my experience and opinion, administrators have more than adequate time to evaluate new educators in the current three year time frame. That is 540+ days for principals to observe, advise, and assist new teachers. We want to recruit and retain the best teachers available. Passing a law that would extend Alaska teacher tenure would make it harder for teachers to choose Alaskan schools over schools in other states.

I urge you to make sure teacher tenure is not changed. I realize that teacher tenure may be part of a larger bill. Please support the removal of the teacher tenure provision in this omnibus bill.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Bill Ernst  
1627 Kassi Court  
Fairbanks, Alaska. 99709

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Harold Rohlman <helenrohlman@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:45 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** tenure change

What is the reason for the proposed change in the tenure law from 3 to 5 years? I have talked to many educators and legislators and never have I had a satisfactory answer to the question. If you vote to accept this change your reason hopefully is acceptable to the people of Alaska.

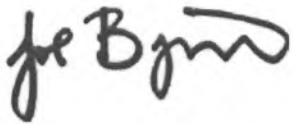
I urge a no vote . Hal Rohlman---Sterling

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 4:41 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Tenure Issue

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** Derek Luke [mailto:dtl5017@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 16:33  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman  
**Subject:** Tenure Issue

Hello Folks,

wanted to contact you today to talk a bit about teacher tenure in Alaska.

My name is Derek Luke and I teach in the Lake and Peninsula School District. I've been in Alaska 4 years - I just got tenure at the beginning of this year.

The reasons for why I support tenure being kept at 3 years is as follows:

1 - Tenure only means that you have the right to "due process." It does not mean a job for life. If people genuinely think that tenure means "teachers have a job forever" then there is something wrong with how a district's administration is running things. Principals are put in the positions they are to help create the best learning environments possible for children. If a principal knows of a "bad" teacher that happens to have tenure then they must follow the process to either help that teacher improve, or to get them out of the classroom. A plan of improvement is not that big of a deal.

**In my experience it's often easier to help someone improve than it is to start all over with a brand new hire.**

2 - Related to the above "firing a teacher and going on the search for a replacement" - is the issue of turnover. Alaska already faces problems with recruiting and retaining teachers. If we extend tenure to 5 years it will give newer teachers less of a reason to stay in Alaska for their full careers. I know that one of the reasons I stayed in my district after my 3rd year is because I was about to be awarded tenure (at the beginning of my 4th year).

If I wasn't going to receive tenure I probably would have left the state to find another teaching job. What reasons would I have to stay one more year? If everything else is held equal and tenure is within reach...you take the tenure.

**The prospect of obtaining tenure in Alaska is one reason that kept me here this long.**

3. The last, and most interesting point I see with all of this is that this change in language is unnecessary.

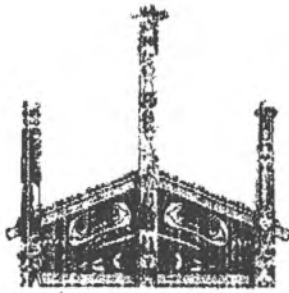
Under the current laws, school districts **can already extend the probationary time** for a teacher if they determine that the district needs more time to work with that teacher.

This is an issue of the school districts and the administrators not doing their jobs when it comes to awarding tenure to teachers. Hold the administration accountable and help teachers do their jobs.

**We don't need another unnecessary law that hurts more than 90% of the people when less than 10% of them are to blame.**

If you made it this far thanks for reading and thanks for your consideration!

Sincerely,  
Derek Luke



# ***Ketchikan Indian Community***

## ***Office of the President***

2930 Tongass Avenue — Ketchikan, AK 99901

(907) 228-4941 Phone

1(800)-308-9331 Fax

### **Written Testimony of KIC President Dundas to Senate Finance Committee on House Bill 278 Education Credits/Programs**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important piece of legislation. My name is Arlene Dilts Jackson. I am the Tribal Administrator for Ketchikan Indian Community. I will be reading this testimony into the record for President Irene Dundas, who is unable to be here today.

KIC is a Federally-Recognized Tribe providing a range of services to more than 5000 tribal members and to the broader Ketchikan community. KIC remains committed to establishing the Southern Southeast Alaska Technical Education Center as a means of delivering much needed vocational and technical training to individuals residing in southern Southeast Alaska communities.

SSEATEC became fully operational in 2011. We offer industry responsive vocational training courses for the Southern Southeast Region. Our first partnership was with the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District's Revilla Blended School. Students from the regular high school also participate. We started our accreditation process in 2013 and remain committed to becoming accredited by mid-2015.

The kind of state funding that can be made available through this bill will help us develop the kind of technical and vocational training programs that will help Alaska citizens become employed. We respectfully ask to have funding for SSEATEC back in HB 278. Thank you.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Mike Coons <mcoons@mtaonline.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:42 AM  
**To:** Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Donny Olson; Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Testimony on HB 278

My name is Mike Coons from Palmer and I speak for myself.

I oppose the \$185 increase in the BSA that the House passed. I grudgingly go along with the \$85 increase in BSA. Governor Parnell made it clear in his State of State that the \$85 BSA increase was based on passage of excellent education bills that were more toward performance vs spending.

These bills included SJR 9, HJR 1, SB 90, HB 196, etc. These bills have not passed and the Governor indicated a carrot/stick aspect as to the omnibus education bill. I do hope that if this BSA increase happens that he will veto it.

For some reason, SB 90 has stalled, even with a very positive Hays Report. Multiple school boards have called for pooling of the health care insurance premiums. This will save million upon millions at the local level. The only written opposition on Basis has been from NEA and one other union local. I strongly request that the wording and intent of SB 90 be added as an amendment to SB 278. This will reduce costs to the School Boards, some of that saving can be moved to teaching and the rest in reduction in our property taxes.

As to the new education standards. Per Commission of DEED 58% of English Arts and 51% of math is directly from Common Core. I fully concur with calls to delay implementation of the new standards until the poor teaching aspects of Common Core are removed and standards are more realistic.

Thank you for your time.

Mike Coons  
Palmer, AK  
745-6779

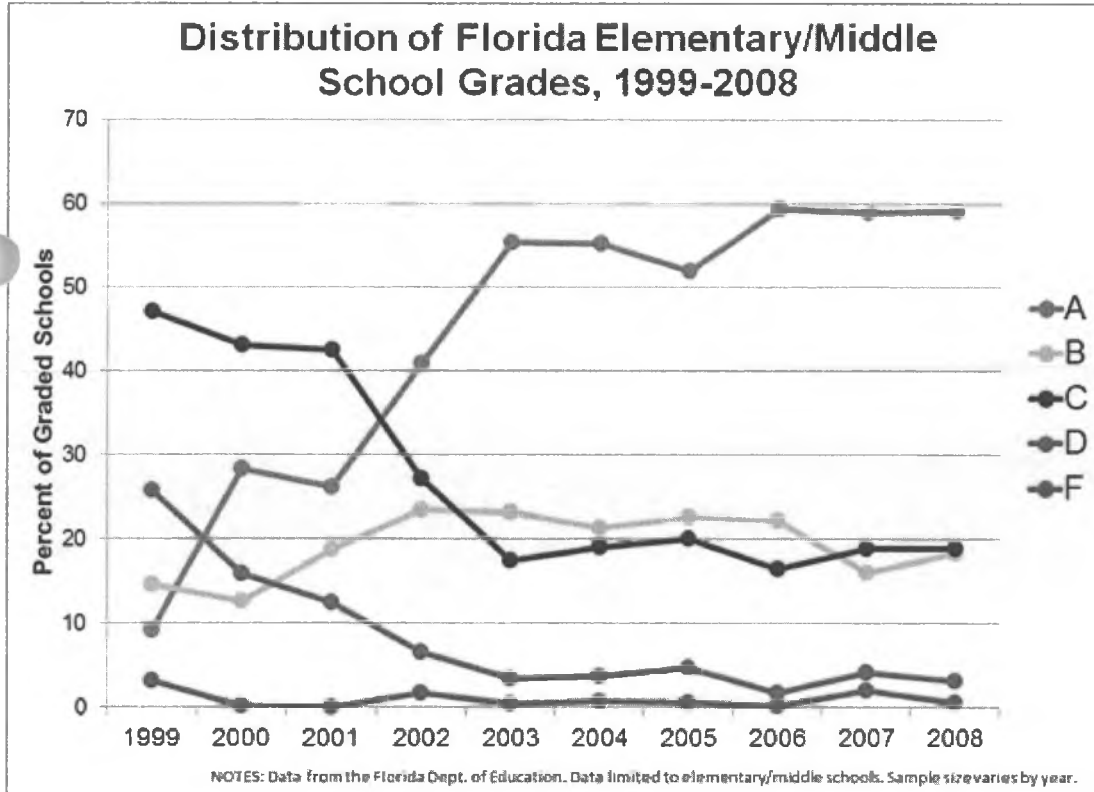
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Using Opera's mail client: <http://www.opera.com/mail/>

**Doniece Gott**

**From:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 12:22 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: testimony on hb278 referenced materials  
**Attachments:** 1991\_09-EducationTaxpayerEquity-1.pdf

**From:** David Nees [mailto:davidneesak@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:57 AM  
**To:** Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Cc:** Michael Dunleavy  
**Subject:** testimony on hb278 referenced materials

Dear Senators,  
I have included the  
the School Grades effect from florida



the ISER report from 1990 look at alternative 2 beginning on page 90

oregon elimination of tenure

<http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/1997/10/01/oregon-eliminates-tenure>

If you want to change the, fire the teachers to raise the BSA cycle,  
you must remove the ability of local school districts to use the political tool of fire the teacher as a budget move.  
Perhaps set state staffing levels and class size. Having a fund districts can use to reinstate staff.

Thank You  
David Nees  
2542 curlew  
Anch Ak99502

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** David Boyle <dboyle@alaskapolicyforum.org>  
**ent:** Tuesday, April 15, 2014 11:09 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony on HB278, BSA Increase

Honorable legislators of the Senate Finance Committee,

I submit the following testimony regarding increasing the Base Student Allocation in HB278. I ask that this testimony be made a part of the official record.

To begin with, we should assume that discussions on the BSA should focus on how increasing the BSA will increase student achievement and not on maintaining a workforce. This should be about educating our students so they can get jobs in their future endeavors, not keeping employees on a school district payroll.

As you know, there has been plenty of talk about Alaska not funding public education adequately. We have heard from many who support more money for the public education system and stand to gain financially. Most of these mention that the "BSA has been flat funded for four years", a phrase that has been repeated so much that many in the general public are beginning to believe it. But this same general public is not aware of the details, as you are, of the Foundation Formula funding for public schools.

Over the past 10 years, the BSA has increased 36% while inflation has only gone up 27.2% during the same period. So the BSA has actually outpaced inflation over the last decade. The fact is the BSA is \$377 more than needed to keep up with the past 10 years of inflation. The media has not reported this story.

You well know that the BSA is one of several factors in the Foundation Formula which is used to calculate the per student funding each school district receives. You also know that the BSA may remain the same, yet some of the other factors may increase, which is what has occurred since 2007. Since FY2007, the Foundation Formula for Anchorage has increased from \$273,280,566 to \$326,182,426, an increase of 19%. Meanwhile, the student population has remained virtually the same. Thus the real per student funding has increased 19% or \$1,061 since FY2007.

In the Anchorage School District about 88% of the operating budget goes toward salaries and benefits. The Anchorage School Board approved a new teacher (AEA) contract beginning this school year which has the following cost increases:

- There is a 1% salary increase for each of the 3 years of the contract; there is a \$1,500 bonus for year 1 and year 3; step increases each year of duty. These equate to a 5 to 7% pay increase for years 1 and 3 for an employee with less than 10 years service.
- 
- The District pays the NEA Alaska Health Trust Fund for those union members who do NOT enroll in the health insurance. This is about 700 people at about \$18,000 each per year (total of \$12,600,000). There is no accountability for any of the funds the District pays to the NEA Health Trust Fund. The District could have saved more than \$12,000,000 by negotiating harder. Of course, the easy way is to ask the Legislature for more money.
- 
- The Anchorage Education Association states that because members must work at .75 FTE or more to receive health insurance benefits in years 2 and 3, that “ASD will work to place any member currently working below .75 FTE to .75 FTE or above.” This is an added cost to the District. This is to comply with the Affordable Care Act.

It is unfortunate that the Anchorage School Board has not abided by its fiduciary responsibility. Now ASD is coming to the Legislature to fix the problem ASD created. If the Legislature bails them out, it incentivizes this behavior. Suppose an Alaskan decides to remodel his home and gets a second mortgage. Upon completion of the remodel, this same person discovers that he cannot make the mortgage payments. Should the neighbors then be required to kick in to help that neighbor pay the second mortgage? This is the position the Anchorage School Board has put legislators in. Unfortunately, some good teachers may have to be let go because the ASD did not exercise due diligence.

You well know that this BSA increase is on an unsustainable path, a path which will lead to either a state sales tax, a state income tax, a statewide property tax or all three. Please do not incentivize irresponsible behavior by some school boards. Do not increase the BSA, we cannot afford it.

Finally, this is not a jobs program, this is an educational program to benefit all Alaskan students. Thank you for the opportunity to comment

Sincerely,

David Boyle



This email is free from viruses and malware because avast! Antivirus protection is active.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Katie Reilly <katieloureilly@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 4:38 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** SB278 Testimony Re: Education

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thanks so much for all the time you spend working on the challenges of funding our state's education system. Thank you also for the time you spend listening to the many voices, like my own, that wish to chime in on the process.

I am writing now because a citizen of our great state, I care deeply about Alaska's schools. I am a public health professional and I understand the link between socioeconomic status (including basic education) is vital to long-term health. As Dr. Thomas Frieden, director of the CDC has stated, if we could simply get more kids to graduate high school, overall health would improve. (And of course, when overall health improves, health care costs come down.)

