

HB

278

(FILE 3)

PUBLIC

TESTIMONY

<TARGET><BILL>HB 278</BILL><SUBJECT>HB 278 (FILE 3)
PUBLIC TESTIMONY</SUBJECT><COMM>SFIN28</COMM></TARGET>

Marty Decker <info@frontierriverguides.com>
Monday, April 14, 2014 6:43 PM
Senate Finance Committee
INCREASE BSA

Subject:

Dear Senators

I am writing to you of my concerns regarding years of static funding levels for public education, and recent efforts to modify the delivery of education in the state of Alaska. I do not believe in fancy private education, secular or religious; I want our public schools to receive more funding. I am an independently minded super voter and you and your party will lose my vote if you stand in the way of my children's future. Other parents have made me realize that the base student allocations needs to be increased by at least \$400 this year, with a \$125 increase for the following two years.

Not only is my youngest child still a student at West High School, I too am a product of Alaska's public education system, having graduated from Lathrop High School in 1972. Both my children and I received a superior quality of education up here; Alaska's schools are not "failed schools" as certain people like to portray them as. Maybe these are new arrivals to the state, but I know better. I was fully and well prepared to transition to university studies and acquired an advanced degree, graduating Magna Cum Laude. Maybe those people who call our schools "failed" were those of failed intellect, who were unwilling to absorb ideas and perform well. Alaska's standardized test scores are excellent and our school systems offer countless educational options, charter schools and special programs. There is something for every learner.

Flat funding is reeking havoc with my child's education. Course offerings are thinning down, staffing cuts have reduced support services such as career counselors, class sizes are set to grow and teachers will be laid off. We are BEHIND in our investments in our children's futures and in Alaska's long term well being.

We parents would love to vote for you at the next election, but if you minimize public education you may lose the support of those of us in the middle of the political spectrum.

Very Sincerely,

Marty Decker
Anchorage, Alaska
owner and operator of Frontier River Guides of Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Judy <judyrae427@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 6:15 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase BSA please

To Senate Finance Committee:

Please increase the Base Student Allocation \$400 this year and \$125 each of the following 2 years. It has been truly amazing to me that you gave millions of dollars in breaks to oil companies and not to students.

Please start representing the people and not the oil companies.

Thank you.
Judy Engh
Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Ivy Spohnholz <ivyspohnholz@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 8:44 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Troy Bowler
Subject: Increase the Base Student Allocation this year and for the next two

Senate Finance Committee members,

As the parent of three Anchorage School District students, I know that our children are our most precious natural resource. As you move into budget reconciliation, I want to strongly encourage you to increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) this year by \$400 and with \$125 increases for each of the next two years to provide some stability to our schools. An investment in our kids today will pay dividends for decades to come as these kids mature and take on the reins of our economy.

Unfortunately, At our youngest child's school several really remarkable teachers have been let go due to the inability of the BSA to keep up with inflation. At our older childrens' school, many of their classes do not have enough text books to go around making it difficult for kids to do homework.

Please make every effort to make this important investment in the next generation of leaders--for this year and in future years. Thank you very much for your thoughtful consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ivy Spohnholz
3473 Newcomb Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508
(907) 332-4897

Doniece Gott

From: Amy <amydak@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 12:40 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase the BSA

Please support education and support funding at \$400 this year, with \$125 for the next two years. Our school districts are struggling and have had to cut crucial and essential positions that directly effect the level of service provided to students.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Amy Downer

Doniece Gott

From: Jennifer Glenn <mtbikejen@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 4:41 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase the BSA

April 11, 2014

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 allowing us to work and 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.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Glenn

Doniece Gott

From: anne richards <acrichards@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 9:33 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase the BSA

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Please avoid a fourth year of cuts to teachers and staff so our children can have adequate class sizes and the support that they need to continue the gains we are making. I respectfully request 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 your support,
Anne Remick

Doniece Gott

From: Christina Zafren <czafren@alaska.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 6:42 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase the BSA

Dear Senators,

I know all of you support providing Alaskan children with the best possible education. Years of funding cuts to our public schools has taken its toll and is affecting the quality of education our students receive. It is time to put our money where the need is. Please vote to reverse the funding cuts and set the BSA at a level that will stop the bleeding. Our kids and teachers deserve it!

Thank you. I know it is difficult to prioritize.

Sincerely,

Chris Tower Zafren
10181 Curvi Street
Anchorage, AK 99507
907-346-2333

Doniece Gott

From: Rachel Faralan-Mingo <faralanmingo@rocketmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 8:48 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase the BSA by \$400 this year and \$125 each the next 2 years

Please consider this my Alaskan vote for an increase to the BSA by \$400 this next school year and \$125 for each of the following years. We CANNOT LOSE TEACHERS. Our classrooms are just making it with the numbers of students currently in them; 25 fourth graders, 30 sixth graders... that's plenty. More than that and teachers will be managing behaviors not teaching.

I have 4 students in public school in Anchorage and I'm in the classrooms 4+ times per week as a volunteer! I'm a product of the Alaskan school system and a college graduate. My husband and I always vote and we always vote in favor of our children!

Rachel Faralan-Mingo
2840 E. 142nd Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99516
907-360-8774

Doniece Gott

From: Scat Mail <scatycaty@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 4:49 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increase the BSA!

Dear senators,

An increase in funding needs to be in the BSA so it can be used to avoid teacher and counselor layoffs. An increase in funding to other areas in the education budget is not what our school districts (and therefore our 129,000 children) need. We need teachers and counselors in the classroom for effective education.

Please increase the BSA by \$400/\$125/\$125.

Thank you,
Catherine Coward
6221 Farpoint Dr
Anchorage, 99507

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Kari Gardey <kari@ak.net>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 12:26 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increases to BSA

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Please increase the Base Student Allocation so that our schools can continue to provide the level of education we expect for our students. Years of flat funding have been hurting our schools. Please raise the BSA by \$400 this year and \$125 the next two years to repair the damage caused the last three years. Our children are our future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Kari Gardey

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 10:20 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Increasing and inflation-proofing the BSA

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: Joe Banta [<mailto:jbanta@mac.com>]

Sent: Monday, April 07, 2014 21:55

To: Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman

Subject: Increasing and inflation-proofing the BSA

Dear Representative:

I am writing to you to convey my concerns about an issue that I think is very important to the future of our state - the need for an increase in the base student allocation for funding of education. I ask that you support the \$400/\$125/\$125 increases in the BSA in order to adequately fund the educational needs of our state for the next three years. Please ensure the mechanism to forward fund the BSA with the \$125 for the following two year is part of the solution so that our schools can plan accordingly and so that our teaching staff can do their incredibly difficult jobs without the added stress of pink slips every year. I thank you sincerely for your support and recognition of this serious need.

I can speak on this subject from the perspective as a parent and volunteer in our public schools for over 15 years, and as a product of the Alaska school system before we had oil money. I can remember bake sales and selling hot dogs to raise funds. Now once again I am witnessing similar financial pressures on our schools. Especially in the last three or four years, our family has seen a steady erosion of real and important services available to our children. These very real changes include loss of school counselors, janitors, teaching assistants, aides, and programs like gifted mentorships, music and art programs and more.

As you make decisions about how public dollars are spent in Alaska, I urge you to prioritize public education funding. We have not adequately supported education for some time, and the negative impacts of these choices are increasingly being seen. When we instead prioritize public education, we are looking toward a more successful future for Alaska – creating a community where families want to settle and preparing our young people to serve us as well-educated citizens in the careers of their choice. There is nothing in my mind that is more fundamental to our future than our children and these children, right now, will never get this chance again, so it's essential that we do this right!

Thank you again for seeing the need and logic in increasing and inflation-proofing the BSA, steps that are critical to maintaining and improving our educational system. Please let me know if there is anything else that I can do to advocate for this critical issue.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Joe Banta

Doniece Gott

From: Lynn Palmquist <lynnpalm@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2014 2:25 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Re: Increasing Base Student Allocation

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I would like to encourage you to please consider increasing the base student allocation amount by \$400 this year and an additional \$125 the following two years. This increase would allow for greater educational opportunities for students here in Alaska. Please prioritize our future.

Thank you,

Lynn Palmquist

Doniece Gott

From: Mary Forbes <mmeforbes@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 1:12 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increasing the BSA for education

Dear Senators,

I am from Kodiak, but on behalf of all Alaska schools, please vote to increase the BSA by \$400 this year and \$125.00 for the following two years. We need to get our schools back on track. I know several families that are seriously considering leaving the state of Alaska because they are so tired of the decline of our schools because of years of budget cuts and chronic under funding. If we are not careful, this will begin to have a negative affect on our state's economy.

Sincerely,
Mary Forbes
418 Mill Bay Rd
Kodiak, AK. 99615

Doniece Gott

From: Shannon Crosson <scrosson@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 4:35 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Increasing the BSA to \$400 for next school year with an additional \$125 for the following two school years

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am a parent with three children in Japanese Immersion at Sand Lake and Mears in Anchorage. I am also the sitting president of Tomo No Kai, the parent group supporting Japanese immersion at Sand Lake, Mears, and Dimond.

Without the increase in BSA, the Japanese Immersion, which has been a marquis program within ASD for 25 years, will be in jeopardy of irreparable harm. The loss of Japanese teachers would mean that already large classes would not only increase in size, but lower the incredible quality that this program expects and produces. Loss of multiple Japanese teachers who damage the program's integrity as we struggle even now to replace Japanese teachers who leave or retire. As president of the program, I can tell you that a loss of one teacher can take year or more of searching to replace that teacher due to the language requirements, visa issues and school year differences between the US and Japan.

Your support in the increase will ensure that this program will remain **one of a handful** of Japanese immersion programs within the USA. Isn't wonderful that our school district has such a quality program that is recognized both here in the US and in Japan as a model for teaching children?

I implore you to save this program from destruction, by using your vote to increase the BSA.

Thank you for your time.,

Sincerely,

Shannon Crosson

CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Resolution No. 2014 – 01

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A SIGNIFICANT PER STUDENT FUNDING INCREASE IN THE BASE
STUDENT ALLOCATION (BSA) WITHIN THE FOUNDATION FORMULA AND SUPPORT FOR A
MULTI-YEAR FUNDING PLAN

WHEREAS the Governor is supporting an increase to the BSA over three years of \$85 the first year, \$58 the second year, and \$58 the third year;

WHEREAS this represents only an increase of 1.5% the first year and 1% over the next two years;

WHEREAS the Juneau School District (JSD) has cut \$11.5 million in spending the past seven years (ten percent of our operating budget), lost 100 jobs in Juneau, cut 32 percent of our Administration staff, 22 percent of our support staff and 6 percent of our teaching staff, neglected curriculum and technology supports for students;

WHEREAS the Juneau School Board realizes that students will be better served academically if the tremendous time and energy focused on doing and redoing budgets by staff, parents, community and Board members can be focused on instruction and create efficiencies;

WHEREAS the JSD invested in higher standards, professional development and evaluation for all staff and also is needing to invest in curriculum and technology supports;

WHEREAS the JSD has instituted Measured Academic Progress approach district-wide that provides data for targeted and intentional student intervention strategies;

WHEREAS the JSD's biggest cost drivers include personnel increases, health care, technology, curriculum, energy and inflation;

WHEREAS Alaska is the most expensive state in the union for cost-of-living for housing and goods, health care benefits, particularly in specialist fields;

WHEREAS the JSD is seeking to be part of a larger public and private health care consortium that can negotiate a health care benefits with flexible options and similar coverage at a lower cost;

WHEREAS Capital costs place a demand on dwindling State resources and the JSD realizes these requests may need to be prioritized and potentially delayed;

WHEREAS the JSD has a budget shortfall of \$4.7M in 2014-15;

WHEREAS the JSD needs a \$443 increase to the BSA to avoid the cuts proposed in 2014-15, an amount that the Board recognizes does not recover the \$11.5 million in prior years, and at least an additional \$300 in 2015-16 to cover our expected increase for the following year;

WHEREAS the JSD needs a defined BSA amount in future years for planning purposes;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Juneau School Board requests the Alaska State Legislature to fund a multi-year funding plan that addresses inflationary costs;


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Juneau School Board requests a significant and substantial increase to the per student funding (Base Student Allocation) in the foundation formula for fiscal year 2014-15 and inflationary increases for FY 2016 and FY 2017.

Approved: March 4, 2014 – Juneau School Board, 10014 Crazy Horse Dr. Juneau Alaska 99801

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:14 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Keep Alaska School tenure at 3 years, please!

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



From: Beth Ott [<mailto:robmaxott@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 07:37
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Keep Alaska School tenure at 3 years, please!

Changing tenure to 5 years would put Alaska even lower in standing when it comes to recruiting and retaining good teachers. Since we are having so many issues on class size and retaining the staff we already have, please do not change the one thing they have going for them! Thanks.

Liz Downing
1247 Bay Avenue
Homer, AK 99603

April 10, 2014

Alaska State Senate Finance Committee RE: HB 278

Dear Senators,

First, I would like to express my appreciation for the Education Session. There has been a great deal of discussion around education issues and it has provided good insight into where we are as a state and the opportunities for where we can go. We have seen strong leadership from legislators, Commissioner Hanley, our superintendents, school boards, teachers, parents, and our students.

I am the mother of a high school junior. I am awed by the education he has received with its rigor and the dedicated educators who have guided him on this path. My husband and I (no slouches when it comes to learning) commented just this morning on how challenged we would be as high school students today.

As the session comes to a close and final bills reach their last steps to becoming law, I am weighing in on where we seem to be landing. Many aspects of HB 278 are spot on. The HSGQE has lost its usefulness. Paying down the PERS/TRS liability makes sense for long term management of this debt and I would like to see funding returned to this bill.

Funding both inside the BSA and outside for innovation makes sense. Districts have been losing ground simply with the cost of maintaining our work. The steps we were able to make to improve student achievement over the last five years or so are now threatened. We maintain cuts to positions like librarians, counselors, and nurses – all still needed – and have never added some of the programs we know would make a significant difference like graduation coaches, more interventionists, and one-to-one digital devices. These need to be inside the BSA if we are to make lasting improvements to education.

Senator Kelly and others have lamented the lack of innovation in our schools. I have seen a number of instances where innovation has occurred but only in pockets, we need to take innovation into hyper-drive and the Senate's proposal of funding \$100m for two years would allow for that. I would, however, recommend that while all districts should have access to these funds equitably, that a plan for its use be required. That plan should be approved by the local school board, include the expected outcomes, and submitted to DEED for processing (not approval) prior to the release of funds. I am fresh off of the National School Boards Association conference with exciting ideas for innovation and would love to see many implemented throughout Alaska before we fall further behind.

Public education has taken a huge hit in public perception. There are areas where disappointment is justified but I believe that the vast majority of our diverse schools do a good job and some excel. DEED has implemented the star rating system that has provided sensible metrics for accountability and informs educators and families on the current status of our schools. It would be a costly mistake to reinvent the system and shame our communities by using the A-F proposed ratings. Let's allow our new system to work.

I am so pleased with the varied opportunities we offer in public education through charter schools, performance or standards-based classes, alternative, and home school programs. Each public program should be equitable with funding and encouragement to reach the highest level of quality. Charter school start-up funding and full 1.0 funding for online students will help us support these programs.

I also believe that Alaska has the talent, energy, and ability, as essentially a "small organization", to effect rapid strategic change bringing quality to every learning experience in the state. It is my hope that this legislature will see the opportunity to be the heroes of this vision.

Sincerely,

Liz Downing

Kenai Peninsula

cc: Senators: Micciche, Stevens, Geissel, Huggins, Coghill, French, Egan, Gardner, Ellis, McGuire, Steadman, Dyson, Wielechowski

Representatives: Seaton, Chenault, K.Olson, Austerman, Costello, Drummond, Edgmon, Feige, Foster, Gara, Gattis, Gruenberg, Guttenberg, Hawker, Herron, Higgins, Holmes, Hughes, Isaacson, Johnson, Josephson, Kawasaki, Keller, Kito, Kreiss-Tomkins, LeDoux, Lynn, Millett, Munoz, Nageak, Neuman, Pruitt, Reinbold, Saddler, Stoltze, Tarr, Thompson, Tuck, P. Wilson, T. Wilson

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 4:40 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB278 unfunded liability of TRS.....Attachment = TRS History

Public testimony



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



From: catherine bailey [<mailto:baileyc1013@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 16:35
To: Sen. Click Bishop
Subject: HB278 unfunded liability of TRS.....Attachment = TRS History

Greetings,

My name is Catherine Bailey, and I am a retired school teacher living in Anchorage. As a public elected official, I believe you have a trust with the people you serve. Please take your time to actually read the attached document. This is the trust, the promise, this state has to the people it serves. We expect this promise to be kept, wouldn't you if you had spend 30+ years as a school teacher in this state??

Thank you for your time and effort.

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 12:32 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278

Public testimony

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

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

From: Leah [<mailto:lhduubber@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2014 17:36
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Mike Dunleavy
Subject: HB 278

Dear Senate Finance Committee members,

I'm writing to urge you to make changes to HB 278.

1. Please increase the BSA further than HB 278. The House may have increased the actual BSA figure, but by moving over an additional expense to be taken out of the BSA the net increase was negligible. It doesn't provide enough money to stop the massive classroom teacher cuts that we are seeing.
2. Please remove the A-F letter-grade rating system. There is no purpose to it and it adds a stigma to schools working tirelessly to meet the needs of our students. The star rating system, while not ideal, doesn't carry the same negative stigma that an A-F letter-grade system does. It's demoralizing to professionals and to families.

Thank you,
Leah Dubber

Doniece Gott

From: Rebecca Bernard <rbernard.ak@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 2:43 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB 278 -- Please raise the BSA

Dear Senate Finance Committee members,

As you are considering HB 278, the Governor's education bill, I respectfully urge you to amend the bill to include a BSA increase of \$400 for next year and \$125 for each of the following two years. This is the increase that will allow the Anchorage School District to avoid teacher layoffs and make up for three years of flat funding. I understand that times are tight, but Alaska's children are worth this investment. When the state has boosted its investment in public education through the BSA, it has paid off with higher graduation rates and reading scores. And rural schools need this increase as well, as these schools are expensive to run and costs are rising there as elsewhere. Here is a link to a recent news story about rising costs at rural schools: <http://www.ktuu.com/news/news/rural-alaska-superintendents-speak-out-on-bsa-increase/25425124>.

Thank you for considering my views,

Rebecca Bernard
1210 N St.
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-244-3988
rbernard.ak@gmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 8:13 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278

Public testimony

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

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

From: jackson_ginger [mailto:jackson_ginger@asdk12.org]
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 22:45
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: HB 278

Senator Kelly,

I'm pleased with a movement forward in increasing the BSA. However, I'm concerned about the added section to HB278 regarding the school grading system. This type of a grading system will have a serious impact on alternative and non traditional schools who are serving students who are at risk. We need to ensure that legislation is thoughtful regarding all schools. Without those alternative schools, our overall graduation would be impacted. Please help by removing the grading system section that will no doubt be weighed primarily by attendance and test scores that are often the weaknesses of students attending alternative schools.

Thank you for your consideration as you make such important decisions that impact the future of our educational opportunities.

Danalee Jackson
A concerned citizen and educational advocate.

Sent from my iPhone

Kake City School District



**P.O. Box 450
Kake, Alaska 99830
(907) 785-3741**

April 8, 2014

Dear Senators:

I would first like to thank the members of the House for addressing several of the concerns that we had with HB 278 prior to passing the bill on to the Senate. I know from experience that there is no perfect bill and while we may not agree with every provision of HB 278 we support the majority of the items in the bill.

Unfortunately, there was an addition made to this bill that makes no sense for our state, and does not align with a well thought out educational system the legislature has been advancing. That addition was the A-F grading scale that was part of HB151. This is a Florida law that has been sold as a silver bullet and that has been responsible for cheating from the Department of Education in Indiana to the state of Florida having to rework the passing standards every few years so that they do not have too many schools receiving "F's". There was a great deal of testimony concerning this bill last year and many Alaskans have stated their reservations about this program.

This addition would take a well thought out program in our new accountability system. I am not sure how much more information A-F would give than our current 5 star system. It would definitely brand a school and be very demoralizing to those students and teachers who walk through the F school each day. I guess the Scarlett letter is supposed to be designed to encourage people to do better, but coming from a former "turnaround principal", I can assure you that one of the things a district must do in order to turn a school around is to establish a culture where the students, staff and community believe that the students are worthwhile, that they can achieve at a more rigorous standard and achievement is worth their effort. The "A-F" brand on low performing schools would be another unnecessary obstacle for them to overcome.

I ask that you please remove this unneeded provision from this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin Shipley
Superintendent

Kake City School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2014 1:28 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278 --- vote to increase the BSA by \$400

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: Suzanne Smerjac [<mailto:suzanne.smerjac@gmail.com>]

Sent: Saturday, April 12, 2014 21:43

To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Hollis French

Subject: HB 278 --- vote to increase the BSA by \$400

Dear members of the Senate Finance committee,

I wanted to contact you to implore you do everything in your power to change the funding situation for the ASD and the schools around the state. I hope that this legislative session can succeed in passing a real and meaningful increase to the BSA. The BSA increase passed by the House, will barely make a dent in the budget gap faced by districts throughout the state. This proposal, which raises the BSA by 3% this year and then 1% for the following two years, is not an increase, it's a cut ---- inflation increases costs by an average of 3% per year. By the end of the three years school funding situation will be dire, especially considering last 4 years flat funding, which amounts to well over \$400 in cuts per student because of inflation costs in energy and healthcare paid by by our school districts. Our schools are operating on bare bones budgets and still they are able to offer children pullouts of art, music, physical education plus an amazing array of curriculum choices, not to mention providing healthcare, counseling and special services to children with learning a behavioral challenges. In order to continue the great work our public schools are doing please vote to **increase the BSA by at least \$400 this year** to prevent further teacher cuts and allow for restaffing of counselors and other key staff lost last in the last years of flat funding. Add language to the bill to support inflation proofing the BSA by tying changes in it to changes in the consumer price index for Alaska. These kids will grow up to be the future workforce of our great state; investng in children by investing in schools is an investment in the future of Alaska.

Please record this email as testimony.

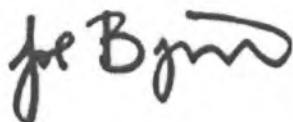
Regards,

Suzanne Smerjac
3850 Knik Ave
Anchorage, AK 99517

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 2:52 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278 (section 8, page 3). provision involving letter grades A-F

Public testimony



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



From: John Vivian kito [<mailto:chiekocharters@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 14:45
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Donny Olson
Subject: HB 278 (section 8, page 3). provision involving letter grades A-F

Good afternoon, my name is John Kito, Principal of Wm Tyson Elementary School in Anchorage, Alaska. As a point of information, the State of Alaska and Alaska school districts have been working to be proactive when describing progress made by schools during the era of NCLB. It was very disconcerting to have to use the idea of a "failing school", so many of our leaders submitted a request for waivers. This waiver was granted and as a result, a system was found to determine how the progress of a school could be determined using a "star system", known as the Alaska School Performance Index (ASPI). This provides schools with a positive venue to continue to improve and move to the next level. By using the system suggested in the amendment it becomes demoralizing to school districts having to determine if they are A-F. In my opinion, it is unfair to "brand" schools and school districts with A-F ratings and all the connotations that evolve from such ratings. Please do not consider the amendment currently included in HB 278 referring the letter grades for schools. It is counter productive to maintaining a positive and successful educational system in our State.

Respectfully:

John Kito
12601 Beachcomber Dr.
Anchorage, AK, 99515
907-244-0327

"It is the greatest of mistakes to do nothing because you can only do little--do what you can". Sydney Smith (1771-1845) British Writer

Doniece Gott

From: Marci Singleton <msingleton@wbb.bssd.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 10:36 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: teacher tenure

I believe that Alaska should keep a 3-year teacher tenure. Educators need to be encouraged to stay within the state. Students need the stability of having the same teachers year after year. Changing to 5-year tenure will discourage teachers from staying in one school, or within Alaska. It is difficult to be a teacher in Alaska, especially in the bush. Teachers need all of the advantages available to them in these settings.