To help those schools and their students thrive, I ask that you support a \$400 increase in the Base Students Allocation plus scheduled increases of \$125 over the next three years.

These increases are needed to prevent the current teacher cuts and restore teacher and counselor jobs that have already been lost across the state.

Please be a part of the solution. You can make a difference in the lives of students across Alaska. Not just today, but far into the future.

Thank you again for your time and your efforts.

Katie Reilly  
2864 E. 42nd Ave  
Anchorage, AK 99508

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** rpbrooks12@gmail.com on behalf of Regan Brooks <regansheltonbrooks@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 12:34 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Testimony regarding SB278: Education

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you so much for all the time you spend working on the challenges of funding our state's education system. And thank you also for the time you spend listening to the many voices, like mine, that wish to chime in on the process.

I am writing now because, as a parent, a former educator, and a citizen of our great state, I care deeply about Alaska's schools.

To help those schools and their students thrive, I ask that you support a \$400 increase in the Base Students Allocation plus scheduled increases of \$125 over the next three years.

These increases are needed to prevent the current teacher cuts and restore teacher and counselor jobs that have already been lost across the state.

Please be a part of the solution. You **can** make a difference in the lives of students across Alaska.

Thank you again for your time and your efforts.

Sincerely,  
Regan Brooks  
Anchorage, AK  
99517

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Lars Danner <lars.danner@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 10:39 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman  
**Subject:** The Base Student Allocation Needs to be Increased Substantially

To the Finance Committee:

I am writing to you in support of an increase in the Base Student Allocation of \$400.00 this year and \$125.00 for each of the next two years.

Competing for jobs in the 21st century means attracting and retaining a talented, skilled workforce. Talented, skilled people want to live in a good place to raise a family with good schools. Education cuts hurt our children today our economy tomorrow.

The immediate risk is a large-scale teacher lay-off for the 2014-15 school year. Over two hundred positions are at risk. Without well-trained, effective, and motivated teachers, a good education is out of reach. Education is the key to personal success and to Alaska's continued economic development. Educated workers are critical to staffing our oil fields, our banks, and our other local businesses.

The benefits of education are not solely economic. The College Board (in "Education Pays," 2013, 2005) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (in "Education in Focus," 2013) have both noted that education reduces poverty and crime while increasing health, life-span and civic participation. Education yields broad societal benefits.

Properly understood, good education spending is not about building fancy new facilities or buying state-of-the-art equipment, it's about keeping good teachers classrooms — teachers who can motivate and inspire their students. Everyone remembers that one teacher who could make a subject come alive. Those teachers won't stick around for long when lay-offs, cuts and pay freezes become annual events. No one wants to have to live with that kind of uncertainty.

For three years, the base student allocation has been flat while inflation has increased heating, labor and supply costs. To prevent the lay-offs, it is vital that the legislature act to restore lost funding. If the Legislature is uncomfortable increasing the base allocation and prefers a one-time emergency grant, it should be earmarked for operating costs and teacher retention.

As a voter, a citizen, and a parent with two children enrolled in the Anchorage School District, adequately funding education is more important to me than any other policy issue. There is not a spending cut I would oppose or a tax increase I would not be willing to pay, if I knew that it would result in increased funding for education.

*Lars Danner*  
*Attorney and Counselor at Law*  
*Alaska Bar Number 0105020*

907-575-5552

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Please consider the environment before printing.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Lars Danner <lars.danner@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 10:39 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman  
**Subject:** The Base Student Allocation Needs to be Increased Substantially

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For three years, the base student allocation has been flat while inflation has increased heating, labor and supply costs. To prevent the lay-offs, it is vital that the legislature act to restore lost funding. If the Legislature is uncomfortable increasing the base allocation and prefers a one-time emergency grant, it should be earmarked for operating costs and teacher retention.

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*Lars Danner  
Attorney and Counselor at Law  
Alaska Bar Number 0105020*

907-575-5552

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Please consider the environment before printing.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 3:25 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: To Senate Finance Committee Members -- Please support our public schools, Increase BSA by \$400/\$125/\$125

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



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**From:** Mark C. Wiggin [<mailto:mwiggin@yahoo.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 15:03

**To:** Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Donny Olson

**Subject:** To Senate Finance Committee Members -- Please support our public schools, Increase BSA by \$400/\$125/\$125

Dear Senate Finance Members:

**I am writing to ask that you support our wonderful public schools by elevating the BSA amount per student to a figure close to the \$400 / \$125 / \$125 number.**

I have heard some of your fellow senators speak of a coming fiscal apocalypse for the state. They proceed to use that as a rationale to further bleed funding from public education across Alaska. I believe that is absolutely a wrong-headed policy position to take. The kids are educating now and in the coming few years in our public schools are the individuals who will, in the coming years, be called upon to lead us out of this fiscal mess created by prior legislatures (an potentially, the current legislature). The current kids in our schools today are the engines of a bright Alaska economic future. We will not create the champions of a bright future by denying them a good education today!

Yesterday I distributed literature in Senate districts asking constituents to support the *Great Alaska Schools* proposed funding levels of \$400 / \$125 / \$125. All of us that walked yesterday had very positive responses from constituents. With the exception of one very odd individual who raved at me about odd matters, just about everyone I contacted stated their strong support for elevated BSA funding and some even texted me after to inform me they had called senator offices on Sunday!

Many of those whose doors I knocked on thanked me for my work. Canvassing for education was very rewarding in light of such positive responses from your constituents. **Please do no harm to our public schools. Fund public education now for the future....**

Regards and thank you

Mark C. Wiggin  
2213 Douglas Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99517  
907-245-2213(h)  
907-244-5041 (cell)  
EMail: [mwiggin@yahoo.com](mailto:mwiggin@yahoo.com)

# **A Perspective of the Evolving Teachers' Retirement System - How did we arrive at this place?**

*by Gayle Harbo*

## **CONTRIBUTION RATES**

Employer Contribution Rates were established in the 1955 act creating the joint contributory system (employee, employer and the state/territory). By 1977 each entity contributed about 7% of salary, so 21% of salary was paid into the system for each member. Between 1966 and 1975, retiree health care evolved from health care available only if the retiree was age 65 and not eligible for Medicare (1966), to free medical insurance for all retired teachers (1975). For retirees reaching age 65, Medicare Part B was required, paid for by the retiree. The monthly Medicare Part B premium, for some, may now be as high as \$200 a month. Health care legislation was passed during the time of the pipeline construction as a benefit to encourage teachers to stay in the teaching profession rather than take the more lucrative pipeline jobs.

During 1987 the recommended joint contribution rate for the employer and the state was just over 26%; employees paid 7%. During FY's '86 and '87 of the Sheffield Administration the state failed to fund its share to the TRS system. In FY'88 the state began funneling its share of the contribution through the local school districts, so the contributions became employee/employer.

In 1990 a second tier was established for the TRS system. Tier II was an attempt to contain medical costs and the original provisions required that retirees be over age 60 or have 25 years of membership service before free medical insurance was available. Unfortunately the Legislature tinkered with these provisions and they were changed so a person under age 60 but retired for 8 years also qualified for free medical insurance. In 1991 the employee contribution was raised to 8.65% and remains at this level in 2011 for employees in Tiers I and II. Applying for Medicare Part B at age 65 continues to be a requirement and at age 65 Medicare becomes the primary plan and the Alaska Care insurance cost per retiree drops significantly. Medicare Part D also provides the state Alaska Care system with a quarterly rebate because of the prescription coverage Alaska Care provides.

The Teacher Retirement Systems Board, with the concurrence of the actuary, Mercer, in 1992 established an employer contribution rate of 12% for a long term 20 year period to give employers stability for preparing budgets. Though the recommended actuary rate may have been higher or lower during this time the Board stayed with the 12% rate until 2002, with the exception of 2000 and 2001 when the rate was dropped to 11%. The TRS Board, which was abolished in June 2005 with the passage of SB141, was advisory only, required to meet at least twice a year, and its actions could be overruled by the Commissioner of Administration.

## **FUNDING RATIO – THE COMPARISON OF SYSTEM ASSETS TO SYSTEM LIABILITIES**

The funding ratio is a quick way to view the relative health of a retirement system. Its history through 2004 shows lows of 67% in 1980 and 63% in 2004, with highs as much as 101% and 103%. Computing this ratio is different for Alaska than almost all other state systems because the Alaska liabilities include the cost of health care for Tier I and II retirees. Escalating health care

costs since the late '90s along with declining investment earnings during the recession of 2000 – 2003 resulted in a rapid drop of the funding ratio. The impact of health care costs was increased by errors of the actuary Mercer. Mercer used a blended rate to predict future health cost increases,, but did not change the assumption every year and when the actuary, Milliman, audited Mercer in 2002 they found that the number Mercer used was 14% too low. In a lawsuit against Mercer, by the state, it was later found that the Mercer actuaries not only erred, but lied and covered up the errors for more than one valuation. The CFO for the Division of Retirement and Benefits said in a September '04 Joint Board meeting that after Mercer addressed this error and finally changed assumptions that “half the increase in employer rates, as they go up, is due to the change in the medical assumption increase.”

Buck Consultants hired in the fall of 2005 as the actuaries for the retirement systems analyzed Mercer's 2004 valuation and found that Mercer's figures for PERS health care costs were off by an additional 7% from the figures cited in the Milliman audit, further lowering the PERS funding ratio. A presentation by Buck Consultants to the ARM Board in March of 2006 shows the health care liabilities of PERS to be more than 3 times the pension liabilities and for TRS the liabilities for pension and health care almost equal.

The deceit of the Mercer actuaries makes one question the validity of any of the funding ratios calculated during the time of their employment.

With two recessions since 2000, it has been difficult for pension systems in most states to maintain funding ratios above 80% (systems with ratios above 80% are considered healthy). Alaska includes health care costs in its liabilities, something not done in most other states. For FY'10 the TRS funding ratio , including booth pension and health care, was 54%.

## IMPACT OF LEGISLATION ON SYSTEM LIABILITIES

The TRS system was created by legislation and therefore can be modified by legislation. Several legislative acts have resulted in severe negative impacts to the system. The several impacts result from some members (usually elected officials) retiring, once vested, with little retirement contribution, but with health care for life.

To mention a few:

Several Retirement Incentive Programs ( RIPS) initiated by the legislatures in the late '80s and early '90s allowed system members to retire early by purchasing 3 years of credit. The first program offered in 1986 during the Sheffield administration allowed a teacher as young as 39 years of age to retire and have health care coverage for life. Unfortunately, the actuary at the time, Mercer, indicated this would not harm the system. How wrong they were. There were several subsequent RIP programs which further contributed to the liability with the escalation in the late 90's of health care costs.

Allowing members, other than full time employees (teachers and public employees), to participate in the system. School Board members, city council members, borough assembly members and legislators are allowed to participate in the defined benefit plans of TRS and PERS. While most of these people join PERS there are many also in the TRS system. They contribute very little to the

retirement system, but when vested they can retire and receive the \$12000 annual benefit of health care for life. In the PERS system the '09 CAFR indicates 9017 retirees receive a monthly pension of \$900 or less and in TRS, 1064 receive a benefit of \$900 or less, yet they receive free health care for life.

Employees of the legislature prior to May 30, 1987 had to work only 60 days a year for 5 years, a total of 300 work days to vest: after May 29, 1987 they needed to work only 80 days a year for 5 years, a total of 400 work days to vest, yet when they choose to retire they will have full health care coverage. Very, very expensive.

SB141 passed in May 2005, eliminated the PERS, TRS and ASPIB Boards and replaced them with a single board, the Alaska Retirement Management Board. The law also required new hires as of July 1, 2006 to participate in a defined contribution (401K type) plan and closed the defined benefit plans to new entrants. The new law did not affect the Judicial system members (judges). Though the cost of the new DC plan is as expensive or more expensive to employers and the state, it will not provide adequate health care to retirees. The DC plan is also a drain of state resources since employees who terminate after two years can take their money and a portion of the employers contribution with them when they leave. Under the defined benefit plan, employer contributions for terminating employees stayed in the pension trust funds. The turnover rate for DC employees has been close to 40% for PERS members and 30% for TRS members since July 1, 2006.

It is ironic that the legislature which passed SB141 by only 1 vote in the House, depended on the actuary, Mercer, for supporting data and later this same actuary was sued by the State for providing erroneous information regarding health care costs in its valuations. Not only did Mercer err, the actuaries lied about their errors. These errors further compounded the understatement of the liabilities of the systems.

An unintended consequence of SB 141 resulted from the provision that non-vested members of PERS and TRS who had withdrawn their contributions, but were not vested, had to repay the contributions prior to July 1, 2010 or suffer automatic conversion to the defined contribution system. The actuary, Buck Consultants, reported that more than 1200 rehires occurred before July 1, 2010, thus re-establishing the accrued unfunded liability of these members. Many of these rehires worked only long enough to get vested and then left for other work, but they will get health care for life.

Two bills enacted following SB 141 impacted the systems significantly. SB 123 effective July 1, 2007 established Health Trusts for the 4 existing DB plans, separate from the pension plans. This is the first time the health care dollars were separated from pension dollars and contributions are required annually to each fund as determined by the actuary. SB 125 established a single payer plan for PERS employers of 22% and set a rate in statute for TRS employers of 12.56%. It also requires that the state contribute to the DB pension funds the dollar difference generated by these two rates and the dollars required by the actuarial determined rate adopted each fiscal year by the Alaska Retirement Management Board. The adopted rate for TRS is far too low, as can be noted from amounts contributed in the '80s, but the University of Alaska lobbied the Legislature for the lower rate so they would not have to contribute more to their employees in the 401K plan for the Other Retirement Plan (ORP) established in the early '90's to pull employees from the TRS system

and give new employees a retirement plan choice.

## MEMBERSHIP

A December 1985 issue of TRS Newsbreak states under the "Highlights" section : As of June 30, 1985 there were 9053 active members in the TRS system. Combined employer and State matching contributions in FY '85 amounted to 17.96% of employee gross pay. In 1985 only 1940 retirees received pension benefits.

Changes in the University of Alaska hiring practices and retirement offerings severely affected the TRS membership from the early '90s to date. The Other Retirement Plan offered to TRS members and new employees provided a 401K plan where the University matched employees contribution with the contribution rate adopted by the TRS Board. It offers no health care for retirees. Many University employees do not stay if they do not receive tenure. This worked until 2002 and 2003 when the TRS Board adopted rates of 16%, then 21%. This is the reason the U of A lobbied so hard for the too low rate of 12.56%. Another adverse effect on TRS is the University practice of employment of adjunct teaching faculty who have no benefits and are paid on a per class basis. Most adjuncts have other full time jobs. These adjuncts now teach almost 50% of classes offered.

In 1992 there were only 9238 active members, 3602 retirees. By June 30, 2006 at the close of Tiers I and II to new DB members there were 9710 active members and 9386 retirees, a sign of a very mature system. At the end of FY'10 there were 8226 DB members and 2269 DCR members and 10255 benefit recipients. Instead of the four trust funds prior to July 1, 2006 there are now 14 funds to administer and the cost of administration has gone up significantly, from 2.4 million for FY'07 to almost 6million for FY'10.

## IMPACT OF THE DEFINED BENEFIT PLANS ON THE ECONOMY

Five years have passed since the first hires under the Defined Contribution (401K) plan began. Those members of this plan who have completed 5 years can take their money and all the employer contributions and head for greener pastures. The turnover rate is already close to 30% for those employed in the TRS system. Though there are no retirees from this plan, the Division of Retirement Benefits supplement to the Treasury report to the ARM Board shows a combined monthly withdrawal of almost 1million dollars from the DCR employee/employer contributions of PERS and TRS. This money leaving the state does not include the dollars lost in training these short time employees.

What kind of stability does this provided to classrooms, school programs and community? In an environment already challenging with high costs of fuel, gas, electricity and food, not to mention severe weather conditions, the reasons for DCR members to stay are not sufficient if they are also faced with an uncertain retirement. Figures show that the current DCR plans cost the state as much, or more, than the Tier II TRS and Tier III PERS plans which they replaced. If any of these people do stay until retirement they will probably have to apply for Medicaid to help them with health care when the dollars in their Health Reimbursement plans run out.

What positive impact do retirees from the Defined Benefit system have on Alaska's economy?

Nearly 2.5 billion dollars a year in pension benefits, health care dollars and other retirement income flow into Alaska each year. This is equivalent to the dollars paid to Alaska fishermen or to the value of mineral production in the state and nearly equal to the dollars spent each year by tourists. (ISER Sept.'06 summary pg 7).

Sixty percent of TRS retirees, receiving defined benefit pensions, choose to stay in Alaska. The pension dollars and health care benefits paid out to these residents amount to almost \$300 million dollars. When retirees reach age 65 and qualify for Medicare, additional Federal dollars come to the State to provide that care.

The more than 6000 TRS retirees who choose to remain in Alaska also receive and spend their annual Permanent Fund Dividend in Alaska. Most own their own homes, pay property tax and contribute countless hours of volunteer work to community organizations. If we also consider the more than 22000 PERS retirees ( two-thirds live in Alaska) the amount infused into the Alaskan economy by DB retirees is very impressive.

Benefit dollars flowing into the Alaska's communities provide enough to create almost 8000 jobs for younger Alaskans, many in the health care industry. National studies have shown that for every dollar paid into a public pension fund, six dollars are generated back into the economy. The public perception that tax payers fund these plans need to realize that, according to the actuary, Buck, from 1979 – 2009, in spite of multiple recessions, 71% of pension dollars to pay PERS DB retirees and 73% of the dollars to pay TRS DB retirees, came from a total of the employee contributions and the interest income from the invested funds.

## CONCLUSIONS

The State of Alaska established a sound and well funded Defined Benefit plan for Teachers and state employees and with the exception to the two years when the State did not pay its obligation to TRS, it has been committed to provide it retirees with a secure future.

Action by the Legislature has, over the years, been responsible for added provisions to the retirement system that were ill conceived and not well founded or well thought out. In the mid-80's the combined state and employer contributions were greater than those paid in 2005, the year SB 141, establishing a DCR plan for new hires July 1, 2006. In 1987 the combined state/employer contribution was at 26%. employees contributed 7%. Had this rate remained in place the funds would be in great shape. For reasons not known to this writer, separate health and pension trusts were not established when legislation for health care for retirees was passed in 1975. Mercer, the actuary from the mid-80's, provided poor or misleading information to the Administration and the Legislature, first in the 80's when they said the Retirement Incentive Programs would not affect the unfunded liability and again when they made errors estimating health care costs and lied about their errors. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure out that the incentive programs, allowing members as young as 39, to retire and have free health care for life would have a huge detrimental effect on the unfunded liability.

The legislature also allowed people who contributed very little to their retirement, because of low salaries or few days of employment to vest, to belong to the PERS and TRS systems and because

of the "health care for life provision" there has been a tremendous impact on the unfunded liability.

Defined Contribution plans do not save money in the long term and provide no security to employees who have dedicated themselves to the State. Money employers contributed is now leaving the state monthly as these DC members terminate. Under a Defined Benefit program this money would stay with the system and earn interest. Two recessions since 2000 have devastated personal accounts, but the long term earnings of the DB funds is about 9% and the money is invested more efficiently and at lower cost than the individual funds of DCR participants.

The powers that be need decide what they want for Alaska's future – for those of us who care deeply about our homes, communities and the future of our children and grandchildren, a stable population, retirees proud to work in their communities and a workforce in our schools that feels committed, innovative and caring are the most important aspects of employment.

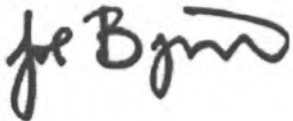
**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 9:31 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: TVEP FUNDING (SB 139)

**Importance:** High

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** P-R Schneeberger [mailto:gonefishing08@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 17:33  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** FW: TVEP FUNDING (SB 139)  
**Importance:** High

**Dear Senator Kelly,**  
**As a former leg staffer and presently a volunteer counselor/educator at Hoonah City Schools across the channel from you in Juneau, I value your support for the Alaska Technical and Vocational Education Program section in SB139.**

**Our students have been deserving of this since 2004 and TRAINING - SOUND TRAINING - is what they have needed all along the way. PLEASE push this forward so my rural and remote island students can excel, succeed and change their lives around for GOOD as these character and skill-building programs are aimed to do.**

**Thank you for your support.**

**Blessings on your week,  
Rory (Mrs. Peter) Schneeberger  
HOONAH, AK 99829-0232**

**Pray. Love. Confess. Listen. Forgive and be kind.**

**Qui sine peccato est vestrum primus in illam lapidem mittat.**

**"You may choose to look the other way but you can never say again that you did not know." William Wilberforce**

**For those who believe, take heart: God's not dead, He cannot be impeached and He's not resigning." (Overheard at Alaska State Legislative meeting, March 22, 2014)**

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Greg Reynolds <reynoldsg@sitkaschools.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 3:56 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** TVEP/ HB 278  
**Attachments:** RTC List.pdf

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I strongly urge you to amend the TVEP portion of HB 278 to include 2% for **Southeast Career Consortium**. We are THE authorized regional training center for Southeast, so designated by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (see attachment). Our client base includes 6,500 students of school age and 3,500 young adults. We feel it is grossly unfair to create a statewide program with ten rural regions and then fund only 9 out of those 10. This makes as much sense as creating the University of Alaska system then funding UAF and UAA but telling UAS to raise their own money. Please restore equity to TVEP by including Southeast in HB 278.

Yours,

Greg Reynolds

**Greg Reynolds**  
Southeast Career Consortium  
Executive Director

(907) 966-1355 Work  
(907) 738-5518 Mobile  
reynoldsg@sitkaschools.org

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Mike Coons <mcoons@mtaonline.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:02 AM  
**To:** Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Donny Olson; Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Updated Testimony on HB 278

My name is Mike Coons from Palmer and I speak for myself.

I oppose the \$185 increase in the BSA that the House passed. I grudgingly go along with the \$85 increase in BSA. Governor Parnell made it clear in his State of State that the \$85 BSA increase was based on passage of excellent education bills that were more toward performance vs spending.

These bills included SJR 9, HJR 1, SB 90, HB 196, etc. These bills have not passed and the Governor indicated a carrot/stick aspect as to the omnibus education bill. I do hope that if this BSA increase happens that he will veto it.

For some reason, SB 90 has stalled, even with a very positive Hays Report. Multiple school boards have called for pooling of the health care insurance premiums. This will save million upon millions at the local level. The only written opposition on Basis has been from NEA and one other union local. I strongly request that the wording and intent of SB 90 be added as an amendment to SB 278. This will reduce costs to the School Boards, some of that saving can be moved to teaching and the rest in reduction in our property taxes.

As to the new education standards. Per Commissioner of DEED 58% of English Arts and 51% of math is directly from Common Core. I fully concur with calls to delay implementation of the new standards until the poor teaching aspects of Common Core are removed and standards are more realistic.

Finally, I fully support increasing tenure and hope by increment to do away with tenure all together and replace with performance over union thugs keeping poor teachers. Bring this in line with the rest of us working stiffs that can be fired for poor performance.

Thank you for your time.

Mike Coons  
Palmer, AK  
745-6779

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Using Opera's mail client: <http://www.opera.com/mail/>

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Diana burch <burchbusch1@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 4:45 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Vote for full funding BSA

\$400/\$125/\$125. Education education education! Top priority.

From another 40+ year voter.

Diana Burch  
11201 mountain Lake Dr  
99516

Sent from my iPad

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Christine Lee <scootch@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:39 AM  
**To:** Doniece Gott; Doniece Gott  
**Subject:** We choose funding to Schools

Hello,

My name is Christine Lee and I am a parent of a child at Alpenglow with another child headed there in three years. My child has special help at school that dramatically improves him in more ways than I can count, and it is because of the amazing people that work at Alpenglow. Some of these amazing people, especially a woman named Laura Hulsebus, will be displaced next year. She has watched over my son to make sure that he gets the help that he needs to continue to strive in school and in life. This is a great loss for my family and I fear that the loss will only continue and my son will suffer greatly for it. It is so important these public schools to receive funding to help put this to an end! We really do want \$400 to be added to the Base Student Allocation next year and \$125 for each of the two following years. Thank you for your time.

-Christine Lee

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:25 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: HB278--don't change tenure, increase BSA

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** Sean Genson [mailto:sgenson@mac.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 00:33  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** HB278--don't change tenure, increase BSA

Dear Senator Kelly,

Please vote to amend HB 278 to eliminate any provision that would change teacher tenure from 3 to 5 years.

Alaska already has a huge challenge recruiting and retaining teachers. Extending tenure, so that teachers remain "at will" employees, will give new teachers little reason to stay in Alaska for their full careers. With budget-related layoffs, no guaranteed pension, and a lack of Social Security benefits, extending tenure will just give Alaskan teachers another reason to leave the state.

Tenure doesn't mean a teacher has a job for life, **it just means a teacher has the basic right to due process**. Teachers without tenure can be fired for any reason, regardless of their efforts, talents, or achievements.

This provision is a "solution in search of a problem." Under current laws, school districts can already extend probationary time for a teacher if they determine they need more time to work with that teacher.

There are many ways to improve teacher training before and during teachers' first few years, and extending the probationary period from 3 to 5 years does absolutely nothing in that regard.

Thank you for giving public education the serious consideration our children deserve.