Marci Singleton

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:45 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: School funding

Public testimony



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



From: Claire Holland LeClair [<mailto:northsister@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 20:26
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer
Subject: School funding

To members of the State Legislature:

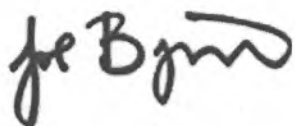
Our family is very concerned about the cuts to public education and the upcoming reduction in teaching staff in the Anchorage School District. We have two school age children and can attest to the high quality of public education here. We volunteer regularly at our daughter's schools and know first hand how talented and dedicated the teachers serving our children are. Please put education first: raise the BSA \$400 this year and \$125 in the next two years. Please invest in our future.

Claire Holland & John LeClair
Anchorage, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:45 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Support for an increase to the BSA

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



From: O'Malley PTA [<mailto:omalleypta@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 20:26
To: O'Malley PTA
Subject: Support for an increase to the BSA

We write to you in regards to the issues surrounding school funding, and the need to increase the base student allocation (BSA) by \$400 this year to ensure adequate funding for schools next school year, and commensurate increases to allow for inflation (\$125 each year). The BSA has not been increased since 2011, and has a lot of catching up to do to meet the educational needs of our children. The O'Malley PTA appreciates your service and wants you to be aware that many of our Board and membership support these increases to the BSA. While we understand that the fiscal situation for Alaska is difficult, we feel that adequate funding to education is a vital part of a healthy society, and that the funds must be made available from the state reserves. Access to a good public education is a basic right for all citizens and must be honored.

If the BSA is not raised to meet the needs of the school district, O'Malley Elementary will lose a teacher next school year, and the middle schools that our children will continue on to will also lose 7 teachers. These cuts are real, and will directly impact our children, and children statewide. We understand that your vote is critical to the outcome of this issue, and we are reaching out to you directly to express our support for adequately increasing the BSA to preserve the over 200 teaching positions slated to be cut, and potentially re-hire counselors and other education professionals that have been lost due to insufficient funds.

We thank you for your service, and for your commitment to the children of your district and Alaska.

Thank you for your consideration,

O'Malley Elementary PTA

omalleypta@gmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Lara Applebaum <laraapplebaum@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:21 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Extending teacher tenure

To Whom It Concerns,

Please keep Alaska tenure at 3 years and take the tenure extension out of HB 278 education bill. Alaska is one of 33 states with a 3-year tenure law. Only four other states have a 5-year probationary period.

- **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 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.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lara Applebaum

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:19 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education funding

Public testimony



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



From: Heidi Embley [mailto:embley_heidi@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 06:39
To: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Pete Kelly; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Education funding

Senate Finance Committee members,

Thank you for your work on increasing the BSA. I ask that you continue to push for additional funding in years two and three. It's not enough to fund the schools for the first year. If you and fellow legislators can get to \$400/\$125/\$125, then many districts statewide won't have to come back next year to ask for more funding in the face of cuts due to a budget gap. With the current proposal, the Anchorage School District is still looking at around a \$10 million gap in years 2-3.

My children are in second grade and kindergarten at our neighborhood school. This is my family's school of choice and we couldn't be happier with the education they are receiving.

Please increase the BSA to the levels needed for the next three years.

Thank you for your consideration.

Heidi Embley
Anchorage resident, parent, employee and community supporter

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:14 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW:

Public testimony



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



From: Allene Whitney [<mailto:allene.littell@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 08:17

To: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Pete Kelly; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman

Subject:

Senators and Representatives,

I am writing to you as an individual mother who is concerned for the education of her two daughters. One, our 6-year-old, currently attends O'Malley Elementary, an Anchorage public school. The other, our 6-month-old, we anticipate will attend the same school in the future. I would like both of these young people to have the opportunities that a strong school system affords, which can only be had with adequate staffing and funding.

I am writing to you to strongly advocate for the BSA increase of \$400/\$125/\$125 over the coming three years. My children and many others, the future leaders of Alaska, need this support. I as an individual am willing to commit to increased taxes, if need be, to make this happen; I can see no higher purpose for the use of state monies than to educate our young people.

Please support the BSA increase.

Sincerely,
Allene Whitney
6100 Moose Meadow Lane Circle
Anchorage, AK 99516

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:14 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: BSA

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: Velvet Ivers [<mailto:velveti@yakutatschools.org>]
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 08:18
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: BSA

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am an elementary school teacher for Yakutat School District, in Yakutat, Ak. When I first started teaching, 15 years ago, our school had over 160 students enrolled. Yakutat had an economy that was sufficient to keep people here. Commercial fishing and logging were the mainstay for our community. Our school had single grades, a music teacher, an art teacher, a PE teacher, a computer teacher, full time aides, a full time librarian, and even a full time shop teacher. Since then, the economy has tanked. Logging has been shut down for years, and fishing has shrunk to the point that the people can no longer live off of just commercial fishing. Our cost of living has sky rocketed as well. Many of our families have had to move away from Yakutat to find work. Over the past several years, the YSD enrollment has dropped below 100 students. This has had a severe effect on our school.

Over the past ten years, our elementary grades have been combined. We no longer have the "extra help" for our students (no PE, Art, Music or Computer teachers and limited aide time) The declining enrollment, means less funding from the State, and less money from our City. Granted, I only have thirteen students in my combined 3rd and 4th grade class, I still must teach two curriculum, as well as the special programs (music, art, PE and computers and library). I am not complaining about what my job duties are, I am capable of teaching these areas, and with such small numbers in the classroom, it is quite doable. However, I see a spiral effect happening. With less students, comes less funding, and less course offerings in our high school, and less extra curricular activities, meaning less opportunities for our students. Over the past several years, I know of families, who made the decision to leave Yakutat, just to take their children to a school with more opportunities. Many of our young people are choosing to apply to Mt. Edgecumbe, or find families in the city to move in with, just to have more opportunities in their education. It sounds like our school is in dire

straights, but reality is, our school has made AYP (No Child Left Behind, "Adequate Yearly Progress") each year, since it's enactment. This is due to the fact that we have had adequate staffing, and a low student teacher ratio.

I know that this is happening all over our state, so I am humbly requesting, that you consider raising the Student Based Allocation for Alaska's rural schools. We would love to keep our villages alive, and thriving. Keeping our schools funded to provide great educational opportunities, for our youth, Alaska's future, is a great place to start!

Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Velvet Ivers

Yakutat School District

3rd/4th grade

Yakutat, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:14 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Base student allocation

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: Chris Habicht [<mailto:chrhabicht@aol.com>]

Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 08:24

To: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Pete Kelly; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman

Subject: Base student allocation

Dear Senator Huggins, Senator Coghill, Senator McGuire, Senator Meyer, Senator Kelly, Representative Chenault, Representative Pruitt, Representative Johnson, Representative Stoltze, and Representative Austerman,

Please increase the base student allocation for Alaskan students to \$400. The BSA has not kept up with inflation over the past few years. Teachers are what make the difference to a child's education and school life; without the increase in BSA teachers will need to be laid off. This will have a negative impact on the quality of education and life for every family in the State.

Sincerely, Penny Crane

Doniece Gott

From: luna n <suebee_ak@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:05 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB 278

Greetings,

Let me thank you for all of the work you have accomplished in the past several weeks, there have been many things to work on. I realize that there is a lot of give and take in coming to craft bills that will be passed, however I urge you to take another look at HB278.

I urge you to take out teacher tenure, this piece of legislation is not good for Alaska. We, as a state have shown in the past few years that we do not value education or teachers; flat funding, Tier 3 retirement, the discussion to create a blanket health care plan, etc. Add extended tenure to the table and I wonder how we will continue to grow teachers, retain teachers, and attract teachers for the long term. This is not a good piece of legislation. Please remove it from the bill and leave it out of future discussions and legislation.

Respectfully,

Sue Button ,Alaskan grown educator (University of Alaska)
Anchorage, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Lance Smith <clancesmithak@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:03 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA increase of \$400/\$125/\$125 over the coming three years

The state of Alaska really need a 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, staff and programs that support our 129,000 school children across the state. 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.

Thank you,
Lance Smith

Doniece Gott

From: Sheila Curran <scurranak@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 8:36 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education Funding

Finance Committee -

Please support full funding of the BSA -- \$400 for this year, \$125 for the following two years. The middle school team model will be cut unless this full funding goes through. These kids are in teams and are close and supportive of one another in their learning with their team teachers. We need to hire good teachers AND be able to retain them. I ask for your full support so our students can receive the best education possible.

Thank you.

Sheila Curran
PO Box 929
Girdwood AK 99587

Doniece Gott

From: bmorris <bmorris@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 7:03 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: 278 Tenure for Teachers

Please pull the section concerning Teacher Tenure so that tenure will remain at 3 years. Extending the probationary time teachers would have to work without due process rights is not a positive aspect to attract and retain teachers in the state of AK.

I know several young teachers watching this topic and are preparing to move out of state if it changes to 5 years.

Thank you,

Barbara Morris
6840 S. Hallie Dr.
Wasilla, AK 99623

Doniece Gott

From: Colleen Bickford <c2mizzc@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 7:01 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please support BSA increases

Dear Finance Committee members,

This is a plea to include a schedule of Base Student Allocation funding increases over the next 3 years at the levels that have been identified by the Great Alaska Schools Anchorage public group - \$400, \$125, \$125. Investing in the education of our state's future leaders is paramount. Please do all you can to support these investments.

Colleen and Jay Bickford
5700 Penny Circle
Anchorage, AK

Doniece Gott

From: gshenk@twin-valley.net
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 6:20 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Keep Tenure

To whom it may concern,

I feel for the better meant of Alaska's students tenure needs to be offered to teachers to guarantee professionalism in the classroom.

Sue Shenk
Retired teacher (1975-1997) and Lifetime NEA member

Doniece Gott

From: Cynthia Petrovich <cpetrovich@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 12:55 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Keep Alaskan tenure at 3 years.

Keep Alaskan tenure at 3 years. Take the tenure extension out of HB 278. Alaska has enough trouble attracting and keeping talented young teachers due to the present retirement system. Please do not add another negative for our state's young teachers.

Cynthia Petrovich

Doniece Gott

From: Tim Walters <twalters@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 11:00 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Keep tenure at 3 years

Dear Senators,

Please take the tenure extension out of 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.

Sincerely,
Tim Walters
931 Hood Ct.
Wasilla, AK 99623

No virus found in this message.
Checked by AVG - www.avg.com
Version: 2014.0.4569 / Virus Database: 3882/7354 - Release Date: 04/16/14

Doniece Gott

From: Trish Clark <markandtrish@gci.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 10:38 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Teacher Tenure

Increasing the teacher tenure to 5 years is not in the best interest of gaining highly qualified teachers and the best education for our students in Alaska. Alaska has very unique circumstances due to geographic location, population diversity, and cost of living that already significantly impact recruitment of new teachers to the state. Increasing the tenure to 5 years will have a substantial negative impact on further recruitment of highly qualified teachers. I urge you to remove the initiative to increase the tenure for teachers in Alaska and keep it at 3 years.

Sent from my iPhone
Patricia Clark
Chugiak, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Carol Munk <chipmunk@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 10:34 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Teacher Tenure

From the Alaska Dispatch article a few weeks ago, I read that students have posted on YouTube, how they got rid of teachers they didn't like. It caused one teacher to commit suicide, and ruined other teachers lives, and resulted in broken marriages and relationships in the family. They way the kids did it, was to use cell phones to take pictures of "harassment", instead of sexual abuse. Harassment can include something as taking a knife away from them or other 'toys' the kids use to distract themselves during lessons.

As I understand Tenure, it's to give teachers the opportunity to defend themselves and be able to have representation.

You must understand that school Principals and Superintendents have job of saying the "customer is ALWAYS right".

Where does the teacher stand any chance of legal assistance in this without tenure being possible.

The stress would be unbearable on a daily basis for me if I were still teaching. Children have the power to write and get signatures on petitions to get their teachers out of the job.

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, so that teachers remain "at will" employees will give new teachers little reason to stay in Alaska for their full careers.

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.

Please consider SHORTENING the Tenure time to 2 years even, not extending it.

Sincerely,
Carol Munk

Doniece Gott

From: Brian Schilling <silbri@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 10:27 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: appropriate support of public education

I look forward to seeing legislation with a three-year funding schedule that increases the BSA by \$400 this year and \$125 year two and \$125 year three.

As a parent of a special needs child, we'll see further reduction of education and related services without appropriate funding. My family is already **paying out of pocket \$30,000 annually to support the educational needs of our child**, in addition to the terrific services of the Anchorage School District. Not many people can afford support at this level. Do you want to support children now to develop independent, tax-paying adults or would you rather pay hundreds of times more in state monies caring for a dependent adult for many decades?

Dr. Brian D. Schilling
8703 Mendocino CIR
Eagle River AK 99577

Doniece Gott

From: Jody Stahl <jstahlcounselor@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:05 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Funding for our schools

To whom it may concern;

It certainly appears that the AK public has spoken out in favor of funding and supporting our public schools. I realize the decisions you face regarding our state budget are difficult. I thank you for your service. I am asking that you please put funding into our BSA so that funding can be put directly into classrooms for counselors, teachers, supplies and all that it takes to help our children's education be the best it can be. A bare bones staffing situation in our schools does nothing but burn people out and drive them from the career of education. Students are coming into our schools with greater needs than ever before. We cannot expect 1 classroom teacher to do it all, and more importantly when class sizes are being raised due to budget cuts. Please raise the BSA to adequately fund our schools at the classroom/support staff level that is necessary to educate our students the best we can. Let's make the great state of Alaska a leader in education not a follower.

Thank you for your consideration in making HB 278 the best it can be for the benefit of all Alaskan students.

Respectfully,

Jody Stahl

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Iiana Kerschbaum <ilanakersch@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 8:48 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Keep teacher tenure

I am writing to you today to let you know I am saddened by the proposal to change tenure to 5 years to 3 years for new teachers. It is my understanding that districts can add more time onto a teacher during the 3 year probationary period if they are not demonstrating what is needed in their performance as a teacher.

This is my 16th year as a public educator and 10th with the state of Alaska. I am torn between looking for another career at some point when my children are a little older or sticking it out, because I used to love being a public school teacher, and hope things start turning around to keep great teachers in Alaska. I don't believe Alaska is making some wise choices for public schools, teachers and most importantly our children.

Do the informed and right thing.
Don't change the current tenure policy.
Iiana Kerschbaum

Sent from my iPad
Sent from my iPad

Doniece Gott

From: Jill Boyd <jillboyd31@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 8:23 PM
Subject: HB 278

I urge you to include a three-year schedule of BSA increases of \$400-\$125-\$125 in the CS. I emphasize that the funding needs to be in the BSA where it can be used to keep our teachers. One-time funds may be useful for other purposes (energy costs, transportation, etc.), but they are not the reliable, annual funds needed to hire and retain teachers.

Thank you,
Jill Boyd
3100 Capstan Drive
Anchorage, AK 99516
748-7236

Doniece Gott

From: Brittany <brittany.sofia@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 8:03 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Teacher Tenure

Senate Finance Committee:

Please keep teacher tenure at 3 years. Changing tenure will limit Alaska's ability to recruit teachers.

Thanks for your time,

Brittany Bauman

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: David Kohler <dvdkhlr@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 8:01 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

Senator Fairclough

I would like to urge you to support an increase to a BSA increase of \$400-\$125-\$125 over the next 3 years. This would allow school districts to recoup some of the lost personnel and be able to plan for future years. Nothing is more important to our state than our children.

Thank you
David Kohler
Anchorage, AK.

Doniece Gott

From: Kimberly Stryker <kstryker@gci.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 7:46 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB278 - BSA Increases

Although it sounds cliché, children truly are the world's future and it is absolutely critical that we choose to invest wisely in our future.

Although one-time funds are helpful to address immediate needs or projects, school districts throughout Alaska cannot hire and retain qualified teachers if they cannot count on stable funding. My daughter is a seventh-grade student in the Anchorage School District. Because of budget shortfalls, her academic advisor and advanced-level art teacher, the school's special education teacher, has been cut from the district's payroll after having relocated from Florida just a few years ago specifically to work as a teacher at her school. Additionally, the school's basic art teacher's position was cut.

These cuts directly affect my family, most specifically, my daughter. Both of these fine teachers give their time (unpaid) to offer optional courses to students after the school day is over and not only provide instruction, but offer their support and guidance to students to help them graduate from secondary school so they can become responsible, productive adults. When people talk about concerns with education, I agree that it is true that we can't just "throw money" at the problem; however, costs have risen for everything – fuel, groceries, utilities, etc. - and it is only reasonable to increase per student allocations to avoid cuts to balance budgets.

Over the past years, the Anchorage School District has essentially been moving chairs on the Titanic in their attempt to minimize direct impacts to the classroom while struggling to balance budgets strained by flat funding and rising costs. Now, there is nothing left outside of the classroom that can be cut and now, we are seeing cuts in the classroom that are, inevitably, going to have a direct impact on students' ability to be successful.

It is unfortunate that most people are unable/unwilling to more fully participate in the legislative process. I suppose we are all busy trying to make a living for our families, help our children do their homework, walk the dog, get our exercise, get our taxes done...you get the picture. However, I hope that you appreciate the interest you are seeing in Alaska's future – our children – and their education. I would like to urge you to include a three-year schedule of BSA increases of \$400/\$125/\$125 in your committee substitute.

Thank you for your service and for considering my request.

Kimberly Stryker
18718 Citation Rd
Eagle River, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Gretchen Hopkins <hopkins.gretchen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 7:36 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Teacher tenure

As an Alaskan teacher and parent I am encouraging you to keep Alaska tenure at three years. Teachers have due process for policing our ranks. Alaska has enough trouble attracting and keeping good teachers let's not make it any harder.

Also please please please vote for upping the BSA to \$400 this year with \$125 the following two years. School districts can budget so much better and use their money so much more efficiently if it is a reliable amount

Thank you
Gretchen Hopkins

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Christine Duprow <akhouse11@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 7:35 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please keep tenure at three years

The budget cuts are negative enough! Hiring and attracting good teachers when our teacher tenure polices do not follow the majority of the U.S. is a bad idea.

Christine Duprow

Sent from my iPad

Doniece Gott

From: Ben Walker <rbenwalker@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 7:30 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer
Cc: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education Funding (HB278)

Dear Senator Meyer (and the Senate Finance Committee) -

I appreciate your deliberation on educational issues and funding since HB 278 has come over from the House, especially with the days dwindling down and all legislative business competing for your time. This is an important and far reaching issue for our State's future and I am glad you have had meaningful discussions and debates on the issues at hand. I would like to make one last request to include any and all request for education funding as part of the BSA, or, if even possible, in some other way forced or more likely to be used for teachers and other staff and not the "one time funds" that have been injected into our districts the last few years and often used for other things that do not carry as large of a student impact.

Ever since the beginning of education, probably all the way back to the Greeks wandering around in gardens as "tutors," there has been one factor that has more of an impact on student learning than any other and that is the person directing and facilitating that learning: the teacher. It has more of an impact than technology or updated textbooks or even heat. Plenty of children in other parts of the world learn in less than desirable conditions because they have the right teacher in front of them. The budget shortfalls that districts across the state are facing are eroding away those teachers. Many have been cut or moved to areas where they are no longer the experts at content and pedagogy. Those that are still in their same positions are being burned out by a lack of support from cut counselors, aides, and other staff, not to mention, in Anchorage at least, the 20% increase in number of students per day with a 20% decrease in planning time due to the elimination of middle school.

If the Legislature thinks teachers could be doing a better job, they should put forward ideas to make that a reality, such as supporting National Board Certification. Last year the federal grant ran out to help teachers with that process and the State did not pick up the slack. Additionally, a bill died in the Legislature a few years ago giving National Board Certified Teachers a bonus provided by the state as an incentive to achieve and maintain that status. Most school districts no longer offer any funds for teachers to pursue professional development.

I get really worked up when people say salary and benefits is the biggest cost driver of education. What else WOULD it be? Textbooks? Those better be some darn good textbooks!! Education is a people centered system and therefore will always been driven by the costs of having those people. However, those costs are minor compared to the costs of having an uneducated and unprepared workforce.

Taking away money from a school district and forcing them to make cuts to staff doesn't punish anyone except the students who have finally found that great teacher to help them understand how they learn, why what that learn in important, and how they can continue to see the world through that lens as they continue on through academia and into the workplace.

Please think hard about not about merely the money amount, but how that money is more likely to be spent, as the biggest impact on students, hands down, has always been the teacher. Research has proven it, experience has proven it, and even your own memories, good and unfortunately bad as well, have proven it.

Thank you.

Ben Walker

10014 Main Tree Drive
Anchorage, AK
907-360-2601

Doniece Gott

From: mark roseberry <mjrose5@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 7:30 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Teacher tenure

Senate Finance Committee,

Teacher tenure provides teachers an opportunity to have a voice about education. It is not about having a job that they can not be released from. A tenured teacher can be released if an admin follows protocol; conducts observations, properly completes evaluations and in the case of a teacher needing improvement, they can put them on a plan of improvement. If the teacher does not meet the expectations, a district has the right not to retain them.

Extending tenure squelches a teachers voice. Non-tenured teachers will be reluctant to speak out about educational issues in fear of losing their jobs for any reason. Tenure protects good teachers' right to have quality professional dialogue without fear of repercussions for having an opinion or point of view that is different than admin. This professional dialogue is needed in order to maintain a quality education system. Please do not extend tenure from 3 to 5 years.

Mark Roseberry, North Slope

Doniece Gott

From: Sue Armstrong <suearmstrong22@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 6:59 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please increase the BSA to \$400 this year

Dear my hard working senators,

I realize you have a hard job figuring out which programs to support and how much to fund each one. I am asking you to increase the BSA to \$400, where it can be used to keep our teachers. One-time funds may be useful for other purposes (energy costs, transportation, etc.), but they are not the reliable, annual funds needed to hire and retain teachers. As a mom of a 2nd grader and incoming Kindergartener, I want my school to have steady funds and not have to worry year to year. When institutions know what is available every year, progress can be made. The energy can be placed in increasing educational opportunities rather than stressed deciding about cuts that affect educational progress.

Thank you for your time,
Sue ARmstrong, South Anchorage 3309388

--

Be the change you want to see in the world.

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 6:54 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278

Public testimony



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



From: Donald Witzel [<mailto:witzdp@mtaonline.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 16:58
To: Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough
Subject: HB 278

Senators,

As I read HB 287, there are several things that I find troubling. First is the inappropriate attempt to set up a two tier system for teachers to gain tenure. Isn't the proposed change discriminatory? The amendment to the bill would establish that if one lives works in a city tenure is gained after 5 years and if working in a rural district, only 3 years, correct? It seems discriminatory to me. What I haven't heard or read is a viable reason for this change.

Second is the amendment added to provide a blanket of tax credits for every conceivable donation made to public and private schools. This seems like a pretty obvious way to bolster private schools. I don't believe it is the State Legislature's job to provide tax credits for private school donors. Again, it's inappropriate.

Third. The legislature is charged with funding public education, a job that it has somewhat neglected the past three years. The SBA needs to be increased by \$400 with inflation proofing to make up for the three years of flat funding.

In conclusion, keep tenure at 3 years, drop the tax credits for donations, and provide a \$400 increase in SBA along with inflation proofing for at least three years.

Don and Phyllis Witzel

Palmer, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Carol Shurson <carolshurson@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 6:49 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

Our children deserve the best education possible and that will only happen if you increase the BSA by 400.00 this year and 125.00 the next two years!

Carol Shurson

Doniece Gott

From: Jason Daniels <jdaniels@gci.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 6:45 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Keep the Teacher Tenure at 3 years!

Hello, My name is Jason Daniels and I am a former Teacher of the Year in the Kenai School District. I would like you to consider taking the tenure extension out of HB 278, the omnibus education bill. Alaska is one of 33 states with a 3-year tenure law. Only four other states have a 5-year probationary period. My partner teacher is due to get tenure next year and now she is afraid she will be cut because of declining revenues. I don't want to lose this fine teacher! Alaska needs good quality teachers and 5 year tenures will hurt our chances of retaining those teachers.

Thank you for your time,
Jason Daniels

Doniece Gott

From: Laura Karchere <karchel@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 6:45 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Keep teacher tenure at 3 years

This just came out today “4/17/2014 in the NEA Today Express. Thought you all may enjoy reading it. Maybe it will help with your decision on how important it is to keep teacher tenure at 3 years.

Laura Karchere
Special Education Teacher
Central Middle School
Anchorage School District

Myth 5: “Tenure” is About Protecting Bad Teachers



One of the most enduring and frustrating myths about teachers is that once you become a teacher, you have a job for life (thanks to those pesky unions) regardless of performance. You hear it everywhere: Teachers have tenure and that means they cannot be fired. The purpose of tenure – a term that is frequently misused – is to provide due process protection that allow teachers to voice their opinions, advocate for their students, and challenge inequities and bad practices without fear of unjust retaliation by principals, superintendents or school boards. But for politicians who have targeted educators and their unions, it is much easier to rally public opinion around the fabrication that it’s about protecting underperforming teachers.

“Teachers know their students better than anyone else in the school, and they can be put in a vulnerable position at certain times,” write Berliner and Glass. “What about the special education teacher who challenges conventional ways of schooling and opts for a more inclusive method over his superiors failed methods? ... What about the teacher who refuses a principal’s request to change a student’s grade from a C to an A? Or what about the one that demands to teach evolution despite community pressure not to do so?”

“Without due process, they might feel that the risk involved in speaking up is too high and choose to teach as required, ignoring what they see as the best interests of their students or their community.”

Doniece Gott

From: Andrew Campbell <alcampbell@gci.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 6:21 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: teacher tenure

Please vote to keep teacher tenure at 3 years. This protection guarantees due process only, and does not guarantee a job for life.

thank you,

R. Lorraine Campbell
Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: gotgunsak@gci.net
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 6:15 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Extending Teacher Tenure

April 16, 2014

Dear Representative Lesil McGuire,

Re: HB 278

I am in support of removing all teacher tenure provisions from the governor's education bill HB 278. As a lifetime Alaskan, I understand the challenges that the state faces in educating a diverse population in both rural and suburban areas of Alaska. I believe that the youngest citizens of Alaska need to have experienced, stable teachers; not high teacher turnover.

As an Alaskan child, I attended several elementary schools in Anchorage, and completed junior and senior high school at Robert Service-Hanshew Jr.-Sr. High School. As an adult Alaskan citizen, I have worked in many career fields including insurance, travel, and hospitality. In order to train and recruit employees who can create a stable workforce in Alaska and continue to build our state's economy, we must have well-educated citizens and voters. Currently, as a high school teacher in the Matanuska-Susitna School District approaching retirement age, and also raising my own child in Alaska, I see the challenges firsthand of getting kids workplace ready as well as prepared for a formal education whether in Alaska or out of state.

Extending teacher tenure from three to five years is a bad idea for many reasons:

1. 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.
2. Tenure isn't a job for life – it just gives teachers and school district employees their due process. Extending tenure means teachers would be probationary employees for five years who can be fired for any reason.
3. 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

Please consider removing the Teacher Tenure provisions from HB 278. This bill is almost exactly like this part of the bill is identical to HB 162, Rep. Tammie Wilson's (R-North Pole) tenure bill that is currently stalled in the Senate.

I hope to hear back from you on this HB 278.

Sincerely,

Donna M. Hickle

gotgunsak@gci.net

(907) 376-1043

Sent from Windows Mail

Doniece Gott

From: Writingtoclarity <writingtoclarity@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 5:50 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please add more funding to the BSA

Good evening,

I support an increase in the BSA of \$400 and inflation-proofing the BSA as well. I moved to Alaska because it is an amazing place, and we should and can have amazing public schools -- if they are funded. Very few Alaska issues are as important to me as quality public education for all of Alaska's children. I also have a super-long memory of voting records, and I always vote in every election.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

KC Elliott,
Proud mother of an ASD student and political junkie.

--

I'm now selling funky and fashionable aprons and tool belts to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Want to know more about Team in Training and get updates about my marathon training? Visit my page: bit.ly/kc2014marathon.

Natasha Von Imhof
301 West Northern Lights Ste 412
Anchorage, AK 99503
nvonimhof@alaska.com
(907) 240-6340

February 12, 2014

Governor Sean Parnell
State of Alaska
State Capital Building 3rd floor
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Governor Parnell-

Thank you for your efforts to pass HB21 last session. Since oil taxes fund a significant portion of our state's treasury, it's critical that Alaska remains a competitive place to conduct business for the oil and gas industry. My family is supporting "Vote No on One" both personally and professionally, to defeat the current referendum in August.

I would also like to thank you for making this legislative session the "Education Session." While the freeze of the Base Student Allocation has been difficult for the Anchorage School District, there have been some positive impacts I would like to share with you. Our district has narrowed our focus, engaged in department consolidation, and have conducted managerial audits in order to identify and address system inefficiencies.

I am here today to address a few items in your Education Omnibus Bill.

Charter School: The Anchorage School District supports charter schools; we have eight charter schools currently in our district and our board just approved the STREAM academy, Science Technology Research Engineering Arts and Mathematics for middle schoolers grades 6-8th. However, after looking at our two year pro-forma cash flow analysis, the transportation piece in the bill may cause our district to come up short in years 2 and 3. We may need a little cover to address the notion "rob the poor and give to the rich." May I suggest that preschool funding might give us the cover.

Preschool: Early literacy has proven to make a difference in children's education. Kids who participate in preschool programs come to Kindergarten ready to read, which gives them a significant head start compared to their peers. It's the biggest "Bang for the Buck" so to speak.

In addition, a preschool bill will appeal to the non-profit sectors. AK Humanities, United Way, Best Beginnings and many of the social service agencies will carry this torch and give you credit. We did an analysis at the Anchorage School District, and a \$5.0MM grant over two years could allow us to add 25-30 additional preschool programs, many of them targeted for low-income children.

Technology: Both you and Legislature have asked for accountability measures from our districts. In addition, the Department of Education and Early Development has passed recent legislation including the Alaska School's Performance Indicator (ASPI) and the new Alaska State Standards. The Anchorage School District can meet those challenges through a \$7.2 million technology grant over two years. Our goal is to-

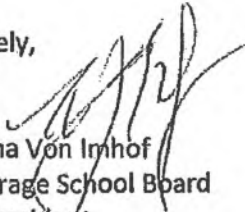
- Organize and report real time data for immediate student academic interventions
- Expand bandwidth to prepare for the online adaptive testing in 2015
- Hire programmers to consolidate all accountability systems under one umbrella to track the best return on our investment and focus our resources on those high value areas
- Design our own software programs to build a link between effective teaching and student achievement

In addition, a technology grant will appeal to the telecom industry. GCI was the gold sponsor of the Mayors Education Summit and is one of the largest employers in Alaska. An educated workforce is one of the company's top priorities.

If this grant is extended to cover districts statewide, the Anchorage School District will be happy to assist the other districts with their implementation of data management programs.

Thank you for your service to our great state of Alaska. If there is anything I can do on my end to help move your Education Omnibus bill forward, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Natasha Von Imhof
Anchorage School Board
Vice President

Superintendent Office

| Priority | Brief Description | Project Description | Estimate Cost |
|----------|---|---|----------------|
| 1 | Upgrades to Yosemite Drive | <p>This grant would fund the construction services necessary to upgrade Yosemite Drive, the access road that serves Eagle River High School. This work is required to finalize the plat for the Eagle River High School site. The project will be constructed in conjunction with the Municipality of Anchorage's project to remediate the drainage issues in this area. The scope of work includes widening the road, installing curbs and gutter and adding an additional walking path on the west side of the road. Funding for design in the amount of \$1.9 million was approved in FY2014 Capital Budget. This project will be executed by the Municipality of Anchorage to be combined with other road and drainage work.</p> <p>Project finish date will be determined by the Municipality of Anchorage.</p> | \$6,000,000.00 |
| 2 | District Wide Information Technology Upgrades | <p>The Anchorage School District (ASD) is requesting grant funding for district-wide upgrades to wireless infrastructure and digital devices. The intent of this grant request is to provide the necessary capacity for data-driven teacher development, teacher accountability and online student assessments as required by the State of Alaska. In addition to providing the infrastructure to meet the needs of these state initiatives, ASD will use technology funded by this grant to provide personalized digital learning to students during the rest of the year.</p> <p>There are three major initiatives that are driving the need for ASD to accelerate our existing technology plans.</p> <p>The first of these initiatives is state-required online assessment. Given a three week timeframe for testing with an additional week for makeup assessments, ASD will be required to administer approximately 10,500 test sessions per day. The technology demands for both wireless capacity and simultaneous device access surpass our current ability. By increasing our wireless access point and device counts, we add additional flexibility to provide mobile technologies around the district to meet the state requirement.</p> <p>ASD's shift to a state-required data-driven teacher development and accountability system is the second initiative supported by this request. This system will allow leadership to use technology to focus and streamline professional development and evaluation. The use of mobile technology to collect and facilitate teacher observation will increase the efficiency and efficacy of the accountability system.</p> <p>By expediting the purchase and implementation of the technology required to support the state initiatives of online assessment and teacher accountability, we also position ASD to innovate with digitalized personalized learning for both staff and students—the third initiative in this request. Some areas that ASD is innovating in and hopes to expand:</p> <p>1. Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) - Permitting students and staff to bring personally owned mobile devices (laptops, tablets, and smart phones) to their schools, and to use those devices to access district resources for learning and working. By expanding BYOD, we allow devices that both students and staff are most comfortable using to be extended into the classroom.</p> <p>2. Digital Learning Tools – Implementing digital learning resources in all areas of the curriculum in order to differentiate and personalize instruction. Online, adaptive software tools allow teachers to provide students with engaging curriculum targeted very precisely for individual student needs.</p> <p>3. Cloud-Based Software Solutions - Using virtualized services, we are able to provide software across any type of device with a model that is fiscally sustainable over time.</p> <p>Grant Objectives</p> <p>1. Increase wireless capacity by 20% across the district</p> <p>a. Audit and optimize existing wireless infrastructure to prepare for online assessment</p> <p>b. Purchase additional wireless infrastructure to provide access in areas of identified need</p> <p>2. Supplementary Devices</p> <p>a. Expand existing virtual desktop / application infrastructure to accommodate online testing across any device</p> <p>b. Replace devices that do not meet the minimum requirements for online assessment, and provide schools increased access to digital tools for personalized digital learning</p> <p>c. Purchase devices that accommodate the shift towards a data-driven teacher development and accountability system</p> <p>d. Provide implementation and training support for the deployment</p> | \$7,200,000.00 |

Governor Parnell,

Forgive me for waiting so long, but thank you for your Forward Thinking while rejecting the near federally mandated Common Core that will negatively influence our children and their education for years to come. Please continue to support parents along with local and state education administrations to teach and nurture those young minds and souls so dear to us.

Regards,

Diane and Wayne Buchanan

Governor Parnell,

My name is Todd Hindman, I am the principal/teacher at Anvil City Science Academy in Nome, Alaska. ACSA is a public charter school in its 16th year of operation that serves the needs of 5th through 8th grade students. The success of ACSA is due to its students, a group of supportive parents, and a dedicated, stable staff. Together, they have been able to establish a thriving educational program that I am extremely proud of. The Alaska Department of Education & Development recognized ACSA as a 2013 Reward School.

ACSA was one of the 31 schools in Alaska that are rated highest-performing, one of 37 schools that are rated high progress schools, and one of 19 schools that are being recognized in both categories.

Like most charter schools, we have faced many challenges including funding and facility issues. I would like to thank you for your proposed legislation, HB 278 and SB 139, that addresses the challenge of funding for charter schools. Several years ago, I worked with other charter schools to pass SB 57 which sought to bring equity in the funding of charter schools with a student population of less than 150. The passage of that legislation certainly did make a difference. Since ACSA only operates on state funding, we continue to face financial challenges. I have personally made the decision to take on the duties of support personnel, in order to save funding for class supplies and activities. With your proposed legislation, I hope that we will be able to have a budget that is more flexible and will allow our small staff to focus more of its time and energy on the classroom. I also support your call for an appeals process for charters that may be denied by a school district. Having this piece in place is yet another way to ensure that more charter schools can develop and yet still be held accountable to a school district and the state.

I am also happy to see other charter school legislation being proposed. Senator Gardner's proposed legislation would also help with some of the other challenges public charter schools face. The idea of being able to set up a charter school within an existing school is an intriguing idea that I think should be pursued. It may help spur an increase of charters operating in the state, especially in areas with schools that are struggling. The proposed 10% increase in BSA for charter schools would help with facility issues like rent and utilities costs. Other facility issues could be helped by allowing charter schools to access state and federal grants.

I think the legislation that you and Senator Gardner have provided is a first step in strengthening the existing charter schools statutes. The current statutes do a good job of holding our charter schools accountable to a local governing body. But at the same time, they provide the needed flexibility for innovative educational programs to develop and thrive. I hope that you will be able to support all of these efforts to make our existing and future charter schools as strong as possible.

It is my firm belief that professional educators and parents can make a difference in our public school system when they work together. I am proud to be a part of the public school system in Alaska and I am thankful to everyone who supports our public schools. Together we can all make a difference in children's lives.

Thanks,

Todd Hindman

Principal / Teacher

Dear Governor Parnell,

I am a parent of a second-grader in the Anchorage School District. I am writing to urge you to support giving our wonderful Alaska public schools the funds they need to keep up with inflation and rising costs and avoid making cuts to teacher, counselors and other important resources at the schools. Please support an increase to the base student allocation by a meaningful amount that will prevent the threatened cuts to school district budgets around the state. The BSA increases proposed in your education bill (HB 278 and SB 139) are far too small and will neither avert the proposed cuts nor stop public school funding from continuing to fall behind inflation and rising costs. My family is very happy with our son's school experience so far, but we are very aware that teacher cuts will lead to larger classes and a worse teacher to student ratio; this will result in teachers having to spend more time on classroom management and student behavior, at the expense of learning and the quality of students' experience. You can prevent this deterioration in the quality of our public schools by supporting a meaningful boost to the BSA that will adequately fund the schools.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Bernard

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Charter school funding is incredibly important to my family and me, and we appreciate all that you are doing to fund it more fairly.

My husband and I are the proud parents of a child at Aquarian Charter School, a public school in the Anchorage School District. You obviously know our issues, but we respectfully ask that you continue to keep us in mind as you work through this session.

The debate over public funding of our schools is foremost this session. And we hope that you know how much we appreciate your attention to this issue, especially equitable funding for the state's charter schools.

As you know, Aquarian Charter School is a public school. We gained access to the charter school through the lottery system. We feel the individualized instruction for our child exceeds the opportunities of our neighborhood school, and better prepares her to receive the strongest elementary education.

However, the funding for the charter schools versus the neighborhood schools is inequitable. We receive the Base Student Allocation (adjusted for enrollment factors). From the adjusted BSA, Aquarian Charter pays nearly 5% back to the school district for mandated indirect costs and then pays for additional costs including rent, teachers' salaries and benefits, maintenance, and phone lines, to name a few items. Traditional schools do not carry that burden; optional / alternative schools do not carry that burden either.

As you will note, we receive fewer dollars than our neighborhood counterparts. We receive little (if any) federal dollars, no state transportation dollars, and no grant monies. That means that we fund operations with \$7,800 for each student versus \$15,000 to \$18,000 for a neighborhood school student (according to media reports).

That is why we are now so encouraged to hear proposals which address more equitable funding for Alaska's public charter schools. HB 278 gives us hope, and we ask that a per pupil facilities allowance also be included to help charter schools like Aquarian.

Please make sure that during this education debate, you remain vigilant about the state's inequitable funding concerning our public charter schools.

Thank you for your time.

Megan Steenburgh

Dear Governor Parnell, thank you so much for taking the time to read and consider my request. I am writing on behalf of the Aquarian Parent Teacher Organization. We are grateful that you recognize the value of school choice in AK as we have all

seen the amazing benefits this opportunity has given our own children. We do have huge concerns that pending budget cuts will affect Aquarian and other charter schools across the state particularly hard. As you know we are not funded the same way as optional

and neighborhood schools. While we do not wish to take away from other programs we do wish for some more equitable funding. It is becoming increasingly difficult to preserve our school's high standards when we have to consider rent and several other costs

other optional schools do not have to factor into their budget. We are grateful for your support of HB278 and hope you will look further into this issue and include more funding for Alaska's amazing charter schools.

Thank you for your service and dedication to Alaska and taking the time to consider our issues.

Sincerely,

Laura Butcher

President/ Aquarian Charter School PTO

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-001

HV
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ALASKA

FEB 21 2014

Re: Governor's Education Bill

Dear Governor Parnell,

This letter is in support of HB278 and SB139. Specifically, the section on the Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) and the language to keep the current percentage allocation and continue the program through 2024. The TVEP funding is vital to AVTEC operations.

When the legislation first implemented TVEP, the bill helped change technology at AVTEC in a drastic way. It allowed for money to be allocated for advancing technology and allowed students to receive the education needed to be successful in society. With technology continually on the rise in today's society more money is always needed to improve the delivery of technology. AVTEC uses TVEP to help students advance their knowledge in a changing society by upgrading technology used daily and allowing them to find better jobs within our community. The funds are allowing Alaskans to get the education and background needed in the job market and keeping them local giving back to our state.

TVEP is essential to AVTEC and Alaska's future. Alaskans have been given an opportunity to give back to their communities and not have the wait that they have had in the past at the university. This money is allocated to help pay for salaries, educational tools for students, computers, and also see that facilities are maintained. AVTEC has gained national recognition for some of its programs and this has brought more attention to AVTEC as a whole.

Sincerely,



Ida Brothers
Student

Teck Alaska Incorporated
Red Dog Operations
3105 Lakeshore Drive
Building A, Suite 101
Anchorage, AK USA 99517

+1 907 428 2170 Tel
+1 888 900 1179 Fax
www.teck.com

Teck

March 21, 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Parnell:

As a major employer in Alaska and most specifically in NW Arctic Alaska, we wish to go on record in support of HB 278 and SB 139. We support the "omnibus" approach to funding education this session and see it as a way that all regions of the state, both urban and rural can benefit.

For some years now we have worked closely with the Northwest Arctic Borough School District and with the Alaska Technical Center in Kotzebue to train workers for hire at Red Dog. We see some particular aspects of your proposed legislation to be of specific benefit to the continuation of our effort.

The Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) has for years now provided considerable ongoing support to the funding of the Alaska Technical Center. We support your efforts to improve the quality of the TVEP program and to improve its accountability. We further appreciate your support of continued funding for this quality vocational educational institution.

As you know, much effort, combined with considerable support from yourself and your administration has gone into the development of a new Magnet School in Kotzebue. This new institution (STAR) will provide residential secondary and post-secondary education opportunities for up to 200 students in grades 11-14. An academic and vocational educational curriculum will be provided through the collaborative efforts of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District, the Alaska Technical Center and the Chukchi College.

Your proposed amendment to the State Education Credit program to include residential construction and operation costs will certainly go a long way to enhance the opportunities for public/private partnerships as the new Magnet School becomes a reality.

Lastly, in a similar regard, your proposal to fully fund the board and room stipend for residential students should lead to the proper alignment of school spending and will serve to protect valuable instructional dollars from suffering in order to cover the required housing costs of residential students.

We support HB 278 and SB 139, and thank you for proposing this legislation and your support for funding education in Alaska.

Sincerely,
Teck Alaska Inc.



Henri Letient
General Manager

From Justina Pelletier to the Romeike family to the high school senior suing her parents in New Jersey, the rights of the parents have been called into question in several major cases recently. On radio this morning, Michael Farris of ParentalRights.org

joined Glenn Beck to discuss the work his organization is doing to introduce a 'Parental Rights Amendment' to the U.S. Constitution and state constitutions around the country." The Blaze

I strongly recommend that Alaska enacts an amendment like this - it includes the right to educate your child in the manner you see fit; it would compliment the School choice Ballot Initiative quite well..

Thank you for your consideration.

Becky Krizan

Karen Parr
949 McGown St. Apt. 3E
Fairbanks, AK 99701

BR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
MAILROOM

FEB 14 2014

February 10, 2014

Hon. Sean Parnell, Governor
State of Alaska
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Gov. Parnell:

Your State of the State message was encouraging to me as a retired teacher. I tried throughout my career to reform public education, as I perceived it from within the system. My efforts did not accomplish much. Schooling is managed top-down, and highly defensive of its centuries-old practices.

I applaud your initiatives for multiple ways to achieve secondary education and to give parents more choices for their children. But I am distressed that you haven't tackled the dual problems at the beginning that create much of the later disaffection, failure, and dropping out.

Both problems stem from the false assumption that all children develop at the same pace, so that all 6 year olds are at about the same level. Our insistence on grouping children by age instead of by developmental level has put those late-bloomers at a terrible disadvantage; they feel they are "dumb" and "not good at school." This is not a slight difference I am talking about: in a typical first grade class developmental levels can have a two-year range.

Boys on the average develop more slowly than girls at first. They are a year behind at age 6; by age 11 there is a 2-year gap. No wonder more boys struggle, and don't finish high school. All educators know this. The usual solution they offer is that teachers adapt their instruction for various levels in each class. This takes great skill, and the social stigma remains.

The second problem is related. At age 6, some are already reading at grade 3 level; others have a very limited vocabulary and no experience of books. Much of this disparity is due more to home environment than to the child's developmental stage, and it can be greatly mitigated by well-run preschools for ages 3-5. The efficacy of this approach has been proven over the last 30 years. The Rand Corporation's massive study ("Investing in Our Children," 1998) found that for each dollar expended in public pre-school for at-risk children, seven dollars was saved in tax money in the areas of, for example, special education, welfare payments, law enforcement, and prisons.

I urge you to initiate planning for real reform of education. It would many years and substantial funding, but wouldn't it be good if 98% of our children were successful?

Sincerely,
Karen Parr



Alaska Charter Schools Legislator Information

Our goal is for the State of Alaska to equitably fund charter schools across the state.

Above all, inequity in facility funding is the largest barrier to new charter school start-ups as well as the single most significant challenge hindering charter school sustainability and growth.

Alaska's charter schools are **public** schools authorized by and run under any of the state's local school districts. Every charter school employs public school teachers who are part of the teachers' **union**. Charter schools must adhere to all the same standards and regulations of any school within their authorizing district. Charter schools differ in the fact that they are exempt from certain curriculum purchases within districts and they are governed by a parent board (APC) responsible for curricular and budgetary decisions. If the charter school employs a principal, the principal is hired by and reports to the APC, but remains a district employee.

Alaska's Charter Schools are established under AS 14.03.250. Alaska's current charter school law allows for educational collaboration between local districts and charter schools while prohibiting outside interests from capitalizing on our Alaskan educational dollar. Even though Alaska's charter school laws offers public educational choice as well as accountability, charter school laws, as they relate to charter school funding are open to a great deal of interpretation resulting in significant differences throughout the state in the way charter schools are funded by the local districts. AS 14.03.260 dictates that charter schools be funded "in the same manner as it would be for a student enrolled in another public school in the district". However, through conversations with charter schools operating all around the state, we have determined that charter schools are funded very differently, district by district.