Sean

Sean Genson  
278 Solstice Ave.  
Fairbanks, AK 99709  
Sean Genson



# Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center

Douglas J. Walrath, PhD

P.O. Box 131

Nome, AK 99762

Tel: 907-443-3507

Fax: 907-443-7076

<http://www.nacteonline.org>



**NORTHWESTERN  
ALASKA CAREER  
AND TECHNICAL  
CENTER**

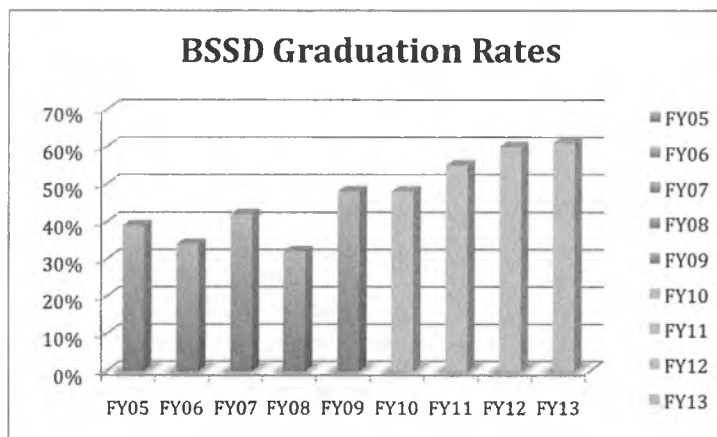
April 10, 2014

To: Senate Finance Committee

RE: HB278: Residential Schools Reimbursement

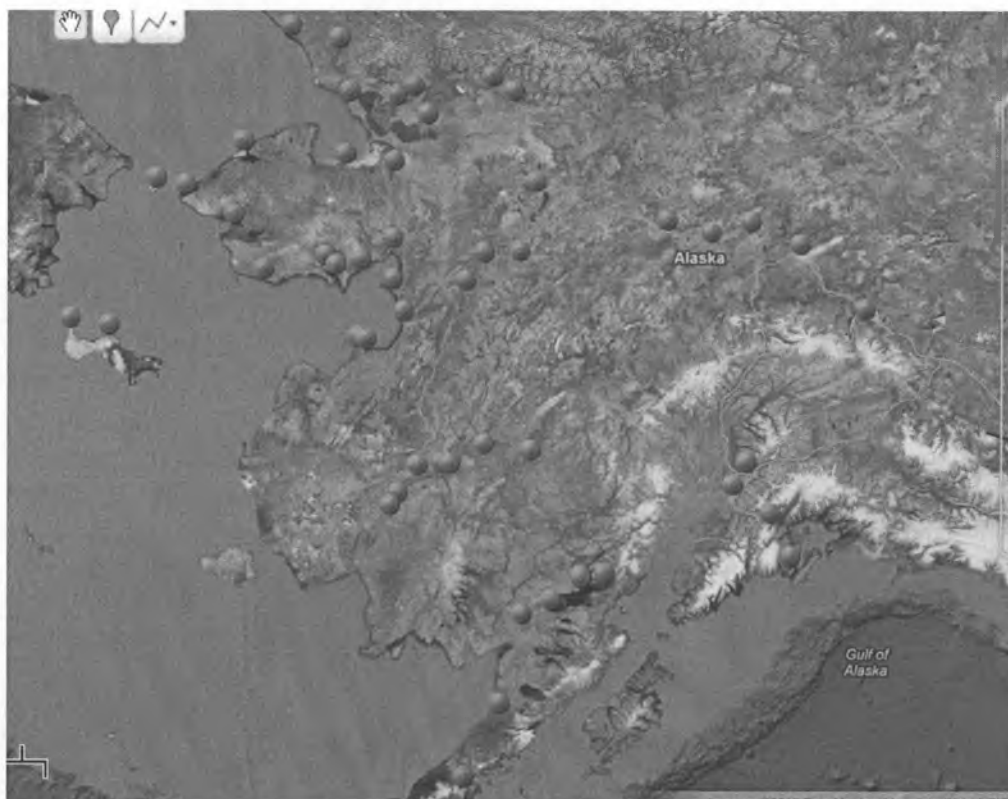
The Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center (NACTEC) is appreciative of the diverse array of critically important education issues House Bill 278 is intended to address for the purposes of improving K-12 education across Alaska. This written testimony is a request of the Senate Finance Committee to ensure that Sec. 13 AS 13.16.200(b) remains intact, as initially proposed in the HB278A Omnibus Education Bill. This section addresses reimbursement costs for residential programs. Without variable term residential programs of the NACTEC model, or Chugach School District's *Voyage to Excellence* program, the majority of rural students would be without engaging vocational training programs. These programs tend to be of greatest value in our rural communities, and are also those programs that prevent many students from dropping out.

There is rich story emerging with variable term residential programs in Alaska. Over the past decade NACTEC has served over 3000 students from 50+ rural communities. 89% of trainees have come from the 15 villages of the Bering Strait School District (BSSD). Following the variability of NACTEC start-up years and coinciding with a steadily increasing NACTEC annual enrollment, graduation rates began a steady 5-year climb in BSSD in FY09. Prior to NACTEC in the region, graduation rates bounced around with little rhyme or reason, and as is the case in many of our rural districts graduation rates most often remained below 50%. *More students dropped out than graduated nearly every year!* That is no longer the case. Last year 78% of BSSD's graduates attended one or more NACTEC high school training programs. Between FY08 and FY13 BSSD graduation rates nearly doubled, from 32% to 61%! Each year, as more students are served, graduation rates continue to climb. Students cite the relevancy of hands-on learning as instrumental to this success.



**Chart 1. Bering Strait School District Graduation Rates/Fluctuation During NACTEC Operational Years**

Due to transportation, energy, and fuel costs it will never be a reality to deliver anything more than very limited vocational training in our most remote communities. However, service in regional hubs is not only a proven reality, it is also one that serves students well as a stepping stone to post-secondary success. Students learn to overcome homesickness, while completing short-duration training programs. The challenge of delivering such training programs is that the costs of housing, transportation, and training students continues to increase at a significant rate. Escalating energy costs and travel costs are major determinants of our ability to serve the maximum number of students annually. If more than 50% of our students continue to drop out annually, the long-term costs to the state in comparison to reimbursement costs of residential programs become trivial.



In just ten years students from 50+ rural villages have been served at NACTEC. As depicted in the map above, there is tremendous potential to meet the needs of student populations who've previously been disadvantaged to vocational training; programs that are keeping kids engaged in the educational process. As such, I urge the Senate Finance Committee to support the increased reimbursement costs of residential programs that are improving the lives of students across the state.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Walrath, NACTEC Director

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 5:27 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: proposed actions affecting the CS for HB278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** PAUL MORLEY [mailto:Paul.Morley@matsuk12.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 16:15  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** proposed actions affecting the CS for HB278

Senator Kelly,

I think that recent proposed actions affecting the CS for HB278 – “Education Bill” and the CS for SB119 – Capital Budget are ill advised and counter-productive to potential benefits of the the current “star” system – Alaska School Performance Index (ASPI), being implemented by EED as part of the USDOE waiver.

Substituting letter grades (A-F) for all schools and school districts is a move in the wrong direction on many levels, including being unfair to “brand” schools which enroll some of our most low-performing students (so they can better their lives), and that such a rating system negative affects perception of school districts that might be assessed with “low grades.” As a 17 year veteran teacher who has served several special populations, rewarding success is far more effective than punishing short-coming.

I urge you to do all you can to see that this change in an otherwise constructive initiative is not instituted.

Respectfully, Paul Morley, MSBSD teacher

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If you believe you have received this information in error, please notify the sender immediately by reply email and immediately delete this message from your system.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Molly Boots <mboots@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 15, 2014 7:35 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please increase the BSA by \$400 AND \$125 for the next 2 years

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for your hard work. I am writing to urge you to increase the BSA by \$400 and \$125 for the next two years.

I am the mother of two daughters who have been educated in the ASD. One is graduated and the other is a junior at Service High School. I have been a volunteer in the schools since my kids started kindergarten.

I know how hard our teachers and staff work. Reducing funding and cutting teachers is not good for our community.

I also want you to fund the TERS in a responsible way. My daughter Flory did a wonderful project through her AP economics class on the problems with TERS. I learned so much from her about this huge problem.

Thank you,  
Molly Boots  
13137 Gulf Circle  
Anc, AK 99515  
345-2878

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:10 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: PLEASE INCREASE THE BSA!

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** Brinna Wojtalewicz [<mailto:brinnalouise@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 06:14  
**Subject:** PLEASE INCREASE THE BSA!

Good Morning,

I am writing to ask you to please increase our Base Student Allocation (BSA) \$400 this year, and additional \$125 next year and an additional \$125 the following year as well. The youth of our state deserve it!

Thank you,  
Brinna Wojtalewicz  
Eagle River, AK

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 1:10 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Please prioritize Alaska's children and raise the BSA for the next 3 years

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Marti Pausbeck [<mailto:Billandmarti@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 13:09  
**To:** Marti Pausback; Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Subject:** Please prioritize Alaska's children and raise the BSA for the next 3 years

We are in the final days of our legislative session and you are an important member of the leadership team. Please put your votes and your priorities into Alaska's children and their education. Please increase the BSA to \$400/\$125/\$125 over the coming three years to get our schools back on stable footing and give them the ability to retain teachers.

Thanks so much. I am a PTA mother who lives in South Anchorage who really values the education of our state's children

Marti Pausback

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** J. Pearce & E. Manning <jpem@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 15, 2014 6:18 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please prioritize education for all Alaskans

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Please do all you can to prioritize education funding for all Alaska children. Please support our public schools by increasing the BSA by \$400 this year, \$125 next year and \$100 the following year.

I understand we are in tighter fiscal times, but our schools have already suffered deep cuts and cannot sustain more without beginning to unravel. I believe we can find the money if the Legislature chooses to prioritize education for all Alaskans and carefully scrutinizes all funding.

I am seeing the lack of school funding beginning to tear apart my children's elementary school, Government Hill Elementary, which up until now has provided an excellent education to my two boys. It saddens and stresses me. Just this week, the principal proposed a reassignment of staff due to the proposed budget cuts that immediately sent our school community into an uproar. More than 20 parents demanded a meeting with the principal yesterday morning to discuss the reassignment, and as I understand the situation, there are now hurt feelings among parents, staff and administration that will likely take months to repair. We are all frightened for the future. It's not our principal's fault, and all of this could have prevented with adequate school funding. I also know we're not alone - many schools are experiencing similar problems. This fiscal crisis is taking our focus from where it really belongs - on quality instruction for our children.

Please act now to restore funding; otherwise, our schools will become second-rate and it will become harder and harder to bring them back up to quality standards. Every year we are losing ground that will become harder to regain if funding is ever restored.

Thank you for your hard work and attention to this issue.

Respectfully,  
Elizabeth Manning  
1517 W. 15th Ave.  
Anchorage, AK 99501

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 13, 2014 1:27 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Please prioritize funding our public schools

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** e hammes [<mailto:ehammes@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 13, 2014 00:48  
**To:** e hammes  
**Subject:** Please prioritize funding our public schools

Dear Senator:

I'm writing to ask you to please support our public schools as a priority in the budget. A basic need for all of Alaska's young people to compete and succeed in the state, nation and world is a good education. If we look to the future, we need to support our future adults, the students of today.

If we don't pay for all of our children's good education now, we will pay more later to address more burdens of a society of people who are unable to contribute to keeping our state and nation great.

If we cannot pay our teachers competitive salaries, we will be unable to find or keep good teachers. If we increase class size to make up for fewer teachers, our students will lose the quality of education they need.

At the very least, our schools need an increase in the Base Student Allocation that is inflation proof to keep from losing ground. This support needs to be an on-going priority in Alaska.

Thank you for considering education as a priority in the state budget.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Hammes

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Cathy Girard <cgirard@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 1:49 PM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire; Rep. Craig Johnson  
**Cc:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please Raise Alaska's BSA for Schools

Hello Senator McGuire and Representative Johnson,

My husband and I live in your district and we need to let you know that we fully support raising Alaska's BSA for schools to \$400 per child, plus \$125 for each of the following two years. We do not have children and yet we firmly believe that education is one of the building blocks to making healthy, productive, mature and economy-stimulating citizens.

None of us can do many things for the same price that we paid three years ago. Educating our children, keeping class sizes in teachable proportion, paying good wages and benefits to teachers, and maintaining school buildings that inspire creativity and learning are critically important foundations for our kids and need to be funded adequately and in step with inflation. We feel so strongly about this that we would be willing to pay state income taxes to ensure that Alaska's kids are educated.

Please vote on behalf of Alaska's future.

Thank you,

Cathy Girard & Mike Mihalka

3841 Chiniak Bay Drive

Anchorage, AK 99515

(907) 243-3077

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Luci Malloy <luci.malloy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 5:42 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please raise the BSA to \$400

Hello,

I have 3 children in the Anchorage School District and 1 who will be attending in a few years. I am asking you to please raise the BSA \$400 this year and to continue raising the BSA every year to keep up with inflation.

We can either pay for our children (our future) to be educated now or we can pay for them as adults when they don't have the skills and knowledge they needs to be successful in the world.

The choice is yours.

Luci Malloy  
(907) 230-9007

*If you can dream it, you can do it. - Walt Disney*

Disclaimer: Sent from my iPhone so please forgive any spelling, grammar or errors in judgement on abbreviations.

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Chandra Poe <chandrabriepoe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 1:55 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please support an increase in BSA

I am an Anchorage parent and voter, requesting you all to PLEASE raise the BSA by \$400 this year, with additional increases of \$175 per year in the following three years. It has been very frustrating to see our requests fall on deaf ears in the House and I sincerely hope that you all step up and respond to the desires of the voters requesting these changes.

Thank You.

Chandra Poe  
parent of an Anchorage public school student  
7331 Silver Birch Dr  
Anchorage AK 99502

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:41 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Please support an increase to the BSA

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** anne richards [<mailto:acrichards@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 09:21  
**To:** Sen. Charlie Huggins  
**Subject:** Please support an increase to the BSA

Dear Senator Huggins,

As the session wraps up I know you have a lot of important issues to consider. One that is very important to me and many other Alaskans is support for our public schools. We do not want to cut the teachers, staff and programs that support our 129,000 schoolchildren across the state.

We really need the BSA increase of \$400/\$125/\$125 over the coming three years to get our schools back on stable footing and give them the ability to retain teachers.

Please support our public schools and Alaska's future.

Thank you,  
Anne Remick

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Alaska <donnatom@alaska.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:59 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please support HB 278 supporting charter schools

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members:

Please support HB 278 with its amendments regarding facilities funding for charter schools. Charter schools are public schools and should be treated equitably. Instead they are only receiving roughly half the funding as other schools in their districts.

This is contrary to the current statute. AS 14.03.260 states clearly that:

- (a) A local school board shall provide an approved charter school with an annual program budget. The budget shall be not less than the amount generated by the students enrolled in the charter school less administrative costs retained by the local school district, determined by applying the indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Education and Early Development. *The "amount generated by students enrolled in the charter school" is to be determined in the same manner as it would be for a student enrolled in another public school in that school district.*
- (b) *The program budget of a charter school is to be used for operating expenses of the educational program of the charter school, including purchasing textbooks, classroom materials, and instructional aids.*

In fact, the charter school education program budget is also being used for rent, utilities, insurance and janitorial services contrary to the law. If facilities were funded on a per pupil basis and directly funded to the charter schools, the program budget funds could be entirely spent on educating students.

Please support HB 278 and its amendments and help charter schools continue to flourish and enable new charters the opportunity to organize by not having to worry about facilities funding and focus on giving students optional learning opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration,

Donna Van Flein  
Aquarian Charter School parent

Sent from my iPad

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Wendelynn Nash <wend.nash70@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 15, 2014 9:35 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please support our Alaska schools

To The Valuable Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Please support our Alaska schools.

It has been shown time and time again, that children thrive and learn more efficiently in smaller class sizes. We desperately need our teachers to educate and guide the children of our future.

**Please support the proposed three years of scheduled increases in the Base Student Allocation.**

Thank you,

Wendelynn Nash

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Waisanen\_Jennifer <waisanen\_jennifer@asdk12.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 6:51 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please Support our Educational Discourse: Fund our Schools

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for your service.

I am writing to ask for your support in regard to our school children. It's imperative that all stakeholders avoid a fourth year of cuts to teachers and staff, so our children have adequate class sizes and the support that they need to continue the gains we are making, we need: Three years of scheduled increases in the BSA (Base Student Allocation): \$400 this coming year, and \$125 for each of the two following years.

The budget cuts this year have already negatively impacted the educational discourse. I would be more than happy to speak with any committee member in order to discuss, clarify the negative effects already impacted on our students, and/or help find a solution to the budget cuts via our educational discourse.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Waisanen

Mother of a 5 year Student in the Anchorage School District and a National Board Certified Teacher (NBTC)

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Shane Perrins <shanemperrins@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 9:58 PM  
**To:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Cc:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Fwd: Please support our public schools!

April 14, 2014

Dear Senator Meyer,

I am writing this letter with the intent to encourage you to please support the measure to increase the BSA funding for our public schools.

This is my first experience with the Anchorage School District as my daughter just entered Kindergarten in the Japanese Immersion program at Sand Lake Elementary last fall. I have been so impressed with the quality of her education thus far. Her teachers are incredible and have already taught her so much, both academically and socially.

Teachers deserve so much more credit that they are given. The amount of time and personal effort they devote to educating our children is absolutely priceless. They are teaching our children important skills such as reading, writing, science, mathematics, etc., but beyond that, they are teaching our children how to appropriately interact with others so that they may become respectable members of society.

Just like the Whitney Houston song, "I believe the children are our future, teach them well and let them lead the way"... these children *are* our future and one of the most valuable things we can do is provide them with the best education. This education is not possible without our high quality teachers. My daughter's teachers have all shown patience, caring, dedication, as well as daily communication with the parents. My son will be entering school in 4 years so we have quite a few years ahead of us in this school district. I would hope to see this quality of education continue beyond the years my children will be in school.

Please support any and all measures to ensure the job security of these exceptional teachers, which in turn leads to exceptional human beings for the well-being of us all.

Thank you for your time and support,

Jana Perrins

341 Blackberry Street

Anchorage, AK 99502

janac1113@gmail.com

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**Shane Perrins**

**8341 Blackberry St.**

**Anchorage, Ak 99502**

**907-230-6544**

**shanemperrins@gmail.com**

**www.frontlineconstructionak.com**

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:48 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Please support phase 4 funding of Barnette Magnet School in the capital budget

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** Peggy H [<mailto:barnetteteach@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 20:20  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Please support phase 4 funding of Barnette Magnet School in the capital budget

**Please follow through with funding for Barnette Magnet School in Fairbanks. This school of choice is one of Alaska's success stories in public education. Our students deserve a completed, healthy learning environment.**

**Thank you,**

**Peggy Harrod**

**1214 W Chena Hills Drive**

**Fairbanks, Ak 99709**

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Rachel Faralan-Mingo <faralanmingo@rocketmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 12:19 PM  
**To:** Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Cc:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please support public schools to the fullest!

Today you are working on a Committee Substitute for school funding. Please find it in your hearts and logical minds to support returning our teachers and support staff numbers to where they should be for QUALITY education... Not babysitting!

Please make us proud that we elected you!

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 12, 2014, at 3:26 PM, Rachel Faralan-Mingo <faralanmingo@rocketmail.com> wrote:

>

> Hello,

> I was born in Alaska and educated in public schools in Alaska. I have 4 kids currently in Alaska public schools and 1 more to join them soon. I volunteer 4-5 days per week in the classroom and on the PTA Board.

> Our class sizes are just barely adequate to provide quality learning for children. An increase in sizes would mean more behavior management and less teaching. This is not okay with this family.

> We MUST put our strength into our KIDS, not bridges, not other things! Our kids' education must be the priority!

> Please pass the \$400 increase to the BSA with increases is \$125 for each of the next 2 years. Losing more teachers will only hurt Alaska!

> Rachel Faralan-Mingo

> 907-360-8774

> 2840 E. 142nd Avenue

> Anchorage Alaska

>

> Sent from my iPhone

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Brett and Tammy Woern <btwoern@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 3:30 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please Support School Funding

My children are finishing their school career here, but at least one of them wants to return after college and teach here in Anchorage. Teaching has been - and should be - a respected profession. But how can I as a father encourage a career path in which the youngest members are routinely "pink slipped" year after year?

The children of Alaska need good, dedicated teachers. But how can we as a community expect good people to dedicate themselves to us when we routinely cut their resources, increase their responsibilities, and give them instability and heart-ache?

Please help prevent further cuts in the funding of our schools, and instead increase the Base Student Allocation.

Brett Woern  
907-762-4836

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** tyocum100@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 4:40 PM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Peter Micciche; Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please take out the tenure ext in HB278

Dear Senators,

As a life-long Alaskan, with myself and siblings, then children and now grandchildren attending our schools, I want to be sure that we have the BEST teachers in our system.

Please take out the tenure extension in HB278. Administrators have 3 years to determine if a teacher meets the qualifications necessary to receive tenure. If they feel the person is close, but not quite there, there is a process in place to extend the 3 year time if necessary. It would be an EXTREMELY POOR administrator who should need more than 3 years to determine if a person is qualified or not!!

I retired after 30 years of teaching; before that I worked in retail, banking, and travel industries- several times as a supervisor. I certainly didn't need 3 YEARS to determine if an employee was to be retained as a permanent employee—we usually had 90 days to make that determination.

Alaska has difficulty attracting and recruiting teachers; extending tenure to five years will make it even harder to ensure there is a pool of highly qualified individuals from which to hire.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Yocum

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** kathy sievert <kathysievert13@gmail.com>  
**ent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 12:35 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please vote for school funding increase

I am a retired ASD high school English teacher (Dimond and Bartlett, 1968-94). My late husband taught math at East from 1973-93. My son-in-law currently teaches at Gladys Wood Elementary. We believe in the purpose, power and promise of a good public school education. This sacred right of every student in the US cannot be sustained if we continue to decrease funding.

Please vote for the BSA increase of \$400 in the first year with \$125 for the following two years. My son-in-law does his best to educate 32 sixth graders. Thirty two kids in one classroom. The other sixth grade teacher also has 32 students. It's impossible to provide the kind of quality education we want for our children with class sizes like this.

You can help by voting yes for the school funding increase.

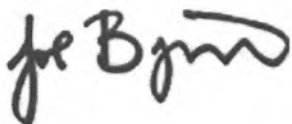
Kathleen Sievert  
2394 Harbor Landing Circle  
Anchorage, Ak 99515

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 1:34 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Amendment

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



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**From:** MARY MCMAHON [<mailto:Mary.McMahon@matsuk12.us>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 13:33

**To:** Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Click Bishop

**Subject:** Amendment

Good afternoon Senators,

It is my understanding that during the hearing of the Governor's education bill on the floor of the House last evening, Rep. Reinbold introduced an amendment to replace the star rating system with a letter grade rating system for schools with the intent that letter grades of A – F replace the star ratings of 5 stars – 1 star.

As a principal and as a parent I have big concerns with this change to how we rate our public schools. The ramifications with such a rating system could have many unintended consequences. I already see amazing educators losing their love for the profession due to all the negative press and the constant message they receive that no matter what they do, they are not doing good enough.

We need to shine a positive light on what is happening in our schools around the state; there are many amazing things happening for students every single day. I hope that you think this amendment through thoroughly and continue to place education as a top priority where we hold our schools accountable in a way that works best for students and educators.

At Colony Middle School we host monthly instructional tours where teachers and administrators observe in classrooms and then meet collaboratively to discuss their observations and learning. We recently decided it

would be a great addition to add community and state leaders to our instructional tour teams, so that the public can see transparently what is happening in our school.

If you are available, we'd love to have you join us on April 30<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 to 10:20 AM at CMS.

Thank you for all that you do for public education. Your hard work and support is appreciated and noticed!

All the best,

Mary McMahon

**Mary McMahon | Principal**

**AASSP President-Elect**

**Colony Middle School**

9250 Colony Schools Drive | Palmer, AK 99645

Office: 907.761.1501 | Fax 907.761.1591

<http://matsuk12.us/cms>

“We’re here to make GOOD things happen for young adolescents!”

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## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sebastian Cedano <sebastiancedano@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 11:16 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please help the Alaska kids

Please help the Anchorage School District to keep our teachers, teacher assistants, and all the staff for the Alaska kids. They need to have a good education. It is the only way that our country could have a good future. Please accept the proposal to rise de BSA.

Att: Sandra Cedano, Anchorage. AK

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Jill Brubaker <brubakers@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:46 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please increase BSA

Senators,

I am writing to you to let you know how important education is to me and to Alaska voters. We are tired of the continual de-funding of our schools and continued disruption to the education of our kids—disruption caused by the yearly laying off and re-hiring of teachers.

We really need you to increase the BSA now and in the future. It needs to be increased \$400 this year and \$125 for the next two years just to get us back on track. The education of my children begins in the classroom and we need to retain our teachers and stop the madness of de-funding education in Alaska.

I personally have 4 children in the public school system in Alaska and I pay attention—as do all of my friends—to those who value education. We are watching carefully what happens with the BSA this year and are hopeful that you will do the right thing and fully fund the BSA.

Thank you,  
Jill Brubaker

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Mara Carnahan <maracarnahan@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 12:40 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please Increase BSA

Dear Finance Committee Members,

I write today to urge you to support an increase in the BSA of \$400 this year, and \$125 for the next two years.

My children are taught everyday by educated, dedicated professionals. Years of budget cuts and financial instability threatens the ability of these educators to continue to serve our children to the best of their abilities.

I believe that my children's teachers continue to selflessly "do more with less" as aides, counselors, fellow teachers, and support staff are cut. I see their cars in the parking lot of our school well past dinner time, and consistently on the weekends. I know that as class sizes creep up, they continue to see each child as unique and deserving of a world class education. But grading 37 English papers takes far more time than 30. Where do teachers find the time? By coming in earlier, by staying later, by giving up dinner and weekend time with their own families. How much can we ask of our educators before it's simply too much? Do we wait until they are exhausted and frustrated; retiring earlier than they would have and taking all that wisdom and experience with them?

I realize the demands on our state finances are many, and that children can't always advocate for what they need. That's why it is imperative that you stand up for them and invest in the most important part of Alaska's future: her children.

Thank you for your leadership. And thank you for increasing the BSA by \$400 this year, and \$125 for the next two years.

Respectfully,  
Mara Carnahan

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Rebecca Noblin <rnoblin@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 9:36 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please increase the BSA

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

I support a greater increase to the base student allocation (BSA) so that our schools can keep up with other schools across the country. I write as a parent whose toddler will enter the Anchorage school system in a few years and as a citizen who believes that all children deserve a good education. There is no better way to provide a good future for our community than by supporting and funding our schools. Not only do good schools benefit the children who go there and who will some day be adults in our community, but they also draw businesses and other positive development to the community. Education is a good investment. Please increase the BSA by \$400 so that our schools can keep their teachers and rehire crucial staff, and please schedule \$125 increases each of the next two years so that our schools will not face a funding crisis every year.

Thank you very much for taking the time to consider my input.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Noblin  
2900 Wiley Post Ave.  
Anchorage, AK 99517  
907-350-4822

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Lisa Paesani <lpaesani@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 3:10 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please increase the BSA

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am a parent of three children in the Anchorage School District. I am writing to you to please represent your constituents by increasing the BSA this year by 400.00 and 125.00 the following two years. I have seen cuts over the past few years directly affect my children. My oldest did not have the benefit of a counselor to help with scholarships as she is trying to figure out where we can afford to send her to college. My middle school child has seen class sizes swell to an overwhelming numbers for the teachers. These teachers still manage to do a great job but we can not make things even worse. Changing the model for middle school to a junior high model will hurt them even more. I actively volunteer in my children's schools and I know that more cuts to programs which support our children will decrease our graduation rates. Many families that already struggle will have children fall through the cracks with our lack of a support system. Already these cuts have meant some kids that could go to college, probably won't from cuts of prior years. Please get your priorities in line with your constituents and increase the BSA.

Thank you,  
Lisa Paesani (West High School and Romig parent)

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Deborah Williams <DWilliams@aydc.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 4:35 PM  
**To:** Sen. Kevin Meyer; Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please Increase the BSA

Dear Senator Meyer and the Entire Senate Finance Committee,

Our children and youth are our state's most important natural resource. Providing our children and youth an excellent education is the most important investment we can make in their and our future.

The most appropriate, consistent, efficient, and significant way to do this is to make sure that the BSA is adequate. To make the BSA adequate, it needs to be increased by \$400.

Please.

This is one of the, if not the, most important legacies of this legislature.

So much is at stake.

Thank you for doing the right thing.

Sincerely,

Deborah Williams

Deborah L. Williams, Executive Director  
Anchorage Youth Development Coalition (AYDC)

2627 C St, Suite 140, Anchorage, Alaska 99503  
Office (907) 277-4179 - Cell (907) 223-1518  
[dwilliams@aydc.org](mailto:dwilliams@aydc.org)

**Anchorage  
Youth  
Development  
Coalition**



**Community Collaboration at Work**

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Diane Shellenbaum <dshellenbaum@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 6:08 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please increase the BSA and avoid more layoffs!