As parents of charter school students, we believe the following items are needed to further strengthen the state's charter schools:

- **Provide state-funded per pupil facilities allowance or 25% charter school BSA bonus, plus allow excess dollars to roll over each year** - charter schools must provide all operations out of one budget – that includes teachers' salaries and benefits, textbooks, copiers, etc. Unlike traditional, optional, or alternative schools, charter schools in Anchorage must also pay rent, maintenance, insurance, and utilities. Public schools are not permitted to hold excess dollars in their accounts at the end of the fiscal year and that prohibits charter schools from saving for future expenses. Rollover exemptions would be needed, with approval of a facilities allowance or BSA bonus, in order to save for charter school construction and maintenance.
- **Mandate that funding shall follow the public school student** – all local dollars, state funding allocations (like energy relief and safety / security grants), and federal (dollars for military families) and transportation monies;
- **Reinstate and/or fund state grant programs for charter school facilities** (Examples include: **AS14.11.105-AS14.11.120, AS14.11.121, AS14.11.125, AS14.11.126, AS14.03.263**) – provide assistance for charter-school start-ups as well as savings for future construction and maintenance;
- **Cap state-mandated indirect fees at 4% of BSA (prior to adjustments)** – Aquarian, for example, pays nearly 5% of what it receives for funding back to the school district. We ask that you establish a reasonable, consistent rate, and require transparency in the current fee calculation; and,
- **Provide property tax exemption for all properties on which a charter school is operating** – presently, charter schools on property held by a private owner [for example, Winterberry (school) – Criterion (construction company / mortgage holder)] must pay property taxes. Exemption should be provided.

Why try to mandate equalities on the state level?

Charter schools are governed by state law. Those current charter school laws are open to a great deal of interpretation allowing for significant differences throughout the state in the way charter schools are funded at the local district level. Strengthening the state charter school laws regarding funding will allow equal opportunity for a charter school to succeed no matter what district they are operating in while maintaining the collaborative relationship with the local districts.

Differences across the districts are significant; funding variations range from districts that pass through all available funds (Mat-Su) or house charter schools rent free in district facilities (Kenai), to districts that provide no assistance with facilities (Anchorage / Fairbanks) and are charging above the state-determined indirect fees (Fairbanks). Additionally, districts provide varying degrees of support with regard to specialized services including special education services. That, in turn, hinders the ability of charter schools to educate children with special needs.

A data request to the state office (2/3/2013) for detailed charter school funding information revealed that the state is not currently keeping data of this sort. The only way to identify the differences is to contact each district, or even school, on an individual basis.

Why should funding follow the public school student?

Currently, depending on which district a charter school operates in, a charter school can receive as little as half the funding a local neighborhood school receives. Yet our charter schools are public schools required to adhere to all local, state and federal policies and standards, open to all Alaska children for no cost. The funding requirements established by the current state laws only mandate a portion of available funds go to charter schools. We believe all local, state, and federal funding formulas used for neighborhood public school students must also be applied to optional, alternative, and charter school students.

What funds are charter schools missing?

As a result of the discrepancy between funding formulas, charter schools are unable to access to the following:

1. Local tax dollars. In the current legislation, the only mandated local dollars are the required local contribution amount. Therefore any additional dollars distributed to a local district by the local municipality currently are not required to be passed on to the charter schools.
2. State special operative funds. For the past two years the Governor's office has passed on to the local districts energy relief funds. These funds have not been distributed down to the charter schools on a per-pupil basis in all districts, including to charter schools which pay their own utility costs. Other special grants and safety and security dollars are also left to the discretion of the local district.
3. Federal monies. Federal impact dollars, received by a local district that are a result of a student count that includes students attending a charter school, are not currently passed to the charter school in which the student attends.

Why should the state assist with facilities?

Charter schools in Alaska are currently, by law, only receiving money for an operational budget. But many charter schools, including each one in Anchorage, must cover all facilities' costs out of this budget; there are no additional means of support. This leaves charter schools in districts that are not providing a facility at an extreme disadvantage. Currently we only know of one district (Kenai) in which charter schools are housed rent free by the district. However,

charter schools in the Kenai district say that this facility structure undermines Kenai's ability to assist new charter schools, which have recently been approved, because it lacks the capacity to support its desired growth.

Why should the state place a cap on indirect fees?

Presently, charter schools pay indirect fees to their local school districts out of the BSA received per pupil. The indirect fees vary each year – from roughly less than 3% to more than 6%. While charter schools recognize and appreciate the symbiotic relationship with the individual school districts, there is no transparency with regard to the benefits received as a result of these indirect fees and there is no consistency as to the amount of the fee itself. The Department of Education and Early Development sets the indirect fees and it appears as though some districts may also add on to that. We ask that, for planning purposes, the local district submits to the state the value of services received and that the amount be capped at 4%.

Why should schools receive a property tax exemption?

All schools should be exempt from local property taxes (and any possible state property taxes in the future). The current funding structure has forced some of Alaska's charter schools to seek private solutions for school construction. The private solutions are tremendously costly – hundreds of thousands of dollars a year with the option to purchase the building at today's value in 20 years – but they also come with a tax bill. Schools in this predicament, like Winterberry in Anchorage, pay tens of thousands of dollars in property taxes every year, out of the education budget, to the Municipality of Anchorage.

Why do charter schools need a per-pupil facilities allowance and a state-funded grant program for facilities?

A per-pupil facilities allowance is the simplest and fastest way to get money to the charter schools which are in dire need of facility monies, including rent and maintenance. Grant programs are a long-term solution that would require investments on an annual basis to provide for savings for future construction and maintenance. A grant program would require incorporating into the DEED system or creating a new one to support charter schools. Charter schools can assist in structuring the program.

In HB 278, it is proposed that state charter schools are given access to grants under AS 14.11. However, if charter schools are pooled with local district neighborhood schools, there is very little chance of access to construction funds due to the first-come first-serve basis employed by the districts. Additionally, discussions with the district have also revealed they are not in a position to assist financially at this time, beyond simple maintenance projects.

Why do charter schools need transportation dollars?

Charter schools provide individualized learning with diverse approaches. This environment is especially conducive to low-income students. Data shows that at Aquarian Charter School, economically-disadvantaged students are performing at the same level as non-economically disadvantaged students. Public transportation dollars could be provided solely to low-income families who would not access a charter school otherwise.

Why mandate union teachers?

Recruiting is always an issue in Alaska. It is even more so in the teaching profession. The best teachers desire greater compensation and benefits. Right now, that is provided by the teachers' union. If charter schools were mandated to accept non-union teachers, it would not only be difficult to recruit teachers, but impossible to hire and retain highly-qualified teachers. Union exceptions for non-teaching positions are welcomed to hold back costs as recruiting is not as much of an issue.

Vernessa Richards
PO Box 1083
Kotzebue, AK 99752

February 6, 2014

Governor Sean Parnell
Alaska State Capitol Building
Third Floor
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

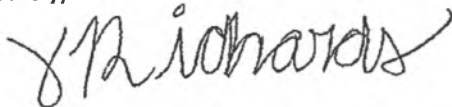
Dear Governor Parnell:

My name is Vernessa Richards I was raised in Kotzebue, Alaska. I'm currently a student in the Business Technology Program training for the Administrative Assistant Certificate with Alaska Technical Center. My training is a yearlong program. I firmly plan to use my Alaska Technical Center Administrative Certificate which I anticipate earning in May 2014 to get a job working in administration. I'm a young mother to a four year old boy, whom also just started preschool the same time as I started coming to class. I chose training here at the ATC simply because I want to be somewhere close to home with my son and would have the support of my family.

My time here with ATC has been a great learning experience. I had the chance to get on the job training with 3 different organizations here in Kotzebue. During my first semester I had the opportunity to job-shadow for Manilaq Association in the Finance Department as a File Clerk 1 for a total of twelve hours. My next rotation was with the Kotzebue IRA as Administrative Assistant for a total of eighteen hours. Last, but not least was my visit to the Northwest Arctic Borough as a Receptionist for a total of twelve hours. The on the job training gave me a better understanding of being in the workforce. I'm forever grateful for Cindy Lincoln our OJT Coordinator for guiding me through that new experience. I enjoy taking my classes with my instructor Mrs. Warren. Being here with the ATC I was also able to make new contacts and lifelong friends from all over the Nana region.

I believe that the Alaska Technical Center is a great benefit to our region and to the State. I understand that the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) reauthorization is being considered this legislative session and I fully support the continued reauthorization and continued support of ATC.

Sincerely,



Vernessa Richards, Student

ATC Business Technology Program

February 6, 2014

Governor Sean Parnell
Alaska State Capitol Building
Third Floor
PO Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001

Dear Governor Parnell;

I am writing in support of full funding for the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) House Bill 238 Senate Bill 139. I have lived and worked in the Northwest Arctic region of Alaska for the past 33 years. I am a retired teacher the father of 6 and currently run the Maniilaq Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation program. Our region needs a motivated, educated workforce, the Alaska Technical Center is a major component to seeing that this is realized.

As a father I have experienced firsthand the changes that ATC has made possible for my son who experiences a disability. He was able to work towards and earned his GED last February. The attention that he received at the Tech center in Kotzebue by the staff helped build his self-concept and propelled him into a positive forward momentum. Since receiving his GED he has gone on to earn certification as a Core Driller Helper, has completed the 14 week Millwright certification program and is currently enrolled in the Construction trades class. He also expects to participate in a Driver's Education program soon. Coming from a small village it was important for him to be able to have a setting close enough to home and connected to our region so that he could participate in home life and also to engage in subsistence activities. He will soon be 20 years old and is feeling confident that the training and experiences that he has gained as a result of the programs that ATC offers will give him the advantage as he begins his job search this spring.

I have also had the opportunity to work closely with the Administration and the Staff of the ATC as the Program Supervisor for the Maniilaq Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program. The MTRV program offers support to tribal members who experience disabilities that present barriers to employment. I have found that the staff at the tech center has been very



907-475 2162 voice 1-888-743-9264 fax

Tom.cyrus@maniilaq.org

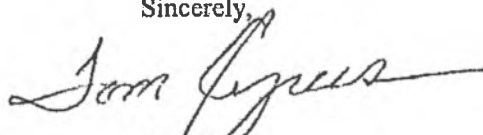
Tom Cyrus, Program Supervisor
Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation
Maniilaq Association
P O Box 135 Kiana, AK 99749

accommodating and receptive to working with tribal members with disabilities to provide them a level playing field when it comes to vocational training and opportunity. The tech center has an atmosphere that lends itself to providing support to all of its students, meeting them where they are and helping them reach their educational goals and as a result achieving an employment outcome.

One of the major strengths of the Alaska Technical Center is its location. Kotzebue is the hub of our region and feels like home. With its easy access students do not feel left out of family and subsistence activities. It is also easy for family members to stay connected as they travel in to Kotzebue from the villages. The well trained staff is knowledgeable and has practical experiences in their respective fields from Mining, Construction, Office Occupations, and Health related fields. This knowledge and experience easily translates to the students that what they are learning in class has a direct correlation to what they will be doing at the workplace. The Administration also works closely with local employers and organizations so that the programs offered are what is needed for the local market.

The Alaska Technical Center is an important component in the NW Arctic region to provide lifelong learning to our people. As a state we need to continue to support it by providing funding to ensure workforce development. I certainly encourage you as Governor to support the efforts of the Tech Center and demonstrate that support by providing full funding for the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) House Bill 238 Senate Bill 139. Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,



Tom Cyrus



907-475 2162 voice 1-888-743-9264 fax

Tom.cyrus@manilaq.org

Tom Cyrus, Program Supervisor
Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation
Manilaq Association
P O Box 135 Kiana, AK 99749

NWALT *Northwest Arctic Leadership Team*

February 6, 2014

Governor Sean Parnell
Alaska State Capitol Building
Third Floor
PO Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001

Dear Governor Parnell:

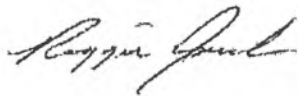
The Northwest Arctic Leadership Team (NWALT) is a collaborative effort between NANA, Maniilaq, the Northwest Arctic Borough and the Northwest Arctic Borough School District designed to maximize resources and reduce the duplication of efforts to address issues affecting the people of Northwest Alaska, while honoring and perpetuating our Inupiat cultural heritage. The Alaska Technical Center (ATC) is an active participant in NWALT activities and provides services that have cross-cutting benefits within our region and the state.

The Alaska Technical Center (ATC) is an adult vocational/technical school for all Alaskans. The core programs offered by ATC include business technology, health occupations, construction trades technology and process technology. Additionally, in FY 15 a new culinary arts program will be offered. ATC also provides various short-courses that meet employer and business partner needs.

NWALT is in support of House Bill 278 and Senate Bill 139 which includes language addressing the reauthorization of the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) which provides grants to high demand career and technical education entities for industry-specific, on-the-job, and classroom training like ATC. Employers like NANA, Maniilaq, Red Dog and other private entities in the region benefit from TVEP funding to ATC because the Center provides high demand training to meet our unique workforce needs.

A priority of NWALT has been to ensure the renovation and expansion of ATC, which was realized in 2013. The expansion has allowed ATC to grow rapidly and ATC is already seeing quantifiable results. ATC has reported had 395 adult learners during the Fall 2013 term, which demonstrates the positive impact of TVEP funds.

Sincerely,



Mayor Reggie Joule
NWALT Co-Chair
Northwest Arctic Borough



Marie N. Greene
NWALT Co-Chair
President/CEO
NANA Regional Corporation

NWALT *Northwest Arctic Leadership Team*

Norman Eck

Dr. Norm Eck
NWALT Member
Superintendent
Northwest Arctic Borough School District

Barbara Janitscheck

Barbara Janitscheck
NWALT Member
Acting President/CEO
Maniilaq Association

CC: Senator Donny Olson, District T (Senator.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov)
Representative Benjamin Naegak, District T (Representative.Benjamin.Nageak@akleg.gov)
Commissioner Dianne Blumer, Department of Labor (Dianne.blumer@alaska.gov)
Nancy Dahlstrom, Department of Labor (Nancy.dahlstrom@alaska.gov)

Teck Alaska Incorporated
Red Dog Operations
3105 Lakeshore Drive
Building A, Suite 101
Anchorage, AK USA 99517

+1 907 784 5116 Tel
+1 888 900 1179 Fax
www.teck.com

February 7, 2014

Teck

Governor Sean Parnell
Alaska State Capitol Building
Third Floor
PO Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001

Dear Governor Parnell,

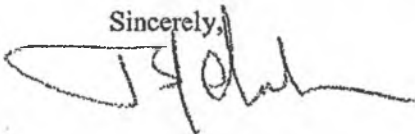
Teck Alaska, Incorporated (Teck) is pleased to provide this letter of support for funding for Alaska Technical Center (ATC). We encourage the approval of the Reauthorization of the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP), House Bill 278/Senate Bill 139. It is important to rural Alaska, and to Teck as a company, that ATC funding be approved; we have a need for trained workers in the career areas that are supported by programs at ATC.

As a major industry partner of ATC, we are proud to support the center. We have hired interns and graduates from the school, provided technical assistance in program development, hosted students and staff at the Red Dog mine, and made significant financial contributions to ATC. As a major rural Alaska employer, it is of great benefit to us to have a post-secondary training center in the region where we operate.

TVEP funding supports Alaska workers, and provides a core financial foundation to rural training centers that positions them to form effective partnerships with agencies and businesses.

Please support the passage of HB 278/SB 139.

Sincerely,



Bob Chesham
Maintenance Superintendent

CC: Cheryl Edenshaw, Director, ATC (cedenshaw@nwarctic.org)
Senator Donny Olson, District T (Senator.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov)
Representative Benjamin Nageak, District T (Representative.Benjamin.Nageak@akleg.gov)
Commissioner Dianne Blumer, Department of Labor (Dianne.blumer@alaska.gov)
Nancy Dahlstrom, Department of Labor (Nancy.dahlstrom@alaska.gov)



February 7, 2014

Governor Sean Parnell
Alaska State Capitol Building
Third Floor
PO Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001

RE: SUPPORT FOR REAUTHORIZATION OF THE TECHNICAL VOCATION EDUCATION PROGRAM (TVEP)

Dear Governor Parnell:

As you know from your visits to our facility, the Alaska Technical Center (ATC) is an adult vocational school designed to meet the vocational and technical training needs of rural Alaskans. As Alaska's northernmost regional training center, ATC understands the Arctic and rural Alaska because we live here, train here and work here. Alaskans trained at ATC know how to succeed in Alaska jobs. All programs are designed to build the Alaskan workforce and meet the needs of Alaska's employers in high fields such as natural resources, health care, education and technology.

ATC is in support of House Bill 278 and Senate Bill 139 which includes language addressing the reauthorization of the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) which provides grants to high demand career and technical education entities for industry-specific, on-the-job, and classroom training like ATC. It is particularly important to rural training centers that the allocated percentages written into the current bill remain in place; further dilution of these funds will be detrimental for rural learners.

ATC has just completed a major renovation and addition, including new state-of-the-art equipment and curriculum supporting our programs. This expansion has allowed us to grow rapidly and we are already seeing quantifiable results. During the Fall 2013 term, ATC served a total of 395 adult learners.

Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) funds provide a significant portion of the basic operational funds for ATC. ATC has four high-demand core program areas: business technology, construction trades technology, process technology, and health occupations. TVEP funds will allow for implementation of a new culinary arts program for FY 15. In addition, ATC provides Adult Basic Education, including a regional GED program. ATC also provides a variety of short-term training sessions during the year, in response to regional and statewide needs.

All ATC training programs are aligned with University of Alaska Fairbanks courses and certificate and degree programs. Students may dual enroll for ATC and UAF credit in most courses. All programs

ALASKA TECHNICAL CENTER

"A Vocational/Technical School for Alaskans"

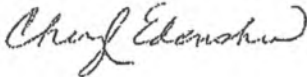
PO Box 51; Kotzebue, AK 99752 ♦ Phone: (907) 442-1500 ♦ Fax: (907) 442-2764 ♦ nwarctic.org/atc

Letter to Governor Sean Parnell
RE: Support of TVEP Reauthorization
February 7, 2014
Page 2 of 2

meet the requirements of recognized state and national certifications. TVEP helps to provide a foundation that allows ATC to maximize additional resources through our various partnerships. ATC partners with multiple organizations and corporations locally, regionally, and statewide, to maximize resources and address workforce development issues affecting northwest Alaska. ATC is an active participant in NWALT, the Northwest Arctic Leadership Team, a collaboration designed to maximize the effective use of resources in our region. In addition, ATC is a partner in the Star of the Northwest magnet school, a grade 11-14 program with education, health, culinary and process technology career pathways.

If you have any questions and/or need further information, please feel free to contact me at (907) 442-1501 or via email at cedenshaw@nwarctic.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
ALASKA TECHNICAL CENTER



Cheryl Edenshaw
Director

CC: Dr. Norman Eck, Superintendent, NWABSD (neck@nwarctic.org)
Senator Donny Olson, District T (Senator.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov)
Representative Benjamin Nageak, District T (Representative.Benjamin.Nageak@akleg.gov)
Commissioner Dianne Blumer, Department of Labor (Dianne.blumer@alaska.gov)
Nancy Dahlstrom, Department of Labor (Nancy.dahlstrom@alaska.gov)



Yuut Elitnaurviat

P E O P L E ' S L E A R N I N G C E N T E R

Alaska National Guard • Association of Village Council Presidents • Association of Village Council Presidents, Regional Housing Authority • Bethel Community Services Foundation • Callista Corporation • City of Bethel • Lower Kuskokwim School District • Orutsarmuit Native Council • UAF – Kuskokwim Campus • Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation

February 9, 2014

RE: HB 278-Education Funding

Hon. Sean Parnell

Governor Parnell:

Yuut Elitnaurviat-People's Learning Center Inc. (YE) thanks you for submitting HB 278 (SB193) and supports the passage of the bill, particularly as it relates to extending the sunset of the TVEP program. As you are aware, we are a recipient of TVEP funding (9%), which we feel a modest investment that in turn provides a substantial return for the State. YE is also aware of and supporting two other bills that are currently set to extend the sunset provision for TVEP- HB 150 and SB 93. We have written letters of support for those initiatives as well. We are not a secondary education institution, thus do not feel we can adequately address the other components of this legislation.

YE is a fully operational vocational school located in Bethel. Our organization was created to deliver workforce development programs to our region, the most populated in rural Alaska. The legislature took a leap of faith and named YE as a TVEP recipient when the program was created in 2004. YE was still early in its development, and this investment from the state made it possible to pilot programs while our campus was still under construction. When we became fully operational in 2009 we were ready to expand and we hit the ground running. Our service numbers jumped from an average of 150 per year during development to nearly 3,000 in 2012.

YE fully utilizes all of our TVEP funding by March or April of each fiscal year. We then spend earned revenue to get us through the end of each year. As it stands we have struck a nice balance with our business model. Our staffing is small, but adequate. Our programs are robust and responsive to our regional workforce development needs. When fuel costs increased dramatically last summer and heating fuel hit \$7 a gallon, we invested in wind turbines and solar panels. The net effect has been that our costs are the same as they were the year before the increase. We are happy with our current funding levels. They ensure we are frugal and encourage us to constantly strive to improve and explore new opportunities.

We have data and statistics that demonstrate the state's investment in our activities is a good value. As it presently stands TVEP constitutes approximately 24% of our annual operating budget. In return for this investment YE provided 3000 services to approximately 1700 individuals in calendar year 2013. YE has developed a very sophisticated customized student tracking database over the last 7 years. The database tracks students progress through programs and after they enter the workforce. YE services include direct training for dozens of industry driven classes, career guide services, GED instruction & testing (largest program in rural Alaska), Rural Alaska's only State Certified Driving School (permit classes, behind the wheel training, ADL & CDL testing), hosting the Dental Therapy Program (the only of its kind in the US), Rural Alaska's only full apprenticeship programs for Industrial Electric, Plumbing & Carpentry, coordinating the Stem Ready(formerly RANSEP) program (brings village based high school students to Bethel so that they can take advanced math and science classes).

Yuut Elitnaurviat – The People's Learning Center • 610 Akiachak Drive • PO Box 869 Bethel, Alaska 99559 • Phone 907-543-0999 • Fax 907-543-0998

Yuut Elitnaurviat – The People's Learning Center Inc. is an equal opportunity employer and program administrator.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.



Yuut Eliitnaurviat

P E O P L E ' S L E A R N I N G C E N T E R

Alaska National Guard • Association of Village Council Presidents • Association of Village Council Presidents, Regional Housing Authority • Bethel Community Services Foundation • Callista Corporation • City of Bethel • Lower Kuskokwim School District • Orutsaramult Native Council • UAF – Kuskokwim Campus • Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation

YE takes great care in collecting student data and keeping impeccable financial records. We take our commitment to our funders seriously and strive to ensure we are always good stewards of all public and private funds that support our endeavors. Our greatest pride however is our commitment to our students. We know them. We know their families. We want them to succeed. We link our services and programs to encourage students to keep moving onward and upward.

In 2012 George Kameroff completed our Certificate in Construction and Maintenance. He then enrolled in our Electrical Apprenticeship program with Chulista. Receiving the certificate allowed him to transfer 500 hours towards his apprenticeship program.

Debbie Rushing moved to Bethel and completed her GED at age 54. She subsequently completed our Certified Nursing Assistant Program (CNA) and had a job waiting as soon as she finished the program.

YE has recently partnered with the Association of Village Council Presidents to deliver a welding program. Nine students completed the program and are currently working building the boardwalks in their own community. Without the training, contractors would have been brought in from outside the region to do the work. After the guaranteed experience this summer, these new welders will have both classroom and work experience under their belts and can apply for high wage jobs at remote camp sites throughout the state.

Anthony Nevak was a 19 year old junior in danger of dropping out. YE recruited him into the RANSEP Program. He came to Bethel for two semesters of advanced math and science coursework. He completed the ANSEP Acceleration Academy and the ANSEP Summer Bridge Program. Anthony graduated and entered UAA without needing any remedial classes. He is now excelling in his sophomore year of college at UAA with the ANSEP program.