To Senator Meyer and the Senate Finance Committee,

Please don't let the real progress the schools have been making go down the drain by taking away the very things that led to improvements in classroom scores and graduation rates, the teachers and the councilors. Please increase the BSA to \$400, with an increase of \$125 for the next two years

I feel strongly that we've been shortchanging our kids and mis-prioritizing our dwindling funds into things like special legislative grants for non-critical, unwanted by the neighborhoods, football fields.

Respectfully,

Diane Shellenbaum

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Diane Shellenbaum <dshellenbaum@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 6:08 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please increase the BSA and avoid more layoffs!

To Senator Meyer and the Senate Finance Committee,

Please don't let the real progress the schools have been making go down the drain by taking away the very things that led to improvements in classroom scores and graduation rates, the teachers and the councilors. Please increase the BSA to \$400, with an increase of \$125 for the next two years

I feel strongly that we've been shortchanging our kids and mis-prioritizing our dwindling funds into things like special legislative grants for non-critical, unwanted by the neighborhoods, football fields.

Respectfully,

Diane Shellenbaum

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:09 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Please increase the BSA and prioritize education funding

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** J. Pearce & E. Manning [<mailto:ipem@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 06:34  
**To:** John Pearce  
**Subject:** Please increase the BSA and prioritize education funding

Dear Alaska Legislators,

Please continue your hard work to prioritize education funding. I realize we are in tighter fiscal times, but we need to continue to invest in the future of our children. Please support a BSA increase of \$400/\$125/\$100 over the next three years to prevent future cuts and to stabilize the future of quality public education for all Alaskans.

Thank you for making education a priority. Your constituents, and all Alaska children, will be grateful for this commitment to our collective future.

Respectfully,  
Elizabeth Manning  
1517 W. 15th Ave.  
Anchorage, AK 99501

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Jenny Glenn <mtbikejen@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 10:18 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** O'Malley elementary mom

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jennifer Glenn and I am writing on behalf of my daughter's who attend O'Malley elementary. My husband was born in Anchorage and I moved here when I was three, attending and graduating from ASD. We realize how important education is and how much it helped us be in the job positions we are today which allows us to give back to the community in which we grew up.

I believe educating our kids is one of the best resources (like oil and fisheries) that can provide years of return investment for a community. A child that has a good public education is more likely to give back to our economy years from now than say a child with a mediocre education.

My children will be attending Goldenview middle school a few years from now. I recently heard that the art teacher is retiring this year, but the position will not be filled. I am a private/contracted art teacher and own my own business and I'm shocked and saddened that these are the cuts we face should the BSA not be raised. This of course is only the tip of the iceberg for all schools throughout Alaska will be affected. O'Malley is also facing cuts, which will mean larger class sizes. Studies show larger class sizes are not beneficial for teachers or students.

During my education I struggled with making good grades due to learning disabilities, however I was good at art. I took art classes knowing that despite my low grades in english, math and science, I was good at something and felt worthy. It took many years to get through college, but I received my Bachelor of Arts degree from UAA and currently I'm working on my master's in education from University of Phoenix online program. Had there not been an art program I might not have graduated from high school and most certainly would not have gone on to college. I had amazing teachers who saw a kid who could give back to the community someday and pushed me to go farther, despite my grades.

I support an increase to the BSA and I appreciate the senate giving \$75 million to the ASD, however, it should go to the BSA to fund teachers, students and staff. We need a \$400.00 increase in per student funding for next year and \$125.00 for each of the following two years to avoid teacher and staff cuts, and provide the best education possible to our kids.

Alaska is a great place to live and raise children, which is why my husband and I came back when he graduated from the University of Washington. We want the best for our children and they deserve the best education. When my children are adults they may decide to live and work in Alaska, coming full circle and continuing the legacy by giving back to a great community in which to live, work and play.

**Doniece Gott**

---

**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 3:03 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: oppose change to ASPI system

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** SUSAN VARRELMAN [<mailto:Susan.Varrelman@matsuk12.us>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 14:06  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** oppose change to ASPI system

*Senator Kelly,*

*I think that the recently proposed actions affecting the CS for HB278 – “Education Bill” and the CS for SB119 – Capital Budget are a step in the wrong direction.*

*This proposed change to the ASPI system from a star rating to a letter grade (A-F) could have a negative effect on the efforts of EED to amend the current star system as part of the USDOE wavier to NCLB.*

*Valley Pathways is an alternative school in the valley that recruits and works with the most at-risk population of students in our community and a letter grade system will unfairly “brand” our school as failing. This would also happen to several alternative schools across the state.*

*I have served as an educator for many years and of those years I have taught 4 years as a teacher in two Mat-Su alternative schools. I speak from experience; this proposed change would have a severely negative impact on the mission of our school.*

*I urge you to drop the amendment to change the ASPI rating system from a star rating to a letter grade rating.*

*Regards –*

*Susan Varrelman*

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**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Joseph Boyle <boylejc08@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 5:18 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Opposed to Extending Teacher Tenure

Dear Senators

I am opposed to extending teacher tenure from three years to five years.

Tenure for public school teachers is not the same as tenure for college professors. Teacher tenure simply represents a guarantee of due process.

Keeping teachers on probation for five years will make it harder than ever to attract the best and the brightest.

School districts can already extend tenure beyond three years if it is felt that more probationary time is needed.

Thank you for your consideration.

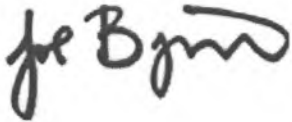
Joe Boyle  
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 11:26 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: CS for HB278 – "Education Bill"

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** CARRIE FIA [<mailto:CARRIE.FIA@MATSUK12.US>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 11:23

**To:** Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough

**Subject:** CS for HB278 – "Education Bill"

Senator,

***think that the recently proposed actions affecting the CS for HB278 – "Education Bill" and the CS for SB119 – Capital Budget are a step in the wrong direction.***

***This proposed change to the ASPI system from a star rating to a letter grade (A-F) could have a negative effect on the efforts of EED to amend the current star system as part of the USDOE wavier to NCLB.***

***Pathways is an alternative school in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley whose mission is to recruit and work with the most at-risk population of students in our community and a letter grade system will unfairly "brand" my school as failing. This would also happen to several alternative schools across the state.***

***I have been teaching for about 6 years and this is my first year teaching at Pathways. I feel I have found my calling here. Everyday I see the good I am doing in the lives of these at-risk students. Without schools like Pathways, many if not most of these students would not be able to be successful and would most likely not graduate from high school.***

***I ask you to reconsider and that you to drop the amendment to change the ASPI rating system from a star rating to a letter grade rating. Please don't do anything that would harm our school, the students, and the amazing staff that work with these at-risk youth.***

***I thank you for your consideration in this matter.***

**Carrie Fia**

**Special Education Teacher**

**Valley Pathways**

**907-761-4660**

**Have a truly blessed day!!!**

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**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Dave Blanchet and Ellen Toll <davellen@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 10:23 AM  
**To:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Cc:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** PLEASE do the right thing for our Schools: increase the BSA

Dear Sen. Meyer,

I am urging you to support an increase in the Base Student Allocation to \$400 for this year, with increases of \$125 for the next two years. Educating our children is the most important thing we do – and if you want people who are qualified to work in the oil field, it makes sense to keep our public schools strong. If the BSA is not increased, we will lose more qualified teachers and our kids will be in larger classes. That is not the way to insure quality education.

As a parent, as an Alaskan, I ask that you do this for our schools.

Thank you.

Ellen Toll

Anchorage

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Amy Johnson <ajohnson@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 12:47 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please ensure adequate school funding

I am the mother of a grade school child in Anchorage, and I want to continue to feel good about the education my son is getting in Anchorage.

I am a little older than most of the parents with grade-schoolers, so I have had the benefit of watching many children go through the Anchorage school system. In fact, two of my nieces have graduated from there. I believe all the kids I've watched have received great educations with ample opportunities to explore fields and figure out their likes and dislikes before heading off to college. I am hoping my son gets the same opportunities as these kids all had.

The public school system in the United States is part of what has made this country so great and I hope you see the benefit of continuing to fund it.

Warm regards,

Amy Johnson

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Celia Rozen <rozencelia@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 13, 2014 5:15 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please fully fund education

Dear Senators Meyer, Kelly, Fairclough, Dunleavy, Bishop, Olson, and Hoffman:

Many, many people are counting on you to realize the urgency of fully funding our schools (\$400/\$125/\$125 increase in the BSA for the next 3 years). We are also counting on you to interpret the collective and massive response you have received from constituents as the will of the voters who placed you in office. I am not only speaking for myself when I say that we wish education funding to be this session's highest funding priority. Thank you, Celia Rozen

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Anna <petersenak@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 13, 2014 11:53 AM  
**To:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Cc:** Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Rep. Charisse Millett  
**Subject:** Please FULLY fund our schools

Dear Senator Meyer

You represent me in the Senate. More than that, as co-chair of the Senate Finance Committee you represent all Alaskans. I ask you, and ALL your fellow members to throw your full support behind our schools. As a state, we can NOT afford to continue the way we have been. This issue is too important to the future of the state and to families and most importantly to the children. We cannot continue to underfund our schools.

Please show your leadership and use your influence where it is needed. Increase the Base School Allocation as recommended by Great Alaska Schools by \$400/\$125/\$125 over the next three years. It is the right thing to do, and we need to make this a priority.

I vote in EVERY election, as does my husband, and my two daughters. They also ask that you move on this issue to support the increase to the BSA. We and many Alaskan's are watching to see how our leaders show support for our schools, our students, and our state.

Thank you

Anna Petersen  
2040 Applewood Circle  
Anchorage, AK 99507  
[petersenak@aol.com](mailto:petersenak@aol.com)

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 10:20 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Please fund our public school teachers, counselors, and the "Middle School Model" of team teaching

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** Tom Davis [<mailto:tomdavisak@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 07, 2014 20:50  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Please fund our public school teachers, counselors, and the "Middle School Model" of team teaching

Dear Senator Kelly -

As a lifelong Alaskan, parent of middle- and grade-schoolers, and a regular volunteer in my children's schools, I would like to express strong support for Alaska's public schools, and specifically for the Alaska Senate acting to add to the State House's proposed BSA for the 2014-15 school year. I request the Legislature to act to avoid substantial loss of teachers, counselors, and team teaching programs at our schools.

I'm particularly concerned that impending layoffs at my son's middle school will damage the programs that have helped him thrive in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Last spring, a school counselor named Kendra Besh helped us place our boy, an incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grader, in the right team teaching program within Romig Middle School that fit his needs. Ms. Besh serves as counselor for the entire 7<sup>th</sup> grade class of around 400 children, yet she made time to help place us has helped our son thrive. I can only imagine how dozens if not hundreds of the incoming children and parents yearly need Ms. Besh's guidance even more than we did.

Secondly, social studies teacher Adam Johnson has served as my son's great cross-country running and (now) track and field coach and a role model, along with the other teacher-coaches after the regular school day. Another social studies teacher, Ms. Fey, happens to be our son's favorite teacher, making learning geography engaging for him. None of these people seem very high on the staff seniority list, and I'm concerned about losing them for Romig.

For those teachers that remain, I am concerned about the increase in class sizes and loss of team planning among the four core subjects. One of the things I think makes Romig work so well is the "Middle School Model" in many of our middle schools. In this model, the teachers have enough "team time" where a core team of teachers work together to support their students. All of our students belong to an individual team. The students and teachers get to know each other. These teams help coordinate activities, offer support to parents, and work with the counselors. However, through the current budget process, the team planning period will be omitted, and our teachers will be teaching 6 out of 7 periods each day. I request the Legislature provide adequate funding to continue the "Middle School Model" allowing for team planning, and for individual students to be a part of "teams" instead of getting lost in large school.

I have volunteered at and participated about a half dozen Romig school events this year, attended parent-teacher conferences, and observed how hard the staff works at fund raising events such as the school's evening cake auction for its music programs. The Romig music program has an exceptionally high participation rate (and sound quality) almost entirely through the work of the great music teachers. It is obvious to me that the school's staff are a great team of dedicated people who have fostered a close knit school community for the kids, even with such a big school and large class sizes.

I am also a regular volunteer at my daughter's school, which is an optional alternative program within the Anchorage school district. We selected our optional school among a variety of alternative programs available through our school district, and I'm more than impressed and grateful at the professional quality of educators for our two kids. Alaska is still a great place to raise and educate children, with optional programs and charter schools within the public school system, and possibilities for parents to participate and further tailor it to their kids' needs, making Alaska a stand-out that can help attract educated workforce to our state.

I will continue to volunteer at my kid's schools. In fact, this evening I'm helping with a track meet, and on Thursday will help with my daughter's 4<sup>th</sup> grade math class. I will continue to participate and expect the school staff to go the extra mile as they continue to do. I respectfully request the State Senate to please fund the BSA to:

- Avoid significant layoffs of teachers and counselors for the 2014-15 school year;
- Maintain the team program in our larger middle schools, by which our students and core subject teachers are on teams.

In great appreciation of your consideration and service,

Tom Davis

1026 W. 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave.

Anchorage, AK 99503

(907) 272-4826

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Rachel Faralan-Mingo <faralanmingo@rocketmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 12, 2014 3:26 PM  
**To:** Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Cc:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please fund our schools with a \$400 increase this next year

Hello,  
I was born in Alaska and educated in public schools in Alaska. I have 4 kids currently in Alaska public schools and 1 more to join them soon. I volunteer 4-5 days per week in the classroom and on the PTA Board.  
Our class sizes are just barely adequate to provide quality learning for children. An increase in sizes would mean more behavior management and less teaching. This is not okay with this family.  
We MUST put our strength into our KIDS, not bridges, not other things! Our kids' education must be the priority!  
Please pass the \$400 increase to the BSA with increases is \$125 for each of the next 2 years. Losing more teachers will only hurt Alaska!  
Rachel Faralan-Mingo  
907-360-8774  
2840 E. 142nd Avenue  
Anchorage Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sebastian Cedano <sebastiancedano@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 11:16 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Please help the Alaska kids

Please help the Anchorage School District to keep our teachers, teacher assistants, and all the staff for the Alaska kids. They need to have a good education. It is the only way that our country could have a good future. Please accept the proposal to raise the BSA.

Att: Sandra Cedano, Anchorage. AK

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 8:17 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Letter Grades for the ASPI rating - please vote against this change.

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** JIM WANSEER [<mailto:Jim.Wanser@matsuk12.us>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 06:39  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Letter Grades for the ASPI rating - please vote against this change.

Senator Kelly,

I think that the recently proposed actions affecting the CS for HB278 – “Education Bill” and the CS for SB119 – Capital Budget are a step in the wrong direction.

This proposed change to the ASPI system from a star rating to a letter grade (A-F) could have a negative effect on the efforts of EED to amend the current star system as part of the USDOE wavier to NCLB.

Pathways is an alternative school in the valley whose mission is to recruit and work with the most at-risk population of students in our community and a letter grade system will unfairly “brand” my school as failing. This would also happen to several alternative schools across the state.

I have served as an educator for 26 years and of those years I have worked the last 18 years as an alternative school leader. I speak from experience; this proposed change would have a severely negative impact on the mission of my school.

I urge you to drop the amendment to change the ASPI rating system from a star rating to a letter grade rating.

Regards -

Jim Wanser

Valley Pathways Principal

Alaska State Alternative Schools Association - Vice President

1150 N France Road

Palmer, AK 99645

(w) 907-761-4650

(f) 907-761 4680

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## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 9:16 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Letter of Concern

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



---

**From:** S J PIERCE [<mailto:sdj@pierce@msn.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 19:38  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** Letter of Concern

Dear Senator Kelly,

I'm writing on behalf of my two children who attend the Anchorage School District. Our family recently moved to Alaska and my wife and I were thrilled to enroll our children into two schools with outstanding records and reputations. Since our time here, we have become increasingly saddened by the upheaval our kids are experiencing due to budget cuts and displacements of teachers, support staff and resources. Frankly speaking, there are outstanding teachers here in the Anchorage School District; however, this state is going to suffer irreversible damage in the near future. Alaska will never attract or retain quality educators when they have to worry about their jobs every year. Educators who are displaced have nowhere to go. Ultimately, most will go back to the lower 48 in order to ply their trade. They are going to talk to other educators, and Alaska's reputation as a place friendly to education will be ruined. In the immediate and foreseeable future, Alaskan school districts will be forced to offer multi-year tenured contracts as well as significantly higher rates of pay in order to entice quality teachers to even come to the state. No one wants to relocate to a state where education is undervalued and its teachers are fearful of losing their career stability because of looming cuts. The Base Student Allocation needs to be raised to \$400 this year with an increase of \$125 for the next two years. Teachers are a commodity and they need to be treated as a valued resource – one of which parents and communities need to be respectful.

Sincerely Yours,

 Sean J. Pierce



## Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor's Office

809 Pioneer Road PO Box 71267 Fairbanks, Alaska 99707-1267 (907)459-1300 FAX (907)459-1102

April 10, 2014

The Honorable Bill Stoltze, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Alan Austerman, Co-Chair  
House Finance Committee  
State Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Representatives Stolze and Austerman,

As the Fairbanks North Star Borough and the State of Alaska continue to work together to meet the U.S. Clean Air Act standards for PM<sub>2.5</sub> in the Fairbanks Non-Attainment Area, continued funding for the ongoing air quality mitigation program or wood stove change-out program is critical to improve air quality and demonstrate progress in the State Implementation Air Quality Plan (SIP) as required by law.

Lack of funding for this program is a serious omission and jeopardizes the successful submission of the State Air Quality Implementation Plan (SIP) due December 2014. The Borough has made significant progress using previous state appropriations to assist residents in heating their homes with more efficient and less polluting devices.

The \$2,000,000 requested by the Governor is essential to meet the Clean Air Act to improve air quality, demonstrate models or measures that effectively reduce concentrations of PM<sub>2.5</sub> and successfully submit the SIP. We respectfully request that you restore funding for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Heating Device Air Mitigation program.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luke T. Hopkins'.

Luke T. Hopkins, Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl W. Kassel'.

Karl Kassel, Presiding Officer

Cc: Interior Delegation and Finance Committee staff

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 12:04 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Letter to Leadership Team re: Supporting Alaska's Students by Increasing the BSA

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** [rpbrooks12@gmail.com](mailto:rpbrooks12@gmail.com) [<mailto:rpbrooks12@gmail.com>] **On Behalf Of** Regan Brooks  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2014 11:23  
**To:** Regan Brooks  
**Subject:** Letter to Leadership Team re: Supporting Alaska's Students by Increasing the BSA

Dear Members of the Leadership Team,

Thank you all for your time and your leadership. I am writing to urge you to help the 120,000 plus school children throughout Alaska by supporting an increase to the Base Student Allocation of \$400 this year followed by \$125 for the next two years. Why? Because it will help save them from losing many of their teachers.

If you have any reluctance about these increases, I urge you to consider the following:

1. The BSA funding increase will not go to anything extravagant or extraordinary. This is simply a "let's help schools pay their staff and keep up with inflation" issue. Voters can recognize that legislators can be fiscally responsible **and** support an increase to the BSA. If you support this you will not be supporting anything new, you will simply be preventing students from losing the support of adult professionals who have been working to help them succeed.
2. Paying for teachers and counselors is an education spending choice supported by the vast majority of voters, across party lines, with and without children in the schools. You are very unlikely to have constituents upset about your choice.
3. Without these increases, the schools have been making --and will continue to make-- cuts. Most vitally, these cuts will be to teaching staff and counseling staff. Our students need these adults and their absence threatens to undermine valuable gains our schools have made in increasing graduation rates. Please remember that there are strong correlations between increased graduation rates and decreased incarceration rates. Let's keep our state on track to continue increasing the former and not the latter. Let's avoid the trap of unintended consequences. As I am sure you know, this is both a moral and an economic issue; prison is a lot more pricey than school.

Thank you again for taking the time to consider this issue.

Sincerely,

Regan Brooks  
Anchorage, Alaska

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Angela <angelasusanne@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 12:03 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** MAKE EDUCATION A PRIORITY!!!

I am in favor of the \$400 increase to the BSA next year, followed by \$125 increase in the following 2 years. Please, please make education a priority.

Thanks,  
Angela

Angela Unruh  
Diamond Independent Beachbody Coach  
(907) 240-8814

Transform your life!  
<https://www.facebook.com/AngelaUnruhFitness>  
<http://beachbodycoach.com/aunruh>  
<http://myshakeology.com/aunruh>  
<http://myultimatereset.com/aunruh>

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Jason & Laurie Dinneen <jldinneen@gmail.com>  
**ent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 2:14 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Make education funding a priority

Dear Committee Members,

Please place our kids at the top of what we fund. The mechanisms, politics and players can be a topic of ongoing change and discussion but giving our children larger class sizes with increased student to teacher ratios is not a fair choice. You cannot give a better opportunity for education once it has been taken or the opportunity is lost.

Thanks, please increase funding above BSA of \$400.

Thanks,

Jason Dinneen

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Rardin\_Joel <Rardin\_Joel@asdk12.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 15, 2014 2:45 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** My kids can't wait. They are in school now!

Please fund a real increase in the BSA.

Who will want to move their business to a state that is attacking its own education system?

I have watched Millions of dollars spent on all sorts of questionable projects but education never seems to get the priority that you all promise in you campaigns.

Joel Rardin

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Diana Burch <burchbusch1@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 4:49 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Fully fund our schools - please

I'm an older Alaskan, graduate of West High in 1968. All of my children graduated from Anchorage schools. I can't believe education is not your top priority. I'm a 'super voter' and will work hard to see that you are NOT reelected if this very important issue is not fully funded at \$400 per student this year and increases in the following two years. Our communities deserve the stability of consistent funding, staffing and planning. How can you not grasp how enraged the majority of voters are on this issue??

Diana Burch  
11201 Mountain Lake Drive  
907 223-4636

Sent from my iPhone

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Megan Richotte <meganrichotte@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 15, 2014 7:31 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Fully fund schools

I was thrilled to see in the Alaska Dispatch this morning that you are planning to add a real increase to the BSA this year and more money in the next couple of years. I encourage you to go all the way and add \$400 with \$125 in the next two years. Don't go partial and still have teacher layoffs in Anchorage. We can afford to have great schools in this state. Please fund them fully.

Megan Richotte  
Parent

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Nancy Pease <nancypease2@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 3:51 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Fund public schools with \$400 BSA

Senators:

Education funding proposed by the House is still inadequate. Fund a \$400 increase to the BSA this year, and \$125 in each of the next two years to avoid crippling cuts to public schools.

If you need a funding source, cancel that Knik Bridge funding. It doesn't cut drive time, and will drain growth and tax revenue away from Anchorage.

I m an "education" voter. I will vote, and campaign, for politicians who support public education funding. I will actively oppose those who starve the public school.

Sent from my iPad

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** D E Wiggin <dewiggin@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 7:41 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Funding public education

Honorable Senators of the Finance Committee:

Thank you for your long hours of work this session.

**I am writing to ask that you support our wonderful public schools by elevating the BSA amount per student to a figure close to the \$400 / \$125 / \$125 number.**

No business thrives when the labor budget is unknown in April for August. I want to see schools held to the private business standards that starts with budgeting for the future. Business employees would never get anything done if they had to suffer through the distractions imposed on teachers and school staff by the poor Legislative budgeting.

I have heard Senators speak of a coming fiscal apocalypse for the state using that as a rationale to further bleed funding from public education across Alaska. I believe that is absolutely a wrong-headed policy position to take. The kids now in our public schools are the individuals who will, in the coming years, be called upon to lead us out of this fiscal mess. We will not create the champions of a bright future by denying them a good education today!

Yesterday I distributed literature in Senate districts asking constituents to call in their support for funding levels of \$400 / \$125 / \$125. All of us that walked yesterday had very positive responses from constituents. Just about everyone I contacted stated their strong support for elevated BSA funding and some even texted after to inform me they had called Senate offices!

Many of those whose doors I knocked on thanked me for my work. Canvassing for education was very rewarding in light of such positive responses from your constituents. **Please do no harm to our public schools. Fund public education now for the future....**

Regards and thank you,

Diane Wiggin

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** richard zimmer <rzimmer@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 11:37 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Great AK Schools

Clearly the stakeholders in the Anchorage School District have spoken loud and clear. I am one of them, with two children in Anchorage Schools, West High and Steller Optional. It is hard to foster excellence in the schools when everyone involved, from demoralized teachers to students to parents, knows with certainty that the majority party values bridges over books. You may SAY you "support" public education, but as they say, money talks and bullshit walks. Great AK Schools is not going away. Please fully fund and inflation proof Alaska Schools and help make them a center of excellence.

**Doniece Gott**

---

**From:** Rachel Carlson <racheljcarlson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 1:07 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** House Bill on Education

Good Afternoon,

As a parent of an incoming kindergartner this fall, it is important to me that our schools are adequately funded. Please grant three years of scheduled increases in the Base Student Allocation (\$400 this upcoming year, and \$125 for the following two years).

Thank you,  
Rachel Carlson  
Anchorage, Alaska

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:46 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** jonbailey [<mailto:jonbailey@mtaonline.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 06:16  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

Senator Pete Kelly,

Please remove all tenure provisions from HB 278 and keep-teacher tenure at three years. High turn over of teachers is bad for Alaska, it's bad for communities, it's bad for schools and it's especially bad for students. Where is the incentive for someone to become a teacher in Alaska? Low salaries, bad benefits and no job security?

If you really want to improve the education system in Alaska, follow the money. Make sure the administrators are spending the money in a fiscal responsible way. Administrators come and go. But it's the teachers and the support staff who are the members of the communities that keeps the schools running.

Thanks Jon

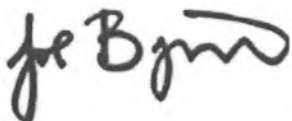
## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:49 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

**Importance:** High

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



---

**From:** cam bohman [<mailto:cambohman@msn.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 19:52  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278  
**Importance:** High

As a former Alaska middle school and high school teacher with 21 years of Alaska teaching experience plus an additional 27 years in educational support and administrative work, I OPPOSE HB 278. 3 years is sufficient time to both evaluate the qualifications of a NEW teacher and to insure them of continued employment. Alaska has a hard enough time attracting good, qualified teachers. School districts need to step up to the plate and guarantee the new teachers continued employment in a reasonable time. 5 years on either end of this issue is degrading to both the school and the teacher.

CORA M BOHMAN  
[cambohman@msn.com](mailto:cambohman@msn.com)

Sent from Windows Mail

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 8:10 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

-----Original Message-----

**From:** B Boring [<mailto:bcbmusic@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:04 PM  
**To:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

Kevin, please remove all parts of HV 278 that deal with extending the existing timelines for teacher tenure. In 1972, I found myself as a recently separated single mom, having to decide if I should stay in Alaska or go back to Michigan or Pennsylvania where I had family. I had taught in both states and had good potential for teaching opportunities and security if I returned to either one. I decided to stay in Alaska for several reasons, primarily because of the opportunities I had up here for a secure future as a teacher, with a reasonable salary (not the highest in the country by any means - but reasonable), I would have benefits for myself/ family, and a wonderful retirement program after 20 years with full benefits then too. I also felt that at that time, Alaska teachers had strong state support for education and educators. We have come a long way since then. And not all for the best.