We know there have been many questions regarding the performance of TVEP recipients, and whether some are meeting the expectations of the State. As we look at the TVEP recipients we see a diversity of program models, none of which are delivering services in the same manner. To us, this doesn't mean that one is better than the other. Each is responding to the needs as they and their local governing boards have determined to be appropriate. Alaska is a very big state, and every region of the state has its own challenges and ways to address their own challenges.

At YE, for example, we provide many industry/employer driven classes that end up with 100% employment (after successful completion). We have 4 of those programs going on this very minute-Facility Maintenance Technician, Commercial Driving-Class A, Certified Nursing Assistant and the Dental Health Aide Training program. However, there are other, more basic, workforce development issues that have to be addressed before we can provide only direct to employment programs. Our Governance has directed us to ready the people of the YK region for jobs that exist in our region. To do that requires much work and training/services that do not immediately relate directly to someone entering the workplace. YE is excited to join the State in its mission of readying the under tapped employment resources of Rural Alaska for gainful employment in the many projects that are being developed throughout the State.



Yuut Elitnaurviat

P E O P L E ' S L E A R N I N G C E N T E R

Alaska National Guard • Association of Village Council Presidents • Association of Village Council Presidents, Regional Housing Authority • Bethel Community Services Foundation • Calista Corporation • City of Bethel • Lower Kuskokwim School District • Orutsaramuit Native Council • UAF – Kuskokwim Campus • Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation

As you are aware, our region, not unlike other regions of rural Alaska is in the process of transitioning from a more traditional (Yup'ik) way of life to a more "western" way of life. This is not an easy transition, and one that will not happen overnight. This transition requires work-readiness prior to direct employment training. We recognize this is a longer-term plan, however, without the essential foundations of work readiness; employment training will have only short-term impact. Because of that, YE puts forth much effort in areas that much of Alaska take for granted. GED services, Drivers Education, Career Guide services, etc. We feel that our efforts in these areas are successful, and we believe these issues should be taken into consideration when the State is trying to determine which programs are successful and which aren't. We look forward to working with the State to identify ways to account for the success and impact of these work readiness efforts.

We believe the State has a vested interest/responsibility to support workforce development in Rural Alaska. TVEP is a relatively modest investment that provides, with our other leveraged funds, YE the ability to provide much needed workforce development services to the YK Delta.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt Kuhne'.

Kurt Kuhne
Executive Director
Yuut Elitnaurviat-The People's Learning Center, Inc
PO Box 869
Bethel, Alaska 99559
(907)543-0999



February 17, 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-001

Re : Governor's Education Bill

Dear Governor Parnell,

We are pro education and training that takes place within Alaska. We feel it is important that HB278 and SB 139 continue funding through 2024 and that its critical Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) keep their current percentage allocations.

The technical skills are in short supply across the United State. AVTEC is offering programs to train Alaskans in areas where technical skills are needed the most at home in Alaska.

AVTEC and the University require funding to stay current with industry. Today TVEP is a major component assuring this continuous.

Sincerely

David Cushman
Air Liquide America LP
Manager Business Development

Advisor ACTEC Welding Program

"Any gas, any time, anywhere..... Air Liquide America"



AIR LIQUIDE AMERICA L. P.

Document1

● **Region Office** ● 6510 Arctic Spur Rd., Anchorage, AK 99518-1546
Phone (907) 562-2080 • Fax: (907) 561-8364
● **Store Location** ● 6415 Arctic Blvd., Anchorage, AK 99518-1546
Phone (907) 562-2080 • Fax: (907) 564-9752

Farrell L. Andrew
6121 Prosperity Dr.
Anchorage, AK 99504

February 17, 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-001

RE: Governor's Education Bill


Dear Governor Parnell,

My name is Farrell Andrew and I am a recent graduate from AVTEC – Alaska's Institute of Technology. I obtained my Medical Administrative Assistant Certificate in December of 2013. I now currently work in the Hospital Education Department through Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC). I am writing to you today in support of HB278 and SB 139. I'm looking specifically at the section on the Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP); and to keep the current percentage allocations and to continue this program through 2024.

TVEP provides a significant amount of funding for the operations of AVTEC. The funding AVTEC receives from this fund is about \$1.8 million. It is used to pay for basic operational costs like light, heat, fuel, food, maintenance, instructional supplies, etc. Currently AVTEC receives 17% and we need that percentage to stay the same; without these funds AVTEC would cease to exist.

AVTEC provides adult vocational technical education and training to Alaskans and is a large part of how Alaska responds to its responsibility to train Alaskans from every community. Today 80% of Alaska's jobs require less than a bachelor's degree and that's what AVTEC does is train Alaskans to fill those technical trade jobs. Without AVTEC I wouldn't be where I am today, and I don't think I would have found another school that suited my needs.

Sincerely,



Farrell L. Andrew

February 17, 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-001

Re: Governor's Education Bill

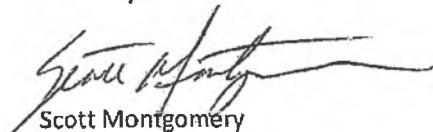
Dear Governor Parnell,

This letter is written to you to voice my support for the funding found in HB278 and SB139 regarding the Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP).

I would like to give you a brief history about myself and why I became a student at AVTEC. Currently I am enrolled in the Industrial Electricity program at the Seward, Alaska AVTEC campus. Prior to moving to Alaska in July, 2014 I had change of heart regarding my career. I was a police officer with 17 years of experience when I moved. I decided to change occupations and become an industrial electrician due to the growing demand for electrical technicians over the next several years. I began to evaluate programs in the Pacific Northwest with the intent of completing a program to eventually move to Alaska to gain employment, but I was not planning on moving until a later date with my wife. However after hearing of the great things about AVTEC's industrial electricity program I knew that I wanted to enroll in the program as soon as possible and thus I facilitated my move in July. I have had to sacrifice time away from my wife and our business which are located in Seattle, Washington. What this equates to is AVTEC was worth my time and money to move to Alaska ahead of schedule. This is a move that I have not regretted in the least. The updated training, hands on labs, state of the art equipment, and the knowledge of instructors is un-paralleled to what I would have paid for at other schools.

I would like to ask for your continued support regarding the TVEP. AVTEC is an incredible institute and you should be proud of the results that the staff, employees, and personnel are achieving through your continued funding.

Sincerely



Scott Montgomery
AVTEC IE Student class of 2014

Governor Parnell,

I am writing this concerning the continuation of the allocations made to AVTEC through the Technical and Vocational Program. I believe that this is vital to both our state as a whole and individual communities. Attending AVTEC has played a pivotal role in my own life.

I have been a licensed aircraft mechanic for some years now, working in the aerospace industry has taken me all over the globe. It has, in short, been a wild ride. Including everything from doing routine maintenance on business jets, to crewing blackhawks in Iraq. As I have gotten older, I have had an increasing desire to work closer to home. However I have found it difficult to find jobs that I have the qualifications for outside of metropolitan areas. Considering that I am from Cordova, this has presented some very difficult decisions.

So after some deliberation, I decided to enroll in AVTEC 's diesel and heavy equipment program. At the moment of this writing, I have eight days of classes left and will be returning to Cordova Feb 27th where I will be employed by Cordova outboard. There by making it possible for me to make a very comfortable living without having to be away from home anymore than I want to be. There is no question in my mind that my story is only one of a myriad. This is why I believe that it is so important to maintain the funding the funding that AVTEC receives through the TVEP legislation.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Trucks". The signature is written in black ink and features a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends across the width of the name.

Scott Trucks

February 17, 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001

Juneau, AK 99811-001

Dear Governor Parnell,

This letter is in support of HB278 and SB 139 specifically, the section on the Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) and the language to keep the current percentage allocations and continue the program through 2024. The TVEP funding is vital to AVTEC operations.

As a student at AVTEC I feel a need to continue the current funding from the state. I came to AVTEC because I had an accident last summer and hurt my knee at work; I now have two bad knees and am currently in the rehabilitation process. My body only has a limited number of years left for hard labor, so I had to make the choice of what would be the best thing for me in the long run (a hard choice for an eighteen year old) but I came to the conclusion after doing work compatibility tests at my local job center I chose industrial electricity as my new calling. Currently five and a half months into my training here at AVTEC I keep growing more and more pleased with my decision. If it had not been for the state funding to make the tuition, and room and board cheaper for me AVTEC wouldn't have been an option for me because I had not been able to work all summer and the only money I had coming to me was my workers comp settlement check which paid off most of my costs. So instead of owing fifteen thousand dollars I only owe three thousand which is an amount of money I am comfortable owing. If there wasn't state funding I feel that the tuition at AVTEC could easily double for the program I am in, and if that were the case I wouldn't have been able to be a student here.

Sincerely,

Hunter Brewer

Student



P.O. Box 1045
302 Railway Avenue
Seward, Alaska 99664
Phone: 907.224.5257
Alaska toll free: 1.888.224.5257
Fax: 907.224.7081

February 18, 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-001

Re: Governor's Education Bill

This letter is in support of the reauthorization of the Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) funding contained in HB278 and SB139. I understand that this funding pays for basic operational costs such as maintenance, light, heat, fuel, food, instructional supplies, etc. for the Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC), and that without the funds, AVTEC would not be able to stay open. As AVTEC provides valuable education and training services that benefit our community and State, SeaView supports the continuation of these funds for the next 10 years at the necessary 17%.

AVTEC helps train Alaskans to meet the needs of industry in Alaska without having to hire for similar positions from outside the State. Our organization has hired a number of graduates from various programs, helping to meet our needs as an organization in serving the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christine Sheehan
Executive Director

Dear Governor Parnell,

This letter was written to support the TVEP funding which my school (AVTEC) needs to function. It is critical that you show support for this fund.

Alaskas Institute of Technology has changed my life and of many other students. It has given many students the skill set needed to have a productive and successful career in the State of Alaska. The funding that AVTEC receives pays for many needed training aids, maintenance costs, staff pay and facility maintenance. The specific class which I am taking, Diesel/Heavy Equipment Mechanics, has a job placement rate of 94%. This means that 94% of Diesel graduates have jobs as mechanics upon graduation. These graduates go on to be productive members of Alaskas workforce, pouring money back into the pockets of Alaska.

TVEP pays for a large part of AVTECs much needed funding. With refunding AVTEC can continue to paint a very bright picture for our beautiful state. So please, keep this great state and great school moving forward and choose to support the funding of TVEP.

Sincerely,

Andrew Kingwell

February 18, 2014

Sean Parnell
Alaska State Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-001

Captain Andrew Wakefield
Southwest Alaska Pilots
P.O. Box 977
Homer, AK 99603

Re: Education Bill HB278 & SB139

Dear Governor Parnell,

I'm writing in support of the Technical and Vocational Education Program and the funding it provides to AVTEC in Seward.

I am currently a Deputy Marine Pilot with the Southwest Alaska Pilots Association. I started my training for this career in 2010 after a 16 year career with BP transporting crude oil from Valdez to the west coast of the United States. Throughout the pilot training process I've had the pleasure to utilize AVTEC's facilities both in the classroom and in the ships simulator. To have such readily accessible and quality coursework within the state is an asset which I believe greatly benefits the state as a whole and would be missed if the current level of funding were to be reduced or eliminated.

Over the past few years I have witnessed a vast improvement in the quality of AVTEC's coursework, simulation models, simulator programming, course objectives, simulator operators and a definite improvement in the overall learning outcome. I believe the quality of AVTEC's maritime career development competes with or exceeds that of most training facilities I've attended globally. I can legitimately say that my piloting skills have been greatly improved with use of AVTEC's ship simulator.

I believe that the course work and "state of the art" simulation which AVTEC provides is vital for Alaska's future by providing safe, well trained young mariners today, and for many years to come.

Respectfully,
Captain Andrew S. Wakefield
Southwest Alaska Pilots

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT



148 N. Binkley Street Soldotna, Alaska 99669-7553
Phone (907) 714-8884 Fax (907) 262-6354

February 18, 2014

Governor Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
PO Box 11001
Juneau, AK 99811-001

Re: Governor's Education Bill

Dear Governor Parnell,

This letter is in support of HB278 and SB139, which is for keeping the current Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) percentage allocations and continue the program.


AVTEC is in dire need of this funding for staffing, training programs, maintaining facilities and student support services.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District considers AVTEC a vital partner in providing workforce development training for many of our students, and is one of the premier Career and Technical Education programs in the state.

Thank you,

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

Dan Bohrsen,

 **CTE** Learning that works for Alaska
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

February 18, 2014

Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99891

RE: Governor's Education Bill (Technical and Vocational Education Programs funding)

Dear Mr. Parnell,

I am writing this letter in support HB278 and SB139 which has portions that support continuing funding at its current levels and allocations for Technical and Vocational Education Programs (TVEP). This funding is extremely important to AVTEC's operations, and honestly their Maritime Program has changed my life.

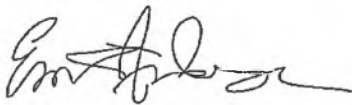
I was working hard from job to job to earn a living and support my family, With the training and scholarships I received, I was able to build a career at Crowley Maritime Services where I am currently training to be a Chief Engineer.

I grew up between Chignik Lake and Anchorage spending many summers on the water commercial fishing with my family. Now, I have a career back on the water using everything I learned during my childhood and through the great programs at AVTEC. I am not just jumping from job to job, but in a career that I can be proud of. This would not have been possible without the TVEP funding and the great instructors and staff at AVTEC.

I was able to complete the training and quickly get into a career using those skills, just like the 92% of AVTEC long term program graduates that move right into their career field. Programs like AVTEC help build Alaska's workforce from within and are both needed and greatly appreciated by everyone in our state.

Thank you for your time today. Please support continued funding through TVEP. It has made a huge difference in my life and could make a huge impact in the lives of my sons.

Sincerely,



Emmett Anderson



18 February 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811

Re: Governor's Education Bill

Dear Mr. Parnell,

This letter is in support of HB278 and SB139. Specifically the section on the Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP). TVEP funding is crucial to the success of AVTEC's programs and success of the graduates.

As an AVTEC graduate of 2005 and a current employer of AVTEC graduates, I implore you to maintain funding for this critical piece of Alaska's educational system. AVTEC has an 87% completion rate and a 92% job placement rate of long term program graduates. These statistics rival any Ivy League school in the nation. The technical training provided is a necessity for Alaska's workforce and continues to feed the developing economy.

TVEP funding is needed to keep providing students and faculty with the tools they need to succeed. We should be proud to have AVTEC as a building block in Alaska's education system.

Sincerely,

Matt Ernst
Fleet & Asset Manager

Captain Jeff Pierce
17321 Yellowstone Drive
Eagle River, Alaska 99577
907-240-2149
Jeffpierce78@hotmail.com
February 18, 2014

Governor Sean Parnell
Governor State of Alaska
PO Box 110001
Juneau Alaska 99811-0001

Dear Governor Sean Parnell:

I am a long-time resident of our great state, and I'm writing to express my concern about TVEP funding for AVTEC, Seward Alaska. I understand that the discussion concerning percentage of funding through TVEP is being considered and without this funding AVTEC would not operate as it has in the past.

I have personal experience how the facility has provided economic and industrial development for Alaskan residents and state of Alaska. I'm a licensed Alaskan State ship pilot for 30 years and also operate a small maritime consulting company Safeguard Marine LLC which provides maritime risk mitigation. We performed an analysis recently based upon the preliminary design for City of Seward concerning the breakwater development attracting the Seattle fishing fleet to permanently moor in our state. Utilizing the maritime simulator we were able to determine that the design required some changes to accommodate the larger fishing vessels. This analysis wouldn't have been feasible without the maritime simulator at AVTEC and ultimately the breakwater design analysis may have helped create economic growth and saved the state money,

This example was just one of many where the facility has provided for the economic growth and creating jobs for Alaskans' who live in our great state. The maritime simulator contribution to the maritime community and state of Alaska can't be emphasized enough as it provides training and risk assessment capabilities, which ultimately assist in our profession of protecting the marine environment, property and the citizens of Alaska from maritime related accidents.

Sincerely,

Captain Jeff Pierce



ALASKA MARINE PILOTS LLC

P.O. Box 920226 - Dutch Harbor, AK 99692
Office (907)581-1240 - Fax (907)581-1372
www.alaskamarinepilots.com

February 18, 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811

Re: Governor's Education Bill

Dear Governor Parnell,

I am writing this letter in support of HB 278 and SB 139. Specifically, the section on the Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) and the language to keep the current percentage allocations and continue the program through 2024. The TVEP funding is critical to AVTEC operations and an important benefit to the Alaskan maritime community.

My support for the importance of AVTEC comes first hand through many years of involvement and benefits that AVTEC's Maritime Training Center have for me both personally and professionally. As an Alaska state licensed marine pilot I have taken both continuing education courses and simulator training at the Center, something that years ago pilots' predominately took outside the state at facilities as far away as Florida as well as overseas. The programs and curriculum offered at AVTEC is of world-class caliber and extremely important to safe maritime operations.

As a current appointed pilot member of the Board of Marine Pilots I have also seen AVTEC's commitment grow in response to the needs of the maritime community for both licensed and unlicensed mariners.

Additionally I have also been an adjunct instructor at AVTEC teaching USCG required courses to both full time and part time students. Through this role I have been able to witness the dedication that AVTEC places on vocational technical training of Alaskans and the responsiveness it has to the maritime industry operating in this state.

I believe that AVTEC has been very successful in providing adult vocational technical education and training to Alaskans. Today, TVEP is a significant part of AVTEC's funding plan used to ensure training programs are offered, facilities are maintained, staff are paid and student services are available.

Sincerely,

David Arzt

Captain David Arzt
Vice-President, Alaska Marine Pilots



Captain Lawrence Vose
dba Lithia Navigaziun LLC
P. O. Box 33559
Juneau, Alaska 99803

February 20, 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
P. O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-001

Re: HB278 and SB139; Governor's Education Bill

Dear Governor Parnell;

Please accept this letter of support for AVTEC and the valuable resource they are to the maritime community in Alaska. As a State of Alaska licensed Marine Pilot, AVTEC is the only in-state resource capable of satisfying certain State-mandated continuing education requirements. Without adequate funding support, State-licensed pilots may be forced to complete required training out of state.

Additionally, AVTEC maritime programs, via the Alaska Maritime Training Center (AMTC), provide the only in-state comprehensive curriculum in Alaska for Alaskans to begin their careers in Alaska's maritime industry (including careers with AMHS, the oil and towing industries, etc.). AMTC provides the upper-level training and education required for mariners to progress in their careers, one example being the only US Coast Guard approved ice navigation course in the United States.

Marine Pilots across the State depend on AVTEC not only for required training, but also for Pilot Association specific and/or individual Pilot initiated professional and safety training. As Pilots we depend on AVTEC as the only State-capable facility for full-mission port-development simulation (e.g. Juneau Harbor expansion, Gravina Access Project) to support economic development in the state.

Your continued support of the Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) funding and most importantly the maintenance of the current percentages are both valued and necessary. The ability of AVTEC to continue to operate and maintain their world-class full-mission bridge simulator is dependent on this reauthorization and integral to AVTEC's continued existence and success as a viable maritime training facility, not only for licensed marine pilots but also for all of Alaska's maritime industries. Support of local Alaskans is support of AVTEC and vice versa.

Sincerely,

Captain Lawrence Vose
Southeast Alaska Marine Pilot

February 20, 2014

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-001

Subject: Governor's Education Bill

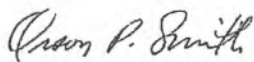
Dear Governor Parnell,

I have enjoyed outstanding satisfaction from my involvement with AVTEC's Alaska Maritime Training Center during the last 5 years and presently am Vice-President of the Center's Advisory Board. The AVTEC maritime programs are growing in enrollment and importance to the State of Alaska with Arctic offshore developments and with modernization of the fishing and shipping industries. The quality of the education at AVTEC is excellent by any measure, yet all the programs continue to pride themselves in accommodating "hawse pipe" advancement, from one US Coast Guard license to the next, with increasing responsibility and higher pay. Programs are aimed at rural residents and at returning veterans, with a view toward giving Alaskans first-shot at exciting, high-paying careers critical to the State's economy.

AVTEC and its Alaska Maritime Training Center are well-managed by competent veteran leaders with focused vision for Alaska workforce development. Other educational endeavors with State financial support should watch and learn by AVTEC's successes. State support remains necessary, however. The TVEP program is a proven method to provide funds to be used efficiently toward a good end, aligned with the mission of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Please continue TVEP funding (HB278 and SB139) and other support for AVTEC and keep its awesome momentum going.

Sincerely,



Orson P. Smith, PE, Ph.D., D. CE¹, D. PE¹
PO Box 126
Seward, AK 99664

¹ Diplomat of Coastal Engineering and of Port Engineering, Academy of Coastal, Ocean, Port and Navigation Engineers.

RESOLUTION OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION & EARLY DEVELOPMENT

In Support of the Repeal of Alaska's Competency Examination Requirement

Resolution 01-2014

WHEREAS, Alaska law presently requires secondary students to pass a competency examination (also referred to as an "exit exam" or the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam "HSGQE") in order to receive a high school diploma,

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 139, SB 111, House Bill 220 and HB 278, all presently in front of the Alaska Legislature, would repeal the competency examination requirement,

WHEREAS, the competency examination, fully implemented in 2004, is a test of basic skills,

WHEREAS, the competency examination is not an appropriate means of measuring college and career readiness,

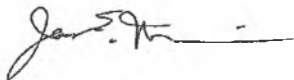
WHEREAS, the Department of Education & Early Development has, in the years since the enactment of the competency evaluation, developed a system of statewide assessments that allows both the Department and school districts to accurately measure academic competency and growth,

WHEREAS, the administration of the competency evaluation results in a significant loss of instructional time for students and teachers,

WHEREAS, the administration of the competency evaluation costs in excess of two million dollars annually,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the State Board of Education & Early Development respectfully requests that the Alaska Legislature repeal the statutory competency examination requirement.

PASSED by unanimous roll call vote, January 27, 2014.



Jim Merriner, Chair
On behalf of the Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development

RESOLUTION NUMBER 14-04

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE TECHNICAL and VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION PROGRAM (TVEP)

WHEREAS, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board is a private industry driven public organization that is accountable through its members including representatives from business and industry, education, organized labor, and government to the residents, the Legislature and the Governor of Alaska;

WHEREAS, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board acts as the lead state planning and coordinating entity for state human resource programs involving employment training, career and technical education, and workforce development;

WHEREAS, The Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) is to provide grants to technical and vocational education entities to provide industry specific training, on-the-job training and classroom job linked training;

WHEREAS, The Alaska Workforce Investment Board supports expanding dual-credit options for high school graduation and certification in a career field;

WHEREAS, The Alaska Workforce Investment Board supports expanding access for Alaska's rural students to quality technical and vocational education programs

WHEREAS, Funds for the program are appropriated from amounts the state collects in unemployment insurance contributions, and are provided to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board;

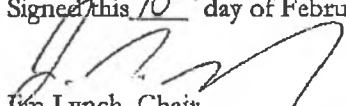
WHEREAS, The Alaska Workforce Investment Board believes TVEP is essential to employment training, career and technical education and workforce development;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska Workforce Investment Board supports the reauthorization of TVEP through 2024.

CERTIFICATION

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board held a meeting of the Executive Committee convened this day 10th of February, and the foregoing Resolution was adopted unanimously at said meeting.

Signed this 10th day of February,


Jim Lynch, Chair
Alaska Workforce Investment Board

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 3:58 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278 ~Tenure Amendment

Public testimony



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



From: Rochelle Bushey [mailto:4rbushey@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 15:56
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: HB 278 ~Tenure Amendment

Please take a moment to read what I have written. I listened to gavel-to-gavel this week as tenure was being discussed. I heard many statements of fact that were either partially untrue, or altogether false.