I retired in 2002, and returned the fall of the same year as a retired- rehired teacher because there was no new talent stepping up to take over my position. I am retiring again at the end of May. Who will take my position is still a question.

I have been in teaching for 49 years, and in my early days in Pennsylvania I taught with wonderful teachers who had started teaching in the 30's, long before tenure, and unions. Every school district was it's own entity and the local superintendent was the educational deity. If he liked you. you had a job. But as soon as someone new came along your job could be gone. There was never any certainty about what tomorrow, let alone next year would bring. Are we heading back to that?

I have participated over the years as a Right's Representative for our local AEA. I can tell you from experience that TENURE does NOT guarantee an individual permanency. Just rights to fair and equal treatment. WE have taken back so much already with not defined retirement benefits, and the insecurity of funding from year to year, so that even teachers with tenure are not sure where or what or if at all they will be teaching next year. Why would young teachers come to Alaska to teach when our state keeps chopping away at the benefits that would entice them to come and encourage them to stay.

Please do not vote for this bill with extending the tenure time line. And please encourage your political peers to do the same.

If you have any questions, Please call me at 907-243-1683

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:48 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Mary Burtness [<mailto:mcburtness@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 21:48  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

We don't need a five year tenure program. I believe the new evaluation system will be an excellent way to weed out the people who aren't cut out to be teachers. The five year tenure program will just make it so much more difficult to attract and retain the good teachers to a state that has difficulties recruiting teachers anyway.

Please don't undermine the public school system by supporting this bill in the senate.

Mary C. Burtness

Sent from my iPad

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:46 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** Crista Cady [<mailto:crista.cady@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 22:08  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am a 49 year-old, first-year teacher and I am writing to ask you to please do what you can to keep teacher tenure at the length of current 3 years. You will hear many reasons why this is a good idea, and why you should oppose HB 278, at the hearing on April 10. Please add my comments to those who oppose HB 278.

Sincerely,  
Crista Cady  
Music Teacher  
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:49 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [ktdaniels@juno.com](mailto:ktdaniels@juno.com) [<mailto:ktdaniels@juno.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 18:26  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

Please vote NO to changing the teacher tenure from 3 to 5 years. This is a bad decision in recruiting and retaining teachers for Alaska. With no guaranteed pension for a retirement plan for new teachers and no social security, teachers would have greater reason to look at other states before considering Alaska. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Janice Daniels  
North Pole, AK

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 5:49 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony

Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Devon [<mailto:designpdx@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 17:34  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

Dear Mr Kelly,

It is important that you oppose HB 278. I am a Special Education Teacher that has been a teacher for almost 3 years. Through the day to day work as an educator we receive a great deal of training in the first 3 years. It is important that we are recognized for our hard work by being tenured at the beginning of our 4th year.

Thank you,  
Devon Delaney  
Resource Teacher  
Anchorage School District

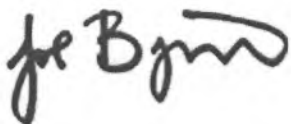
Sent from my iPhone

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:48 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



---

**From:** Ed Hays [<mailto:hays6780257@yahoo.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 21:27

**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly

**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

- Dear Senator Kelly,
- Please keep teacher tenure at 3 years. Extending tenure would mean that good teachers could be fired for any reason for up to 5 years. When I came here to teach 33 years ago, it was for the good pension and good salary. Now with no guaranteed pension, lack of social security benefits and mediocre salary, extending tenure will give Alaskan teachers another reason to leave the state.

Thank you for your support.

Ed Hays  
Haines, AK

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 1:57 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** Kimball [<mailto:tkimball@mtaonline.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 12:22  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

Isay no to changing tenure

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 7:49 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

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**From:** Tara Kulbeth [kulbetht@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 7:31 PM  
**To:** Sen. Kevin Meyer  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

am a mother of 2 beautiful daughters who each attend schools in the Juneau School District. I am also an educator. I'm writing to urge you to remove all teacher tenure provisions from HB278.

Extending teacher tenure from three to five years is a bad idea for many reasons:

- Alaska faces huge challenges recruiting and retaining teachers. Extending tenure, so that teachers remain "at will" employees, will give new teachers little reason to stay in Alaska for their full careers. With budget-related layoffs, no guaranteed pension, and a lack of Social Security benefits, extending tenure will just give Alaskan teachers another reason to leave the state.
- Tenure isn't a job for life – it just gives teachers and school district employees due process. Extending tenure means teachers would be probationary employees for five years who can be fired for any reason.
- Extending tenure is a solution in search of a problem. Under current laws, school districts can already extend probationary time for a teacher if they determine they need more time to work with that teacher.

In order to continue to recruit and retain quality teachers in Alaska, I urge you to keep teacher tenure at 3 years.

Thank you,

Tara Kulbeth  
11878 Mendenhall Loop Rd.  
Juneau, AK 99801

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:49 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



---

**From:** Tara Kulbeth [<mailto:kulbetht@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 19:31  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

I am a mother of 2 beautiful daughters who each attend schools in the Juneau School District. I am also an educator. I'm writing to urge you to remove all teacher tenure provisions from HB278.

Extending teacher tenure from three to five years is a bad idea for many reasons:

Alaska faces huge challenges recruiting and retaining teachers. Extending tenure, so that teachers remain "at will" employees, will give new teachers little reason to stay in Alaska for their full careers. With budget-related layoffs, no guaranteed pension, and a lack of Social Security benefits, extending tenure will just give Alaskan teachers another reason to leave the state.

- Tenure isn't a job for life – it just gives teachers and school district employees due process. Extending tenure means teachers would be probationary employees for five years who can be fired for any reason.
- Extending tenure is a solution in search of a problem. Under current laws, school districts can already extend probationary time for a teacher if they determine they need more time to work with that teacher.

In order to continue to recruit and retain quality teachers in Alaska, I urge you to keep teacher tenure at 3 years.

Thank you,

Tara Kulbeth  
11878 Mendenhall Loop Rd.  
Juneau, AK 99801

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:48 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** [devondroberts@gmail.com](mailto:devondroberts@gmail.com) [mailto:[devondroberts@gmail.com](mailto:devondroberts@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 20:53  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

Senator Kelly:

Alaska is already starting to have issues attracting and retaining teachers, and this isn't going to be aided by increasing the number of years to obtain tenure to five. Tenure in public elementary, middle and high schools is only guarantees due process for teachers. It is not the same thing as the tenure provided to professors at the college level. Increasing the minimum number of years for a teacher to obtain tenure is smoke and mirrors, and it creates more problems than it solves. It will do nothing to improve the quality of education and makes me wonder why the time and energy is being spent on the discussion.

The only conclusion I can come up with is that it is a lame attempt by some to look tough on those 'liberal' educators and take some of the attention away from a slight and short term increase in the BSA that has short changed public schools across our State for the last four years.

The very logic of it makes little sense to me. Why was there discussion of keeping rural district teachers on a three year tenure track and switch urban districts on a five year track? Doesn't this acknowledge that this change will impact attracting and retaining quality teachers? If this is true, why have a double standard? Don't we want to have quality teachers in our urban schools as well as our rural schools?

I encourage you to oppose the addition of tenure language in the education bill in order to keep the focus and discussion on other more important aspects of the education legislation before the legislature. Let all of our children benefit from quality teachers and well-funded public schools.

Respectfully,  
Devon Roberts

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:49 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony



*Joe Byrnes*

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** Jeanne Sande [<mailto:isande@kpunet.net>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 20:09  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

Please keep tenure at 3 years as it gives teachers due process rights. Jeanne Sande

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 8:46 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** Brittany Sofia [mailto:[brittany.sofia@gmail.com](mailto:brittany.sofia@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 08:24  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

Dear Senator Pete Kelly,

- Tenure is not a job for life. It is a guarantee of due process for teachers and school district employees who meet or exceed performance standards.
  - Extending tenure would mean that good teachers could be fired for any reason for up to 5 years.
- Alaska faces huge challenges recruiting and retaining teachers. Extending tenure, so that teachers remain “at will” employees will give new teachers little reason to stay in Alaska for their full careers.
  - With budget-related layoffs, no guaranteed pension, and a lack of Social Security benefits, extending tenure will just give Alaskan teachers another reason to leave the state.
- Extending tenure is a solution in search of a problem. Under current laws, school districts can already extend probationary time for a teacher if they determine they need more time to work with that teacher.

Thanks for your time,

Brittany Bauman

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 5:29 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose HB 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



**From:** Bill Vedders [mailto:billvedders@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 17:11  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 278

- **Tenure is not a job for life. It is a guarantee of due process for teachers and school district employees who meet or exceed performance standards.**
  - Extending tenure would mean that good teachers could be fired for any reason for up to 5 years.
- **Alaska faces huge challenges recruiting and retaining teachers.** Extending tenure, so that teachers remain “at will” employees will give new teachers little reason to stay in Alaska for their full careers.
  - With budget-related layoffs, no guaranteed pension, and a lack of Social Security benefits, extending tenure will just give Alaskan teachers another reason to leave the state.
- **Extending tenure is a solution in search of a problem.** Under current laws, school districts can already extend probationary time for a teacher if they determine they need more time to work with that teacher.

Bill

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**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:46 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose increasing teacher tenure

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes  
Staff for Senator Pete Kelly  
907-456-3709



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**From:** [deemarcou@yahoo.com](mailto:deemarcou@yahoo.com) [mailto:[deemarcou@yahoo.com](mailto:deemarcou@yahoo.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2014 20:39  
**To:** Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Subject:** I oppose increasing teacher tenure

Senator Kelly,

Please keep teacher tenure at 3 years for all Alaska school districts. I truly believe that increasing it to 5 years will do nothing to improve the education our students receive. I believe that it will make Alaska a much less desirable place to teach, so getting and keeping quality teachers will be more difficult. Please remove the teacher tenure provisions from HB 278. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Darcy Marcou

Sent from Windows Mail

**Doniece Gott**

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**From:** Thea Agnew Bemben <thea@agnewbeck.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2014 12:54 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Subject:** SB278: I support a \$400 increase in the base student allocation

Dear members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you so much for all the time you spend working on the challenges of funding our state's education system.

I am a product of the Anchorage School District and my son is currently enrolled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade there. I believe that an exceptional public education system is key to our productive economy and future as a state. We must have excellent teachers and be able to provide all of the good offerings of the district to all students, especially those who need it most because their families are lacking in other supports.

To help our schools and students thrive, I ask that you support a \$400 increase in the Base Students Allocation plus scheduled increases of \$125 over the next three years.

These increases are needed to prevent the current teacher cuts and restore teacher and counselor jobs that have already been lost across the state.

Please be a part of the solution. You can make a difference in the lives of students across Alaska.

Thank you again for your time and your efforts.

Thea

**Thea Agnew Bemben**

Managing Principal

907.222.5424 office

[www.agnewbeck.com](http://www.agnewbeck.com)

Engage, Plan, Implement. Agnew::Beck

## Doniece Gott

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**From:** Mari Reeves <alaskamari@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2014 2:07 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance Committee  
**Cc:** Mnemeth; alaskamari@gmail.com  
**Subject:** I support increased funding for Anchorage Schools

Good Afternoon -

I understand that you are currently considering legislation that may alter the funding status of the Anchorage School District.

I would like to let you know that I support an increase in funding for the Anchorage School District. Specifically, I concur with the Greater Alaskan Schools request of:

- Three years of scheduled increases in the BSA (Base Student Allocation): \$400 this coming year, and \$125 for each of the two following years.

I have been an Anchorage resident since 2002, and last time I checked, we contribute a fair amount to the city in the form of annual property taxes.

I am proud to live in Anchorage. I think we are a great city, with excellent opportunities for education. As a parent of 2 young children, I am grateful that my children have the wonderful and varied options they do within the public school system.

I certainly support our property tax contributions going to support more opportunities for education (and recreation, by the way) in our town. I hope that the legislature also directs state funding towards our schools, so that they can remain happy and healthy places for our children to learn and be.

Thank you for your time! Feel free to call with questions or concerns.

Mari Reeves  
907-244-6722  
7945 Port Orford Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99507

**Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce**

2417 Tongass Ave., Ste. 223A  
Ketchikan, AK 99901



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Tatsuda's IGA

**Len Laurance**

Inter-Island Ferry Authority

April 10, 2014

Senator Kevin Meyer  
Senator Pete Kelly  
Representative Bill Stoltze  
Representative Alan Austerman

Honorable Legislators:

I write this letter to express the Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce's support for the economic assistance appropriation to the Inter-Island Ferry Authority in FY 2015 as is provided for in the April 10<sup>th</sup> working draft of SB 119.

The Inter-Island Ferry Authority provides southern Southeast Alaskans with a transportation and shipping option that is integral not only to the regional economy but also to the quality of life experienced by the residents of both Ketchikan and Prince of Wales Island. From moving seafood to market to transporting tourists to lodges to allowing the sick and elderly access to healthcare via a means that is affordable, the IFA provides services that are simply one-of-a-kind.

As a Chamber, we work to promote regional economic growth, a climate that is good for business, a lifestyle that attracts year-round residents, and a stable, skilled workforce. The IFA supports each aspect of this mission unequivocally, and it is for this reason we believe in the necessity of the IFA's continued existence.

I, along with the Chamber's Board of Directors, fully support the legislature's efforts to support the IFA, the services it provides, and a sound socioeconomic climate in the southern Southeast Alaskan region through this appropriation.

Sincerely,

Chelsea J. Goucher

Executive Director  
Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce

O: (907) 225-3184

C: (907) 220-2133

E: [chelsea@ketchikanchamber.com](mailto:chelsea@ketchikanchamber.com)