- "It's too hard to get rid of a bad teacher". This is untrue. All teachers are evaluated yearly. Evaluations include administrator classroom visits during instruction time, weekly reviews, parent/student feedback, and now we are adding results from student achievement tests. Any time a teacher is performing below expectations their performance is included in their evaluation and they are given the opportunity to make the needed corrections or they will be terminated. This is true of tenured and non-tenured teachers alike.
- Changing the tenure from 3 years to 4 or 5 years is necessary to give administrators the time they need to evaluate teacher effectiveness. This is not true. All of our kids NEED to have effective teachers every year. Most administrators early in their career were teachers. They know first hand what effective instruction looks like. If they are making observations and having conversations about what it takes to meet expectations of the job they should be able to make a recommendation to retain or fire a teacher by the end of the contract year.
- Tenure is just the promise of due process. True! ---Teachers need to know that they will not be fired arbitrarily." The value of tenure is to ensure teachers due process rights, but they can still be terminated for cause. Up until the first day of your fourth year a district and let you go even if your evaluations were stellar. They can let you go and give you not reason and you have no recourse. What tenure does is require that after 3 years of loyal service to the district and the students in your class that the district will afford you due process before terminating your employment. This is a benefit that I had at my state job after only 6 months of service.

· One final consideration~ this change in Tenure will have unintended costs. Administrators are required to perform one formal evaluation per year for tenure teachers, and two formal evaluations per year for non-tenured teachers. (As per association contract only administrators can do the evaluations.) The state is moving toward a new and more extensive system of teacher evaluations. The new system will require a larger percent of the administrator's time to complete. Currently our district runs at about 30% non-tenured teachers. Now increase that workload due to having longer probation periods. In many areas this increase in workload may actually require district to hire additional administrative staff to meet the increase in workload.

· As I see it there is no reason to change the system we have. We just need to support and train the administrators we have to do the job they have been given. ~ This is a subject for another time all together.

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Kevin Meyer
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 7:48 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278 and other education issues

From: Ben Walker [rbenwalker@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 7:47 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer
Subject: HB 278 and other education issues

Senator Meyer -

I am a constituent of yours up off Main Tree Drive and will not be able to provide testimony in the Senate Finance committee hearing of HB 278 tomorrow. However, I wanted to share some thoughts and questions on some key issues I see with the bill. Full disclosure, I am a teacher here in town at Romig Middle School, however, first and foremost I am a parent of two young children, one of which will be entering kindergarten at O'Malley in 2015. We specifically moved up to this area for their quality life, including good public schools. As an educator, I am also pondering leaving the state before it is too late in my career to successfully do so and establish a new career and life for my children elsewhere. I am vested on Tier III and with the way educators are being discussed these days, I am losing faith in Alaska has a friendly place for professionals such as myself and this worries me as a parent as I want my children to have dedicated educators like myself and many of my friends, not educators simply because they save the state a little money.

Funding - I am a supporter of a large bump in the BSA in order to keep up with lost funding and inflation and also any "one shot" injections of funds should be built into the BSA so districts can plan long term rather than spend that money on other things besides teachers. Is it disingenuous for the state to claim they don't have the money while also throwing money at studies for megaprojects that we have been chasing for years. I read an article the other day our Governor wanted to sue for the right to spend \$50 million on a study that had already been conducted. The saying for this is "penny smart and dollar dumb." We are currently in the bottom quarter of the nation for education spending as a percentage of our budget. While money is not the only correlation to student success, you can't cut yourself to the top.

Statewide Salary Schedule - This item was actually quite surprising to me and I am confused as to both its origins and its necessity. Currently districts have every reason to try to keep salaries low, but also attract the best talent. I don't see why this is needed at all and it will severely restrict local school boards ability to control their own destiny in terms of staff. I also don't fully understand if this is still in the idea state or something that, if passed, will be implemented in 2016 however the Department of Administration decides it should be. Perhaps you or one of your staff can clarify for me what this part of the bill means. I am 100% completely against this portion of the bill and have no idea why it has gotten this far. There would not be a bill saying "All municipal administrative assistants in the whole state" or "all local road engineers or police officers" in the whole state get this salary. Why is this only something lawmakers are willing to try on teachers?

While there are other parts of the bill I do not agree with and would like removed (tenure changes, charter transportation, and tax deductions among them) the above two are my biggest problems and I hope you will think hard about their impact for future generations, such as my two young children.

Thank you for your time and service.

Ben Walker
907-360-2601

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:13 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: CSHB 278 Education Funding: E-Mail Testimony

Public testimony



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



From: James Bethany [<mailto:jamesleebethany@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 08:08
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: CSHB 278 Education Funding: E-Mail Testimony

James Bethany

300 Lake Otis Parkway, L-379

Anchorage, AK 99507

Telephone: (907) 301-1045

Electronic Mail: jamesleebethany@gmail.com

Thursday – April 10, 2014

Senator Pete Kelly

State Capitol Room 516
Juneau AK, 99801
Telephone: (907) 465-3709
Fax: (907) 465-4714

Electronic Mail: Senator.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov

Dear Senator Kelly:

I am writing you in regards to current bill CSHB 278 the Education Funding Bill.

I strongly encourage you to consider supporting robust funding for our Alaska students and schools. I know that you, like me, support funding our future. Education is not cheap, but the fact of the matter is that the return on education funding (macro-economically speaking), often pays much larger economic dividends, when examined from a larger socio-economic perspective. I am also sure that you, like me, know the importance of funding education and research here in Alaska. Wouldn't you like to someday look back and know that you played an important role eradicating cancer or some other terrible disease, because you supported funding Alaskan students and schools?

Thank you for your time and attention regarding this important Alaskan Value-Added Resource issue. Have a great day.

Regards,

James Bethany

24-year Alaskan and former resident of Bethel in the Yukon Kuskokwim River Delta;

Citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma;

UAA School of Justice & UAA School of Social Work major;

UAA Seawolf Alumni (Human Services);

Americorps Alumni;

Local 341 Member;

AFL-CIO Member;

Anchorage Central Labor Council volunteer and;

Son of a State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Division of Behavioral Health Alaska Psychiatric Institute (Retired) Psychiatric Registered Nurse.



ALASKA FEDERATION
OF NATIVES

April 16, 2014

Sent Via Electronic Mail

The Honorable Pete Kelly
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Rm. 516
Juneau, AK 99801
Senator.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov

The Honorable Kevin Myer
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Rm. 518
Juneau, AK 99801
Senator.Kevin.Meyer@akleg.gov

The Honorable Anna Fairclough
Vice-Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Rm. 514
Juneau, AK 99801
Senator.Anna.Fairclough@akleg.gov

The Honorable Mike Dunleavy
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Rm. 510
Juneau, AK 99801
Senator.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov

The Honorable Click Bishop
Member, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Rm. 115
Juneau, AK 99801
Senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov

The Honorable Donny Olson
Member, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Rm. 508
Juneau, AK 99801
Senator.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov

The Honorable Lyman Hoffman
Member, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Rm. 111
Juneau, AK 99801
Senator.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov

Re: House Bill 278, Education; Base Student Allocations for Fiscal Years 2015–2017

Dear Co-Chairs Kelly and Meyer and Senate Finance Committee Members:

The Alaska Native Federation (ANF), the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, submits this letter, together with a copy of Resolution 14-10, in support of increasing the base student allocation (BSA) for fiscal years (FY) 2015–2017. We understand that Governor Sean Parnell, through House Bill 278, *Education*, has asked the Alaska State Legislature to increase the BSA by \$85 in FY 2015, and \$58 in each FY 2016

and 2017. However, for the reasons set out below, we believe that these numbers should be \$400 in FY 2015, and \$125 in each FY 2016 and 2017, with an inflation calculation mechanism added for FY 2018 and beyond to automatically increase the BSA without additional legislative action.

Prior to FY 2011 the Legislature steadily funded in-classroom educational expenses, providing incremental adjustments for inflation. This resulted in a 64% in-classroom increase between FY 2003 and 2011. However, the Legislature has only increased in-classroom spending by 1% since FY 2011, progressively losing value due to inflation. Accordingly, a "catch up" BSA of \$400 is required for FY 2015, followed by a \$125 BSA increase for each FY 2016 and 2017, to avoid a further educational crisis.

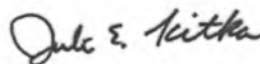
Without a meaningful increase in BSA, in-classroom positions, such as teachers, counselors, and nurses, will continue to be cut and larger, less effective classrooms will become commonplace for Alaska's children. This is unacceptable. It also circumvents the Education Clause in the Alaska State Constitution, which requires that the Legislature "establish and **maintain** a system of public schools open to all children in the state." (emphasis added). See ALASKA STATE CONSTITUTION, Art. VII, Sect. 1. In examining this clause, the Alaska Supreme Court, in *McCauley v. Hildebrand*, 491 P.2d. 120 (Alaska 1971) noted firmly that:

[t]he constitutional mandate for pervasive state authority in the field of education could not be more clear. First, the language is **mandatory**, not permissive. Second, the section not only requires that the legislature "establish" a school system, but also gives to that body the **continuing obligation** to "**maintain**" the system. *Id.* at 122. (emphasis added).

Please do not be persuaded by the misguided argument that educational spending has increased since FY 2011. While this is true, and the Legislature has appropriated additional funds for construction, maintenance, fuel, transportation, etc., none of these shortfall monies could be used for in-classroom purposes. Thus, even through general spending increased, in-classroom funding has decreased by roughly 7% since FY 2011.

For these reasons, and others, AFN urges the Senate Finance Committee to fund the BSA in the manner suggested above. If you have any questions or comments about the content of this letter, please contact me directly. Thank you.

Sincerely,
ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES



Julie E. Kitka
President



Alaska Federation of Natives
2014 Legislative & Litigation Committee
Resolution 14-10

TITLE: SUPPORT FOR AN INCREASE TO THE BASE STUDENT ALLOCATION

WHEREAS: The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska and its membership includes 151 federally-recognized tribes, 134 village corporations, 12 regional corporations, and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and

WHEREAS: The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and

WHEREAS: The Base Student Allocation (BSA) is the basis for how state funding is distributed for students and staff; and

WHEREAS: The State has not increased the BSA since 2011, falling substantially behind inflation; and

WHEREAS: The BSA should be increased every year, because costs to run Alaska schools (*e.g.*, staff salaries, staff benefits, fuel costs, etc.) increase every year; and

WHEREAS: Without an increase to the BSA to catch up with the rate of inflation positions and programs will have to be cut every year, including teachers, counselors, nurses, and sports; and

WHEREAS: In recent years the Alaska State Legislature (Legislature) has appropriated extra funds for construction, maintenance, or fuel, which are valuable, these monies cannot be used for staffing and do not help students in the classroom; and

WHEREAS: A \$400 dollar increase to the BSA in fiscal year (FY) 2015 will replace the educational funds that have been lost to inflation since the Legislature last increased the BSA in 2011, and an addition \$125 dollar BSA increase in each (FY) 2016 and 2017 will ensure a stable and predictable source of funding for our schools before the BSA will have to be reexamined.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc. that AFN requests that the Legislature increase the BSA by the amounts above in order to avert the proposed district cuts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the increases to the BSA be adjusted for inflation in FY 2018 to allow the allocation to increase each year without additional legislation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be the policy of AFN until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

Passed on April 15, 2014



Doniece Gott

From: Michelle Turinsky <michellet@gci.net>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 11:54 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please Increase the BSA—\$400!

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for your service to all Alaskans. I'm writing to you today as a parent of a West Anchorage High School student and I'm asking you to fix the House's bill to include a raise in the BSA of \$400 this year, and \$125. the next two years after that. I'm also asking that some sort of mechanism be put in place that each year the legislature determines what that third year's funding will be—so that districts always know what future funding will be—and that they can be fiscally responsible. An incredible amount of time and energy is spent state-wide each year envisioning all of the different funding scenarios. Imagine if that energy could be put into educating the students instead!

At West High School we've already seen the affects of three years of flat funding—and it's not good. Continuing down this path ASD projects an additional \$25 million in cuts for next year. A seven-period high school day could easily happen in the future unless funds are increased. I think the seven period day would be devastating to our system. How can a teacher possibly connect with students and teach anything in 42 minutes—and larger class sizes? This would not serve anybody well.

Frankly, I'm worried about our districts retaining quality teachers as well. (For the record I've never been a teacher of a member of the NEA). I don't know of any other profession that has to continually defend their jobs. Teachers do not have cushy jobs—and I challenge anyone that thinks they do to go spend a day shadowing a teacher. My child's teachers all work incredibly hard—they're all available before school, during lunch, and after school for additional help. Many of them participate in extracurricular activities as coaches, advisers, and directors. For many students these adults are the only stable and consistent adults that they have in their lives. We should be doing everything we can to support our teachers.

I watched Gavel to Gavel yesterday during the finance committee hearing and I wholeheartedly agree with Andrew Halcro's remarks. We need to get serious about reforms in education but those reforms need to be data driven. The study he referred to was the first study that asked teachers what their biggest challenges are. Teachers, parents, community members, administration—we all need to be a part of the discussion. But underfunding education right now when it appears to be at a tipping point will only exacerbate present problems. Let's fund education and work together to improve it. To give all Alaskan students the education they deserve and the tools they will need to become productive adults.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michelle Morton Turinsky
2301 Saint Elias Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517
(907)276-6299

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:19 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278

Public testimony

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

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

From: Marty Decker [<mailto:info@frontierriverguides.com>]
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 00:53
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: HB 278

Greetings Senator Kelly and Staff Member,

Would you now be holding public office (or working for an elected official) were it not for the skills that you learned from your public school teachers? Speaking, writing, "doing the math", athletics, student government, arts, debate, working with others, respect for God and country? Or maybe you were privileged to a private education and developed those skills outside of the public education realm? HB 278 includes an extension to teacher tenure (among other changes) that is detrimental to the recruitment of quality new educators for our children.

Only the most idealistic and good hearted young people will these days elect to become public school educators in Alaska: they have no access to social security, no designated retirement, no encouragement from state leadership, students with their heads in electronic devices, parents too busy struggling to survive to oversee home work completion.

Only a person who was a saint, and who was kind of of a nerd, would take on the task of facing 32 fifteen year olds at 7:30 a.m. to study literature, expository and creative writing, public presentation, vocabulary, reading, etc. New teachers already serve three years in which they can be dismissed at the whim of any administrator who doesn't like them, personally or professionally. Extending that belittlement to five years will only dissuade yet more talented, loving people from becoming teachers.

If you love children and the future of America, please remove the teacher tenure portion of HB 278.

Marty Decker

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Saturday, April 12, 2014 1:03 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: Todd Hindman [mailto:toad@arctic.net]
Sent: Saturday, April 12, 2014 12:20
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: HB 278

Senator Kelly,

This is Todd Hindman, Principal / Teacher of Anvil City Science Academy in Nome, Alaska. Anvil City Science Academy is a highly successful charter school, which despite the many challenges we face is increasing our enrollment to 60 students in the coming school year. It is our goal to continue our expansion up to at least 80 students. In doing so, we could have five full time teachers, including myself. This would allow each teacher to concentrate on teaching only one content area, benefiting each student as we refine our lessons to meet the needs of our students. Currently, we are responsible for teaching three to four different content areas to students who have academic abilities ranging from 3rd to 12th grade. In order to expand further, we are going to have to address facility issues. Currently we work with what we have, spare rooms in a 50 year-old facility that was once the dorms for a regional high school. While the facility we are currently in can be used, it will need major renovations and restructuring to modify it into useable classroom space. I thankful to see that HB 278 provides provisions for additional funding for charter schools and other measures that address facility issues. I ask for your support on these measures.

Charter school throughout Alaska share these common challenges. If addressed, I believe that we could finally reach the cap in the number of charter school allowed to operate in the state. This would provide more families with a choice in public school education, with local control. Grass root efforts to set up charter schools, that meet the needs of the communities they serve, are far more likely to succeed. This type of school, developing and growing within the current charter school structure is a fiscally responsible way to address school choice within the public school system. We owe that to the taxpayers that support them.

As with most bills, there are ideas I agree with and ideas I do not. In relation to the extension of tenure from three to five years, I believe this measure is not necessary. Any effective, talented principal or teacher can recognize others who are effective and talented. Additional time is not needed to determine whether a teacher should be offered a contract after one or two years of teaching. Why would we want to keep an unqualified, ineffective teacher in the classroom for five years? That does not make sense.

For me personally, tenure is needed purely for the need of due process, to protect teachers from administrators that they may not see thing eye to eye. In my career, I have had two experiences that support my position. I began my career in a "right to work" state, Texas. There, I was lucky enough to work with and be mentored by a teacher that taught me to think "out of the box." Mr. Urban, was a gruff Vietnam vet. Originally from Boston, he migrated to Dallas. He rode a Harley to school and did not teach in the traditional style. That being said, he periodically had administrators that did not see the qualities he had as a teacher. I owe much of my teaching style and professional philosophy to Mr. Urban. All of the students I have taught, have benefitted from my experiences I had teaching science with him. I give you all of this background information because after six years of working with Mr. Urban, he was run out of our school by a principal that had a personal vendetta against him. Without a true due process system in place, Mr. Urban had no protection and was removed from the school. It was a great loss to our students, myself and the school as a whole. Shortly after that, I decided I needed to make a move to Alaska, The second experience I had to support my position on tenure was about to occur. My first teaching job in Alaska was in Sand Point in the Eastern Aleutians. There I worked with a superintendent that did not like it when staff members spoke honestly about their opinions on what was best for the students. I was shown the door after two years. Of coarse since then, I landed my second job in Alaska, my present job at Anvil City Science Academy in Nome. I believe one of the reasons I and the other staff members at ACSA have had success, is due to the fact we are flexible and think "outside of the box." In these days of canned curriculums, we need to encourage creative teachers willing to challenge the system. Tenure provides protections for those teachers, while providing a system to remove ineffective teachers. I ask that you do not support an extension to the number of years needed to be attain tenure.

Another area of disagreement I have is with the letter grading of schools. The AK DEED put a rating system in place this year, The Alaska School Performance Index, that is easy to understand and does the job. I do not see how labeling schools with a letter grade will benefit students in the classroom. The focus needs to be on attracting and retaining effective teachers and administrators and continue to support them by providing excellent professional development opportunities. This type of legislation is just a distraction from the real needs we have in order to improve our schools.

I am happy to see that there is a proposal to increase the BSA. Anvil City Science Academy's budget is based only on state funding. We do not receive any local contribution funding In fact, we receive less than 70% of funding generated from the BSA. An increase in the BSA will help us offset higher personnel costs that are slowly eating away at our supply budget which supports student activities. Other efforts to direct more money to charter schools would also be welcomed. Equity in funding is an issue that needs to be addressed.

I also support efforts to help technical and vocational education programs. Not every student is headed to college. Support for these programs benefit communities throughout Alaska. Here in Nome, there is a needed for dependable, qualified electricians, welders, plumbers, etc. Every summer we see an influx of laborers that come in from out-of-town and out-of-state. The local and state funds that support their salaries unfortunately do not stay in the local and state economies. We need to encourage a "home grown" work force.

Additionally, I am in support of efforts to support tax credits for education, especially for early education. Nome has participated in the pilot program for pre-schools the legislature funded a few years ago. The program have proven to be effective throughout the state in getting children ready for kindergarten. The earlier we can address the needs of children and their parents the better off we will be. Directing finances to early education makes sense. Intervention and special education programs are expensive and the costs only go up as children get older and eventually become adults. A well educated Alaskan is a less expensive Alaskan.

I thank you for all of your efforts and for your consideration in these matters !

Todd Hindman
Principal / Teacher

Anvil City Science Academy

Nome, Alaska

<http://www.nomeschools.com/~acsa/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Anvil-City-Science-Academy/224466621006346>

Doniece Gott

From: Mari Jamieson <marijaminak@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 4:56 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB 278

Honorable servants of our community,

I am writing to ask that you do two things:

1. Maintain the BSA in a manner that is efficient and useful to our educational system. Having to ask for more money regularly is neither efficient nor useful.
2. Maintain Alaskan's tenure for 3 years. It is difficult to recruit and retain teachers in Alaska - making it less attractive to be a teacher is neither efficient nor useful. We need more teachers, not less.

Thank you for your time.

Mari Jamieson
520 W 19th Ave
Anchorage, AK 99503

Doniece Gott

From: Moira Smith <alaskamoira@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 12:34 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Donny Olson; senator.peter.kelly@akleg.gov; Sen. Click Bishop
Subject: HB 278

Members of the Committee,

First, thank you for your service, particularly in the waning days of session. I appreciate your hard work, over long hours, grappling with our state's most important issues.

I am writing about an issue of key importance to me as a lifelong Alaskan, a mom, and business person. Education is critical to our state's success, and it is worthy of our investment. In the last several years, our previous investment in education paid off as we saw dropout rates meaningfully decline. The lack of BSA-specific funding increases in the last three years, however, threatens to reverse that progress.

I am asking that you increase the BSA by \$400 this year, and by \$125 in the following two years. I recognize the financial burden this will place on the state. It is worth it for so many reasons, not least that it will contribute to the development of a better educated workforce.

I appreciate your attention to this very important question, and look forward to hearing an amendment to HB 278 in committee to increase the BSA as so many nonpartisan Alaskans have requested.

Thank you,
Moira K. Smith

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Saturday, April 12, 2014 1:03 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278

Public testimony

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

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

From: Linda Strobe [mailto:linda_strobe@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 22:17
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: HB 278

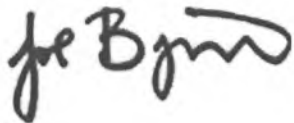
Vote no to change teacher tenure, vote no for public monies for non-public schools, vote yes to increase BSA even more than is proposed to offset the last five years of insufficient short funding of Alaska's kids

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 8:13 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278

Public testimony



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



From: dxdydz58@aol.com [mailto:dxdydz58@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 17:29
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: HB 278

Senator Kelly,

Tomorrow morning, April 9, 2014, HB 278 will make it way to the Senate Finance committee. I am very concerned about several aspects of the bill in its current language. Several amendments were recently added to this bill that I find quite disturbing. I know you are very busy so I will try to be brief.

1. The bill has a \$185 BSA increase the first year with an additional \$30 mil in 2015, with a mere \$58 increase in the BSA over the following two years. However, the \$30 mil is a one-time only thing and the \$185 increase to the BSA does little to close the gap of the flat funding that has taken place over the past 4 years. I teach at Eagle River High School and am very concerned about what this means to my students. The flat funding of education has led to teacher and staff layoffs. Last year all ASD schools lost their Career Counselors, which will result in millions of lost scholarship dollars for our students. At Eagle River High School alone, we are losing 5.8 teaching position. I am a math teacher and this loss of teachers means larger classroom sizes, which means I have less time for one-on-one contact with my students. Research has shown that student achievement decreases as classroom size increases. Please consider a \$400 increase to the BSA this year, with a \$125 increase the following two years.

2. An amendment was placed on the bill that would replace the current rating scale of 1 to 5 stars (ASPI) with a Public School and School District Grading System (A, B, C, D, F). Eagle River High School was one of the top ranked schools in the state last year, so why should I have a problem with this amendment? When I have a student that is achieving below their potential, I do all in my power to motivate and encourage that student to do better. I find out and do all I can to help that student be more successful, but I certainly do not publicly label that student as failing or below average. Placing negative labels on students does nothing to motivate them. Likewise, placing negative labels on schools and district will do nothing to motivate them. Most low achieving schools are working with students who come from a low socio-economic background. These schools are filled with excellent teachers doing their best for their students day in and day out, but it is difficult to keep motivating and encouraging the students when negative labels are placed not only on the students but on the schools themselves. Also, with the lack of funding all of us are asked to do more with less. Please do what you can to take this amendment out of the bill.

3. Lastly, an added provision would allow taxpayers to claim tax credits for donations to “a public or private nonprofit elementary or secondary school in the State.” This seems unconstitutional to me and is kind of like, “Voucher’s Light.” I think this amendment is testing the waters for full blown vouchers, which would divert money away from public schools. Our public schools have suffered enough, as have our students. The public schools in Alaska are rich educational environments where great teachers bring their A-game every day to their students. Please eliminate this language from the bill.

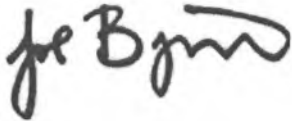
Thank you for all you do for the people of the state of Alaska and thank you for reading and considering my thoughts on this education bill.

Paula Strom

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 4:40 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278

Public testimony



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



From: Evelyn Willburn [<mailto:ewillburn@kakeschools.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 16:39

To: Kevin Shipley

Cc: Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Adam Davis; Isabel Mills; Michele Friday; Renee Kadake; Wanita James; Anthony Ross; Arthur Johnson; Brenda Catahay; Charlette Davis; David Grimes; Deborah Johnson-James; Dwayne Davies; Emily Davis; Falen Mills; Fred Flye; Heea Lee; Jack Walsh; Jeff Vantrease; JoAnn Jackson; Joonho Chang; Judy Mills; Lonna Jackson; Lonnie Cavanaugh; Myrna Hill; Rich Catahay; Robert Fausett; Ruth Demmert; Ryan Hayes; Stu Mach; Sylvia Shaquanie

Subject: Re: HB 278

Thank you, Mr. Shipley. I whole-heartedly agree.

On Wed, Apr 9, 2014 at 8:00 AM, Kevin Shipley <kshipley@kakeschools.com> wrote:

I have enclosed a letter pertaining to our opposition to a provision in HB 278 concerning A-F grading.

--

Evelyn Willburn
K-8 Principal
Kake City Schools
907-785-3741
ewillburn@kakeschools.com

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 10:08 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 278, Section 23

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: cibernoski@gmail.com [mailto:cibernoski@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 06:24
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: HB 278, Section 23

Senator Kelly,

I am writing in regards to the recently passed (4/8/14) HB 278, specifically Section 23. The section speaks to teacher tenure. I would urge you to strike this section from the bill for several reasons.

1. This is inequitable. Urban school districts and teachers (Anchorage) have tenure extended to five years simply because they have a population above 5,500 residents. As a resident of Anchorage I see that the Anchorage School District (ASD) has a tough time of attracting new talent. All of Alaska has a tough time with recruitment.
2. It is incumbent on the administrative team of a school (e.g. principals) to develop and review talent. This can be easily accomplished in three years by an engaged administrative team. However, this section seeks to punish new teachers for the failings of administrators.
3. Tenure is not the guarantee of a job it is due process rights. New teachers have no protection for three years. When a school district is in a budget shortfall (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau) new, talented teachers without tenure are immediately at risk because of seniority, not quality. However, teachers with tenure (seniority), and not always high quality, are guaranteed help for placement.
4. The legislature is seeking ways to have high quality teachers. This section in no way helps provide districts with quality teachers. As I speak with teachers, principals and community members no one is concerned with the new (younger) talent in ASD. Nearly all complaints center around teachers that have years in the district that far exceed the acquisition of tenure. You are seeking to fix the end of the profession that is not broken. If you want to fix the front end of the teaching profession you need to concentrate on providing resources and funding, something the legislature is failing to do.
5. This is one more disincentive to teach in Alaska. Flat funding the BSA for years (transportation and energy does not help the profession), removing a pension system for new teachers and now extending tenure is shouting to talented teachers to go anywhere other than Alaska. The legislature is continually telling the education profession to operate more like the private sector, in this case the legislature needs

to listen to itself. How do we expect to attract the best talent by actively making it an unattractive profession?

Thank you,

Chris Bernoski
cjbernoski@gmail.com
Alaskan
Property taxpayer
Two kids in ASD

Sent from Windows Mail

Doniece Gott

From: Holleman, Andy <andyh@anchorageea.net>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 8:56 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB 278

Dear Members of the Committee,

I respectfully ask that you increase funding through the BSA by an amount to keep the operating budget of schools even with inflation. This would be in the range of \$400 for an increase.

Thank you.

Andy Holleman
President
Anchorage Education Association

907-274-0536
<http://AnchorageEA.org>

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 2:35 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: HB 385-Funding

Public testimony



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



From: Michael and Ashley Dean [<mailto:Dean@Bendbroadband.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 12:48
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: HB 385-Funding

Dear Senator;

As a former longtime Alaskan and a State retiree whose future depends upon my retirement income from the State of Alaska; I am seeking your support of HB 385"An Act relating to additional state contributions to the teachers' defined benefit retirement plan and the public employees' defined benefit retirement plan; and providing for an effective date". Without your support of this bill the future of retirees are at risk and even a bigger crises looms in the future if this funding is not secured . Please support those who have dedicated their lives to service of the State of Alaska.

Thank you,

Michael R. Dean, Retiree

Bellingham, Washington

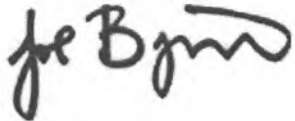
dean@bendbroadband.com

541-549-8431

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 3:02 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: A rural perspective about our funding challenges

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



From: Jack Walsh [<mailto:jwalsh@craigschools.com>]

Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 23:20

To: sen.don.olsen@akleg.gov; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Lyman Hoffman

Cc: Sen. Gary Stevens; rep.ionathon.kreiss~tomkins@akleg.gov; Sen. Bert Stedman; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Bruce Johnson

Subject: A rural perspective about our funding challenges

Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Significant news coverage is generated daily throughout the session, particularly news of education funding shortfalls and the impact on teachers and classrooms in places like Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau where the major media exists. To manage those challenges, our largest districts must take steps outlined in their Reduction In Force (RIF) plans and that could result in every non-tenured teacher receiving a lay off notice. Later, they may see some funding as a result of legislative action that allows them to bring back some teachers and classified staff.

Rural Alaska faces the same challenges, but because our numbers are smaller, they never grab the attention of many. Another difference for rural Alaska is that in some of our districts we experience annual turnover of 10-30% and we can manage more of that reduction through attrition, rather than threatening layoffs and working through those steps. As a result, the impact on individuals may seem less significant.

As another example, Craig eliminated positions last year and is faced with like challenges again this year. But if Craig, and other rural districts went through a RIF process on an annual basis, we would have even less applicants each year. Those teachers who do work for us would be more likely to leave even more quickly or frequently. It's a vicious cycle.

I think it is also important to mention another reality for rural districts. When we don't have the money we need to operate our districts and programs, we look for other funding through grants and other opportunities. We know any cuts need to start as far from the classroom as possible. We defer maintenance, reduce activities and travel, delay curriculum reviews, professional development and materials purchases.

In a small district like ours, we have one teacher at each grade level and the next cuts will push us into a multi-aged or multi-grade setting. In either case, that change requires more than just moving students into a different space. That type of paradigm shift requires additional teacher training to address individual student needs with a wider range of students in a classroom. It also requires additional community preparation and support. Without that preparation, students will suffer and their achievement fall further off the trajectory we had hoped for. Those efforts take time and money, which is why that is often delayed and avoided, too.

I understand that funding shortfalls are projected in the vast majority of Alaska public school districts – large and small, urban and rural. The projected shortfalls vary, but the fact remains that staffing and much needed programs are being negatively impacted. Please know that is a message you have heard throughout the interim and session. I can only hope you will consider those real challenges when you act in these last days of the session. The true measure of success in this 'Education Session' will be how well those 60 bills resulted in meaningful change, and an investment in our children and their future.

I appreciate your efforts on behalf of Alaska. I wish you continued success in your deliberations this week. Jack

--
Jack Walsh, Superintendent
Craig City School District
PO Box 800
Craig, AK 99921

Office (907) 826-3274
Fax (907) 826-3322
Cell (907) 654-3971

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 2:42 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Alaska public schools are our future

Public testimony



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



From: Mara Kimmel [<mailto:mekimmel@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 14:35
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Alaska public schools are our future

As a parent and concerned Alaskan educator, I am writing to urge you to NOT jeopardize our future and do not allow cuts that would reduce the teachers, staff and programs that support our 129,000 schoolchildren across the state.

Support our kids and our future, and increase the BSA \$400/\$125/\$125 over the coming three years to get our schools back on stable footing and give them the ability to retain teachers.


Thank you,

Mara Kimmel

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 4:14 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Alaska's Future

Public testimony



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



From: janese.masten@chouest.com [<mailto:janese.masten@chouest.com>] **On Behalf Of** Rick Fox
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 15:35
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Alaska's Future

Dear Senator Pete Kelly,

I appreciate the many difficult choices and challenges you face and thank you for your service to our State.

I want to weigh in personally, on an issue that is very important to Cyndie and me. We have made Alaska home and our son has moved up with his family, including the two grandsons 2 and 4. We want them all to love Alaska as we do and we want them to thrive here as every other parent and grandparent does for their own.

Cyndie and I ask on behalf of all the parents and grandparents in Alaska, our kids and grandkids and the future of this state:

1. Restore education funding levels and find a way to create sustainable funding for Alaska's school system to be the state we want to be and to support our future through our children.
2. We must have a way to assure the most effective use of our resources to educate and prepare our children for the future.
3. We must address the revenue side through diversification and long term sustainability. We need new sources and skin in the game for all of our citizens.

You did a good job of righting the ship to make investing in Alaska attractive. I will take the long-view on promoting investment in our state and will vote against Ref 1. I think a strong economy is essential for our state and for us to attract and keep talent, keep our families together.

Thank you,
Rick and Cyndie Fox

Rick Fox
Sr. Vice President and General Manager

Edison Chouest Offshore Alaska
3601 C Street, Suite 370
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
mail: rick.fox@chouest.com

Doniece Gott

From: Susan Sullivan <susan.sullivan.1946@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 2:15 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Fwd: BSA

Dear Senators,

Please support the CS to the education bill that will provide the most funding for our schools in the next several years, that is, three years of scheduled increases in the BSA (Base Student Allocation): \$400 this coming year, and \$125 for each of the two following years. This will allow our students to have a workable class size and the support that they need to continue reaching their learning goals.

Susan Sullivan
433-0835

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Saturday, April 12, 2014 1:58 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: Jimmie Froehlich [<mailto:jimmiesitka@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 18:49
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: I oppose HB 278

Dear Senator Kelly,

Regarding HB 278...

I am a 3rd grade teacher in Anchorage, Alaska. I have taught in Anchorage for more than 15 years and have achieved yearly assessments of Meets or Exceeds Expectations in all areas. I achieved tenure in 2001 but left the state for two years in 2007. After I returned, I worked diligently to gain another teaching position. After two years of substitute teaching, I was hired in 2010 as a 3rd grade teacher, a job I enjoy and put my heart into. I am finishing my third year of teaching in Anchorage since I returned.

As I approach my second tenure in Alaska, HB 278 is being considered in the Legislature and it may require teachers to teach for (a now total of) five years to achieve tenure.

My questions:

Will the bill require me to teach for an additional two years to achieve tenure for a second time? (Or will I be grandfathered in because I began my tenure process before the rules changed?)

or

Will the bill require me to begin all over and be required to teach another five years to achieve tenure? (Since I have no tenure at present?)

and, most importantly,

Does this bill provide protections for non-discrimination for interstate travel of persons?

I find it difficult to follow all the requirements for my job as a public servant. Please advise to me your understanding of this bill.

Therefore, I oppose this bill as it stands because it seems to discriminate against me, despite my many years of service to education in Alaska. Please advise to me your views of this legislation.

Thank you for your response,

Jimmie Froehlich

Doniece Gott

From: Robin Wittrock <wittrock@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 3:45 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: CS - Please support our schools!

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

We write to urge you to please draft the CS to fund education in our state as supportive as you possibly can. We ask no more than that you keep up with inflation!

We have had children in the ASD for 7 years now and have been rolling along extremely pleased with our school and the education are children have been receiving. But now, we are hearing about significant changes at our schools daily - these changes will necessarily be to the detriment of our children. Our childrens' education should not suffer, so long as we can pay. And we believe the State can pay. We hear about the many dollars spent on the **legislative building** in Anchorage. We hear about the State grant to a lodge owner by the **Knik Glacier**. We hear about a grant to build **tennis courts** in Anchorage. We hear about the many millions of dollars being spent on **KABATA** studies. We hear about tax cuts to the **oil companies** and **cruise ship** industry. And yet, in Anchorage, we are firing hundreds of teachers and teacher assistants in order to pay our bills? What about our kids?

Please, support our children. Please write the CS to increase the BSA by \$400 this year and \$125 for the next two years.

Sincerely,

Patrick and Robin Wittrock
9701 Sidorof Ln.
Anchorage, AK 99507

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 8:15 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: CS for HB278 , SB119 –

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: SUSAN STEELE [mailto:Susan.Steele@matsuk12.us]

Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 08:10

To: Sen. Click Bishop; Senator.Donny.; Senator.Mike.; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Senator.

Cc: JIM WANSER

Subject: CS for HB278 , SB119 –

Senator ,

I think that the recently proposed actions affecting the CS for HB278 – “Education Bill” and the CS for SB119 – Capital Budget are detrimental to the Alaska State School System. 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 waiver to NCLB.

All alternative schools that currently recruit and work with the most at-risk population of students in our community will get a letter grade that will unfairly “brand” my school as failing. This would happen to all alternative schools across the state.

I have served as an educator and counselor for 21 years and of those years I have worked the last 12 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 and any alternative 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 W. Steele, MA, LPC

Disclaimer Notice: This email and any attachments to it may be confidential and are intended solely for the use of the individual to whom it is addressed. Any views or opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the **Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District**. If you are not an intended recipient for this email, you are hereby notified that this is not a waiver of confidentiality and that you must not take any action based upon its contents, and any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this information is strictly prohibited.

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

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:09 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Raise the BSA 400/125/125

Public testimony



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



From: Christina Eubanks [<mailto:christinaann58@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 07:24

To: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Pete Kelly; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Chris Tuck

Subject: Raise the BSA 400/125/125

Representatives of Alaskans-

I implore you to raise the base student allocation \$400 this year and \$125 for the next two years. The cuts to our schools have already had devastating impacts on our children due to the loss of support staffing in the schools. Continued cuts will make the schools harmful to children and create an educational system of further inequity. We want Alaska to be a strong state with a strong workforce. Continued cutting of education, so that it does not cover cost increases, creates a barebones system where adults come out at the end of the factory line without the ability to be innovative and industrious. Raising the base student allocation to cover the increased costs is the right thing to do.

Thank you for your time.
Christina Eubanks
Anchorage, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: David Boyle <pennyak@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 4:47 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Fw: A thru F grading of schools -- Keep it!

>Senate Finance Committee members,

>

>I have been watching the proceedings of your committee and am very disturbed at those testifying against the grading of schools on an A-F basis. It is unfortunate that so much of the focus has been on the education system and not the student. If Alaska's schools are doing a good job of educating our students, then they should be proud of their accomplishments.

>

>#We are grading the students, let's grade the schools #Parents need to

>know how well or how poorly their school is doing #Why hide behind the

>curtain of opaqueness? Transparency shines the light on success and

>failures #Would you enroll your child in a school that is failing its students?

>#Why protect the schools from the students and parents? Protect the

>students from under performing schools #The schools are there for our kids; our kids are not there for the schools.

>#Kids only get one opportunity to succeed in a school

>

>In the summer of 2012 I stood out in front of 2 neighborhood schools in Anchorage during the waning hours of registration and handed out flyers to parents who were enrolling their children in these schools. These schools had failed NCLB for 3 or more years. I explained to the parents that they had the RIGHT to get their kids to a successful public school and get free transportation to that school. None of these parents knew their rights or the status of these schools. Of the 21 parents I talked to, 17 were going to enroll their children in a successful public school. You see, information is valuable and transparency works for the kids.

>

>Our kids are more important than the education system. Give parents the information they need to know to make the right decision for their children. It's only fair--and it's the only right thing to do. Thank you.

>

>David Boyle

>Anchorage, AK

>

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 4:58 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: A thru F grading of schools -- Keep it!

Public testimony

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

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

From: David Boyle [<mailto:pennyak@earthlink.net>]
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 16:42
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Donny Olson
Subject: A thru F grading of schools -- Keep it!

Senate Finance Committee members,

I have been watching the proceedings of your committee and am very disturbed at those testifying against the grading of schools on an A-F basis. It is unfortunate that so much of the focus has been on the education system and not the student. If Alaska's schools are doing a good job of educating our students, then they should be proud of their accomplishments.

#We are grading the students, let's grade the schools #Parents need to know how well or how poorly their school is doing #Why hide behind the curtain of opaqueness? Transparency shines the light on success and failures #Would you enroll your child in a school that is failing its students?
#Why protect the schools from the students and parents? Protect the students from under performing schools #The schools are there for our kids; our kids are not there for the schools.
#Kids only get one opportunity to succeed in a school

In the summer of 2012 I stood out in front of 2 neighborhood schools in Anchorage during the waning hours of registration and handed out flyers to parents who were enrolling their children in these schools. These schools had failed NCLB for 3 or more years. I explained to the parents that they had the RIGHT to get their kids to a successful public school and get free transportation to that school. None of these parents knew their rights or the status of these schools. Of the 21 parents I talked to, 17 were going to enroll their children in a successful public school. You see, information is valuable and transparency works for the kids.

Our kids are more important than the education system. Give parents the information they need to know to make the right decision for their children. It's only fair--and it's the only right thing to do. Thank you.

David Boyle
Anchorage, AK

Alaska Association of School Administrators
Leadership for Learning

234 Gold St. • Juneau, AK 99801-1101
Phone: (907) 586-9702 (800) 478-9702 • Fax: (907) 586-5879



April 14, 2014

Senate Finance Committee Members
Senator Meyer
Senator Kelly
Senator Fairclough
Senator Bishop
Senator Dunleavy
Senator Hoffman
Senator Olsen

Dear Finance Committee Members:

The Alaska Association of School Administrators (AASA) strongly supports additional funding for PreK-12 education. We respectfully request that any funds made available for PreK-12 education be distributed through the existing foundation formula.

AASA recognizes that media outlets in rural Alaska are often unavailable, thereby limiting coverage for education. This differs from our larger districts where significant news coverage is generated daily, particularly news of funding shortfalls and the impact on teachers and classrooms. AASA understands that funding shortfalls are projected in the vast majority of Alaska public school districts – large and small, urban and rural. The projected shortfalls vary, but the fact remains that staffing and much needed programs are being negatively impacted.

As a superintendent of a small REAA school district, Alaska Gateway, I can attest that our district is experiencing a projected shortfall despite instituting major energy conservation measures to contain our high energy costs during the past few years. In FY15, with current projections, Alaska Gateway anticipates losing two teachers from our current staff of 36 (5.5%) as well as three instructional aides from our team of 38 (7.9%). Even with the elimination of staff, the shortfall to our general fund is just over \$230,000 (2.9%). State aid for our operating budget is projected at nearly \$7.8 million. Having recently spoken with other rural superintendents at the Alaska Teacher Placement Job Fair held in Anchorage, I can assure you that financial challenges are real throughout Alaska.

On behalf of AASA, we thank you for your continued effort and willingness to consider additional financial support for PreK-12 education. An infusion of much needed funds, distributed through the foundation program, is critical in order for Alaska school districts to maintain staff and programs necessary to continue our efforts to meet the needs of all students.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Todd Poage'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Todd Poage
AASA President



Alaska Federation of Natives
2014 Legislative & Litigation Committee
Resolution 14-10

- TITLE:** SUPPORT FOR AN INCREASE TO THE BASE STUDENT ALLOCATION
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska and its membership includes 151 federally-recognized tribes, 134 village corporations, 12 regional corporations, and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS:** The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS:** The Base Student Allocation (BSA) is the basis for how state funding is distributed for students and staff; and
- WHEREAS:** The State has not increased the BSA since 2011, falling substantially behind inflation; and
- WHEREAS:** The BSA should be increased every year, because costs to run Alaska schools (*e.g.*, staff salaries, staff benefits, fuel costs, etc.) increase every year; and
- WHEREAS:** Without an increase to the BSA to catch up with the rate of inflation positions and programs will have to be cut every year, including teachers, counselors, nurses, and sports; and
- WHEREAS:** In recent years the Alaska State Legislature (Legislature) has appropriated extra funds for construction, maintenance, or fuel, which are valuable, these monies cannot be used for staffing and do not help students in the classroom; and
- WHEREAS:** A \$400 dollar increase to the BSA in fiscal year (FY) 2015 will replace the educational funds that have been lost to inflation since the Legislature last increased the BSA in 2011, and an addition \$125 dollar BSA increase in each (FY) 2016 and 2017 will ensure a stable and predictable source of funding for our schools before the BSA will have to be reexamined.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc. that AFN requests that the Legislature increase the BSA by the amounts above in order to avert the proposed district cuts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the increases to the BSA be adjusted for inflation in FY 2018 to allow the allocation to increase each year without additional legislation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be the policy of AFN until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

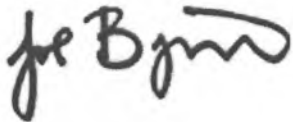
Passed on April 15, 2014



Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 8:55 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: ASPI

Public testimony



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



From: MELINDA HAYNES [<mailto:Melinda.Haynes@matsuk12.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 08:18
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: ASPI

Senator Kelly,

I do not agree with the recently proposed actions affecting the CS for HB278 – “Education Bill” and the CS for SB119 – Capital Budget. They 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 been a teacher for 17 years and of those years many have been in alternative education. I speak from experience; this proposed change would have a severely negative impact on the mission of my school and the students that attend it.

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

**Thanking you in advance,
Melinda Haynes
Valley Pathways High School Teacher**

Disclaimer Notice: This email and any attachments to it may be confidential and are intended solely for the use of the individual to whom it is addressed. Any views or opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the **Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District**. If you are not an intended recipient for this email, you are hereby notified that this is not a waiver of confidentiality and that you must not take any action based upon its contents, and any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this information is strictly prohibited.

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

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 8:15 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: ASPI Rating

Public testimony



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



From: CONNIE VEREIDE [mailto:Connie.Vereide@matsuk12.us]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 07:38
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: ASPI Rating

Senator ,

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

Kind regards –

Connie Vereide

Connie Vereide

Registrar

(907)761-4654 PH 761-4680 FAX

connie.vereide@matsuk12.us

Disclaimer Notice: This email and any attachments to it may be confidential and are intended solely for the use of the individual to whom it is addressed. Any views or opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the **Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District**. If you are not an intended recipient for this email, you are hereby notified that this is not a waiver of confidentiality and that you must not take any action based upon its contents, and any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this information is strictly prohibited.

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

From: Chris Habicht <chrhabicht@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 3:30 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: base student allocation

Dear Senators,

Please consider adjusting the base student allocation for Alaskan schools to \$400. I don't know a single parent that doesn't view this as a critical issue this legislative session and it is truly a statewide issue. Teachers are what make a difference to children, funding must be adequate not to lay teachers off. We can invest money in other infrastructure projects, but the truth is, without strong schools, it will be difficult to attract and maintain a talented work force.

Sincerely, Penny Crane

Doniece Gott

From: Evan Thoms <evan.thoms@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 2:18 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Base Student Allocation - Please increase!

Dear members of the Senate Finance Committee,

As a parent of a first grader and a kindergartner-to-be, I am very concerned about the direction the State of Alaska has recently taken regarding the funding of our public school system. I feel that reducing the funding of public education is like throwing our future away. You might as well send out a letter to all of the families that have kids in state schools saying "You don't count and we don't think your children can amount to anything anyway.". It shows a lack of foresight which is characteristic of policies that simply lurch from one economic crisis to another. We must make funding education a long-term first-order priority if we expect Alaska to be a place where families will want to live and grow.

Please stand strong for Alaska's children and future. Specifically, I support the advice of Great Alaska Schools; that the BSA be increased by \$400 this year and for \$125 each year for the next two years.

Regards,
Evan Thoms
Anchorage, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Li Retus <lretus@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 7:08 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Base student allocation

- 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. We need this to support our children's future.

Doniece Gott

From: Susan Ritter <arcticpouncer@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 3:15 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Base Student Allocation

To the members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Please increase the base student allocation to \$400.00 for the 2014/2015 school year. In addition the following school years should also receive an increase of \$125.00. Education is the key to prosperity for all citizens in our great state. You have the ability to provide a greater impact on education in a very positive manner. Not funding our schools or underfunding them will impact all schools in a very negative manner.

Sincerely yours,

Susan Ritter
Anchorage, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Megan Richotte <meganrichotte@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 6:02 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Base Student Allocation in budget bill

Dear Senator Meyer and Senate Finance Committee

Alaska is counting on the senate finance committee to ensure that schools get what they need to provide the state's 130,000 students with a great education. Please ensure the bill that passes the Senate includes a \$400 increase to the BSA for next year and \$125 for year of the following two years. A quality education is a foundation of our economy, community health, and individual lives. I believe there is no more important function for state government than insuring a great education. I know you are making choices but this is a choice that needs to be made.

There are a lot of number being thrown around about how much the state spends on education. The truth is that we should not sacrifice the quality of education that today's children receive because the state failed to fully fund teacher retirements in the past or for any other reason. We need the BSA money to keep up with the cost of providing a quality education in today's world. Schools can not sustain 6 years of staffing losses which is what they face with the numbers that have passes the House Finance Committee. We are counting on you to fix this.

Thank you,
Megan Richotte
Parent of a kindergartener and preschooler in Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Vicki Campbell <vcampbel@ak.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 8:03 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

Hello Senators,

Please increase the BSA for not just this year but for the next 3 years. I have been a teacher in Anchorage for 14 years. I teach first grade, the most critical year of a child's education. This year lays the foundation for the rest of a child's educational experience.

In the 14 years I have taught I have seen class sizes go up from an average of 18 to my current class size of 23. Each year as the budget for the district is less and more of that budget required to be used in specific areas I have heard, class size will go up but just by one student. Now that one student per year has increased in my classroom by a new reading group, three more struggling students, two more with unsupported social emotional needs. Again the district will increase by just one student. I am one person just like that one more student, unfortunately I have 23 other students that want me to be just the one teacher for them.

An increase in the BSA will alleviate the need for larger classroom size, give students more access to their teachers without competing with other students. It will allow schools to adjust classes without having to do combination class, such as a first/second grade split.

Our future depends on the first graders I'm teaching today. They will be the ones who will be our state leaders maybe senators. I want them to be the best educated they can. Don't you?

Please increase the BSA and continue to fund our future.

Vicki Campbell, M.Ed.

Doniece Gott

From: Matthew Johnson <matthewjohnsonfamily@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 4:15 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please adequately fund our schools. Many districts have said there is a need of \$400 this year and \$125 for each of the two next years. Alaska has one of the best education systems I've seen. I have six children attending school. Please fund appropriately to keep our schools fully functioning and staffed to provide our students with the best quality of education. Our kids are the future of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Matthew Johnson
Alaska Resident

Doniece Gott

From: Elizabeth Schafer <haversmama@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 8:51 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for your time and energy. I am a concerned parent of 2 students enrolled in Anchorage School District. They are in 5th and 8th grade, so we have many more years of education in front of us. I strongly support increasing the states funding for the Base Student Allocation. The students, school districts all over the states and the states future health depend on maintaining and growing a strong school system. I support the BSA being increased this year to \$400, and then to \$125 the next 2 years. I find it crazy that the BSA was not inflation proofed in the past, and now ASD is laying off qualified, talented teachers who are NEEDED in the classroom. I do not understand how the states government can keep pushing development in oil and natural resources, but not try to develop its human resource with a long term quality education.

Thank you for your time

Elizabeth Schafer (and Howard Mozen)

Doniece Gott

From: Tague_Carolyn <Tague_Carolyn@asdk12.org>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 3:56 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: akcarin@hotmail.com
Subject: BSA URGENT

Importance: High

Senate Finance Committee:

I am a concerned constituent, parent, and grandparent who is asking you to make the CS as supportive of our school children as possible. 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.

Sincerely,
Carolyn Tague

Doniece Gott

From: Scatycaty <travelncat@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 1:36 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA \$400 this year and \$125 each next two 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,
Catherine Coward
6221 Farpoint Dr
Anchorage, 99507

Doniece Gott

From: toni.direct@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 8:40 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA Adjustment

Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Please be supportive of our children and increase the BSA \$400 this year and \$125 for the subsequent two years in the CS you are working on today. This is critical for maintaining the quality of our education and the integrity of our communities.

Sincerely and Urgently,

Antonia Sparrow, lifelong Alaskan

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

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

Public testimony

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

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

From: oswald_vonda [mailto:oswald_vonda@asdk12.org]
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 22:46
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: BSA allocation

Senator Kelly,

I am writing to support a raise in the BSA to \$400.00 this year with an additional raise of \$125.00 in the next two years. Losing teachers, raising class sizes to an unexceptable number overcrowding classrooms, overworking our already overworked teachers is not appropriate or wise for the future of our schools and the future of our children. Please push to have the great injusticed fixed.

Thank you,
Vonda J. Oswald
Bartlett Booster PTO, President

Doniece Gott

From: Staci Cox <cox.staci@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 4:39 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA increase

Senator Meyer,

I am a super voter, but I have rarely been so engaged in politics as during this legislative session as I track the progress of the education bills in both the House and Senate. I hope your committee sees how essential it is to put increased funding into the BSA rather than adding one time funds. Our school districts cannot make long term plans or hire teachers with one-time funds.

This year has been especially devastating for the Anchorage School District, and I am very concerned about the upheaval the layoffs and displacements have caused in schools throughout our community. The loss of the Middle School Model is especially tragic, since those teachers work with children at a difficult, pivotal age.

Fortunately, these cuts don't have to happen if you increase the BSA and give districts long-term funding formulas which they can use to plan.

Staci Cox
Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Robynn Davis <davispty5@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 10:13 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing to encourage you to make education a priority in Alaska. Failure to adequately fund public schools in Alaska is now having a direct impact on the classroom. Teachers, counselors, teaching assistants, and secretarial staff have all been affected by the sweeping cuts made over the past three years. All of these positions have a direct impact on the quality of education Alaskan students are receiving. I am aware of an elementary school in Anchorage who lost a Kindergarten teaching position at the beginning of this year. As a result, there are two Kindergarten classrooms with 28 students each – this is unacceptable and Alaskan families deserve better.

By not increasing the BSA you are effectively setting schools up to fail. It is my opinion that allowing public schools to fail is all part of a larger plan on the part of the governor and those who support him to usher in vouchers as the savior of education in Alaska. The truth of the matter is, public schools educate 90% of Alaskan children and when schools are adequately funded, they do a phenomenal job providing a quality education to a very diverse population. If families choose to send their children to private/religious schools, that is their choice, but as a taxpayer I shouldn't have to finance that choice.

I will be following this issue and your actions closely and I will vote accordingly when it comes time to cast my ballot.

Sincerely,

Robynn Davis

Doniece Gott

From: Meggan and Eric Judge <ericandmeggan@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 11:00 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA Increase

To whom in may concern,

I would like to voice my support for raising the BSA in order to continue to invest in the future of the education of the states' greatest source of riches, our children. I am a father of five with three in the Anchorage School District and have seen the great things that can happen in the lives of children in a great school. My children attend Winterberry Charter School, a public charter school in the ASD. Please support the continued education of our children.

Eric Judge
Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Anna Marie Kupilik <amkupilik@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2014 7:28 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA increase

I am writing to urge you to make an amendment to the education bill that would give the BSA a sustainable increase. We need an increase that will protect our schools and our kids from further cuts this year and into the next few years. What we need is a \$400 increase this year and at least \$125 the following two years.

Please know that education matters and it is a very BIG issue for constituents across the state.

Sincerely,

Anna Marie Kupilik

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Heather Marshburn <heather.marshburn@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 8:28 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

I am sending my support to get \$400 into the BSA for next year and \$125 for each of the consecutive two years following.

Thank you-
Heather Marshburn
Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Theresa Murry <theresarosek18@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 2:46 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA increase

I hope you will make the choice to make increases in the BSA to \$400 this coming year, and \$125 for each of the two following years. Our children need your support!

Thank you!

Theresa Murry

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Linda Shore <sharasmom@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 6:12 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough
Cc: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

Good evening, folks,

I would like to heartily encourage you all to increase the BSA by \$400 this year and again in the next two years by \$125 per year. Our schools are one of the most important things we can fund.

We need to make sure we are NOT laying off teachers and, in fact, are adding teachers! Who among you believes that larger class sizes benefit the students?

I firmly believe that we can do without KABATA and you can scale down that palatial remodel of the Legislative office building and turn the money to schools. Public schools.

Thank you for your attention.

Linda Shore
Anchorage

--
There's nothing so good for the inside of a man as the outside of a horse....Lord Palmerston

Doniece Gott

From: aweaver3@u.rochester.edu on behalf of Anne Weaver <anne.weaver@rochester.edu>
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2014 6:09 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA Increase

Hello, I am writing to express my strong support for increasing the BSA by \$400/\$125/\$125 over the next three years. The children of this state are counting on you to fully fund their education. They need to be a priority, as they are our future. As a young Alaskan voter, a top-tier education system here is a top priority for me.

-Anne Weaver

Doniece Gott

From: Christina Zafren <czafren@alaska.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 12, 2014 11:43 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA increase

To the Senate Finance Committee,

I want you to know how strongly I support increasing the BSA to a level (e.g. \$400 per student this year) that will stop the erosion of public school funding. We need to focus our priorities away from boondoggle projects (Knik Arm and Susitna bridges, for example) and back onto our children. I hope you all will find a way to make a meaningful increase in the BSA - not just the shifting around of funds that has been attempted so far.

Sincerely,

Chris Tower Zafren
10181 Curvi Street
Anchorage, AK 99507

Doniece Gott

From: Megan Richotte <meganrichotte@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2014 1:12 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA increase for schools across Alaska

Dear members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Please support a \$400 increase to the BSA next year and \$125 in each of the following two years. There should be no bigger priority or responsibility of state government than to ensure high quality public educations for the youth of our state. There are always decisions regarding funding priorities to be made and education should be at the very top of the list.

Clearly, if the state can fund a giant bridge, we can fund our schools.

Every student in this state deserves a great education. It is essential to leading rewarding lives, contributing to society, full employment, and our economy. Eroding funding, laying off of staff, and increasing class size is an unacceptable trajectory for Alaska.

Please support full funding of our schools!

Megan Richotte

Anchorage parent of a Kindergartener at Roger's Park Elementary and a preschooler

Doniece Gott

From: Mary Janis <marymjanis@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 12, 2014 11:20 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer
Cc: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA

Senator Meyer,

As a parent I am writing to strongly urge you to support the request of \$400/\$125/\$125 scheduled increases in the BSA over the coming three years to keep our schools intact. As my daughter enters high school next year, I want her, as well as all of the other students in Alaska, to have all of the advantages afforded to those who attended during adequate funding times. Public education is the basis of our society and must be adequately funded to support continued excellence in our students.

Sincerely,

Mary Janis

Doniece Gott

From: David Landry <dl_landry@yahoo.com>
ent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 8:23 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA increase please

Honorable Senators-- I encourage you to raise the BSA by \$400 this year and an additional \$125 in the next two years. The organization Great Alaska Schools speaks for me on this issue. School funding hits close to home for voters, people are paying attention.

Thank you,
David Landry
7000 Town &Country Place
Anchorage, Ak
99502

Doniece Gott

From: angie Jensen <jensenangie@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2014 6:07 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BSA Increased by \$400, Please!

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Our schools are a great equalizer. When the budgets are tight and support staff positions are let go, that no longer becomes possible.

It is because support staff make it possible for all kids to learn. When basic needs of food, shelter, and safety are not being met, students are unable to learn. After 12 years, I am one of those support staff and I am now displaced from a school with kids that needed my help to meet those basic needs. Teachers cannot do it alone.

I am scared our kids may pay the price for inaccurate conclusions by people who are unaware of what services schools provide to our entire community. When you fund schools, you fund more than education.

Increase the BSA this year by \$400 and \$125 the next two years.

Thank you!

Angie

Doniece Gott

From: Curtis Watkins <cwatkins58@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 1:42 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: budgeting process and concerns with tenure

Good morning with a couple of comments.

I am concerned with the budgeting process as well as the curriculum available to our students. The budgeting process appears to be a year by year process rather than a well thought out long term plan. This is not the way to run a business (government or academic entity). There should be at least a well thought out 5 year plan that will adequately fund the education of our students that is based on the needs of our next employees as determined by our employers. Right now, employment opportunities are there for those who have the skills but when I talk with employers, many of them are having to hire Outside because of the poor preparation of our current work force. Our high school students need to be introduced to skills such as mechanics, wood working and welding that many will need in the future and not just those skills needed for college preparation. So, I'm calling for a better coordinated vocational training for our high school students that is funded using a long term plan.

As for tenure, there are steps currently in place to take care of inadequate teachers. Let's don't fix something that's not broken. Administrators are well aware of who should not be in the classroom. Having tenure extended out to 5 years makes me wonder just what is the real underlying reason for doing this. I believe that there is some unspoken agenda going on and agendas are usually driven by money.

Thanks for your time.

Curtis Watkins
915 Skyline Drive
Fairbanks, Ak 99712
907-474-2884

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 5:24 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Change to ASPI star rating to "Letter Grade" rating

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: CORINNE CUNNINGHAM [mailto:Corinne.Cunningham@matsuk12.us]
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 17:09
To: Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough
Subject: Change to ASPI star rating to "Letter Grade" rating

Dear Sirs and Madam,

I urge to reconsider approving the proposed change to the school site / school district rating system in HB278 (Section 8, page 3). Many arguments will be leveled against this amendment.

I would begin by questioning the validity of information being presented to me by our EED. At the January 25, 2014 Keynote Address for the State RTI (Response to Intervention) Conference, Dr. Susan Macauley enthusiastically endorsed the Alaska School Performance Index (aka, the star rating system) being implemented as part of the USDOE waiver. In other words, her presentation explicitly stated that the ASPI would serve as Alaska's new rating system, without question. A significant portion of her presentation outlined the many benefits and advantages for implementing that change. The presentation was clear, concise, and very effective in persuading the educators I attended the conference with that this, indeed, would bring a positive change to education throughout Alaska.

Next, I would urge you to consider the ramifications of using the outdated "letter grade" system to rate school sites and/or districts. I have been an educator for 28 years. All have been in public middle and high schools that have sent home grade reports based on the letter grade system. In spite of my attempts to counsel students and assist them in developing short- and long-terms goals for improving their grades, the initial response to an "F" is always "I'm a loser (or some equally derogatory word). I'll never be able to improve that grade. Why should I even bother trying?" Those same negative connotations will arise among the public--and potentially among school staff--if the letter grade system is used for rating schools.

Although I do not have a specific percentage to share with you, I can assure you that a significant number of parent conferences have been spent discussing the question: "But what does that letter grade tell me about what my child is able to do? What skill sets has he/she learned, developed, or refined this year? How will that letter grade translate into securing him/her a job after graduation?" In addition, I have helped numerous seniors compose letters of interest and college entrance or scholarship essays. An equally significant number struggle to identify and describe their own skill sets.

The letter grade system carries with it such powerful connotations, and it measures what, specifically? You might argue the same for the star rating system (as presented in ASPI); however, a certain number of stars will never equate to an "F", which in education will always mean FAILURE. (The use of all capital letters is completely and thoughtfully intentional.)

Lastly, why would you support a provision that never made it out of the first committee of referral, i.e., the House Education Committee? Why have a committee tasked with studying the effects of proposed changes on a specific entity if you're just going to ignore their findings?

I anticipate that you will receive many emails and phone calls regarding this particular insertion into HB278. I will not take any more of your time, but will end with a final plea that you NOT support retaining this change to the ASPI school site/school district rating system.

Sincerely,

Corinne Cunningham

English/Physical Education Instructor

Challenge Course Facilitator

Title 1 Teacher Leader

Burchell High School

Mat-Su Borough School District

(907) 864-2627

Disclaimer Notice: This email and any attachments to it may be confidential and are intended solely for the use of the individual to whom it is addressed. Any views or opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the **Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District**. If you are not an intended recipient for this email, you are hereby notified that this is not a waiver of confidentiality and that you must not take any action based upon its contents, and any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this information is strictly prohibited.

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

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 2:03 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Charter schools and the school size factor

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: Laura de Mander [<mailto:laura.hutto.demander@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 11:29

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

Subject: Charter schools and the school size factor

Please consider this public comment on HB 278:

Good day Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

As a very involved parent and former chair of the APC at Rilke Schule German School of Arts and Sciences, the largest charter school in the State of Alaska, I was disappointed to see the changes in the school size factor formula removed from HB278 on the floor of the house. The school size factor hurts our ability to grow and take in more students. Unlike other charter schools in ASD, we want and need to continue to grow because we are trying to build a thriving middle school program which will feed into a sustainable high school program. In order to build a thriving middle school we need to admit four classes of 22 kindergartners. We do not admit non-German speaking students after the end of the first quarter of first grade due to the immersion component. Without this strong base of young students, due to natural attrition, by the time our students reach middle school the classes are too small to justify ASD providing German immersion classes at one of the comprehensive high schools for our students.

The school size factor affects our funding in such a drastic way that continued growth makes admitting more students cost more in staff dollars and facility costs than we get in funding. Without an adjustment in the state's funding formula to make an exception for charter schools our growth will be capped in the future at 400. This does not provide the maximum benefit to students in ASD as we could serve approximately 200 additional students if allowed to grow.

I also believe the \$500 per student grant to charter schools should be made available to existing charter schools as well. These charter schools have scraped and borrowed to obtain curriculum materials and done without text books, computer labs and libraries. This sort of grant can provide the benefits neighborhood schools take for granted.

Finally, in order to incentivize school districts to bond for charter facilities, I believe the 80/20 funding for charter school bonds should be returned to the final bill. Without an incentive there is no reason a school district would place a charter school facility above a neighborhood school and no reason for district wide voters to support construction of a charter school.

Thank you for your hard work on behalf of the State of Alaska. I appreciate all you do.

Laura de Mander

Eagle River

Doniece Gott

From: Steve Atwater <SATwater@KPBSD.k12.ak.us>
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 5:10 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Comment on HB278

Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am sorry I was not able to testify by phone earlier today.

I want to comment on two sections of the bill.

Section 6 and the establishment of the A-F system is a bad idea; I feel that it should be removed. There is no need to add a second rating system for schools. The variables that affect a school and student performance are many. To reduce the number of variables used in the ASPI system for the letter system is a mistake. No one is lauding or hiding behind a 1 star designation- it is not necessary to further state that a school is graded an F. Shaming one into improvement is not the way to go.

Section 12 that caps the indirect rate for charter schools at 4% is a mistake and should be removed from the bill. I assume that this change was brought forward because of a belief that charter schools are unnecessarily paying too high of an indirect rate. I feel that it is a mistake to set an arbitrary number for this amount. Our indirect rate for charters this year is 4.89%, next year we are approved for 4.54%.

The charters on the Kenai are not in dire financial straits and appreciate my district office's good and necessary service. Please understand that the expensive conversion to a new student information service or such includes charter schools- charter schools do not share in the expense of such a periodic change. In sum, my district office fairly treats its charter schools and supplies good administrative service and at times legal service that exceed the 4% indirect rate.

Thank you for considering my comments on these two sections of the bill.

Steve Atwater, Ph.D.

Superintendent

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

148 N. Binkley

Soldotna, AK 99669

907-714-8836 (voice)

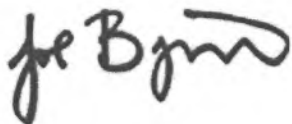
907 262- 9132 (fax)



Doniece Gott

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

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: jacob bera [mailto:jacobbera@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 22:19
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Comments on HB278

Senator Kelly,

My name is Jacob Bera. My wife and I are both educators, and we both live and work in the Eagle River/Chugiak area. I have been watching and reading the progress being made on educational issues, most recently HB278, which passed the House and is now in Senate Finance. I want to share with you my strong concerns about this bill, as it stands. There are four main issues I have:

1. The additional funds added to the BSA are a step in the right direction. It's my hope that this is a result of legislators realizing that districts are eliminating important decisions that factor greatly in the success of our public schools. I have been working during my free time with the nine educators at Eagle River High School that are being displaced/cut due to the budget deficit ASD faces. One young teacher has been displaced three times in her first three years at ASD, and has decided to resign and move back to New Jersey. I respectfully ask that additional funds are added to the BSA so we can retain key staff, and restore positions that in the past made a positive impact on our program.

I heard numerous times on the House floor that the budget shortfalls are a result of the loss of Federal funding. I have inquired numerous times about this, and from what I've found this simply is not true. I also heard concerns from some legislators of wasteful spending, yet I haven't heard specifics. By all means, point out where my district, ASD, is wasting funds and I'll be your ally. I ask this when I meet with legislators, but I never get a specific answer.

The reality is, my district is seeing valuable and effective positions cut because of a budget shortfall. Over a year ago, our Career Resource Counselor position was eliminated. This person helped Seniors make connections with colleges, internships, and careers in the military. She was responsible each year for helping to bring millions in scholarships and grants to graduating Seniors at Eagle River High School.

2. The concept of tenure is something I believe is very misunderstood by some lawmakers. If the intent of this move is to increase teacher quality and "weed out the bad teachers", then in my view this move misses the mark entirely. I want to make sure I'm working with colleagues that are high quality and effective. Also, I support holding teachers that aren't doing their jobs accountable. The bottom line is, ineffective teachers are originally hired by the district as the best candidate for the position. And during the three years they are on probation,

administrators have the responsibility of properly evaluating them. In my experience, administrators have a lot of duties competing for their time, and often a proper evaluation is put on the sideline. Secondly, moving the year tenure is earned from 3 to 5 years gives perspective educators from out of state (which a majority of Alaska's teachers come from) another reason not to consider the move. It's bad enough that Alaska doesn't offer a Defined Benefit retirement option with no Social Security. If the legislature is serious about improving the quality of educators in Alaska, I ask you to consider leaving the year tenure is earned to three years for the reasons I stated above. Additionally, I strongly suggest reconsidering the changes made to teacher evaluations, and learning more about the Peer Assistance and Review Evaluation:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/06/education/06oneducation.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>

As an educator, I would support this proven model. But it's one that's built initially on trust...and then accountability with strong consequences.

3. It's my understanding that the new version of HB278 calls on the Department of Administration to create a plan for a statewide salary and benefit schedule for school districts. It is also my understanding that there is a fiscal note of \$600,000 for this study. I am very concerned about this. What is the goal of this study, and is there an example of this being implemented somewhere else? This would take away the ability by locals to bargain with school districts pay and benefits that are appropriate for the area they live in. This would eliminate the ability for some districts to attract educators with salary and benefits, since we'd all be on the same plan. How would the salary and benefits proposed even be determined? If the intent is finding efficiencies, then I would like to see this concept vetted further before being written in law. In meeting with legislators in the past, I've always presented myself as someone that's open to all perspectives. But until I hear them, I view this study as an attempt to weaken local bargaining units.

4. I urge you to take out the school grading system that replaces the ASPI star rating system. This was an amendment that was added on the House floor. I have followed this concept not only here in Alaska, but in other states. My home state of Wisconsin does this. Trust me, it's a good indicator of reminding folks that there is a strong tie between socio-economic status and educational success. All kids can learn and be successful, despite their home situation. But the last thing that staff, and the community needs is a "letter grade" that simplistically, and unfairly labels them. In ASD, we provide a number of reports and surveys that are a more comprehensive reflection of each school. These are public documents that are easily available. Here's the page for my school:

<http://www.asdk12.org/aboutschools/eagleriverhs/schoolnumber.3122.en.html>

The bottom line is, how many times, and how much money, does the State need to spend in order to keep reinventing the wheel? We already have the ASPI star rating system in place. Why spend more to implement a new school grading system when it's purpose is to do the same thing?

The decisions you make in the next few days are very important to me, and will have a large impact on my future. I urge you to consider my thoughts above as a sincere attempt to contribute to your decision-making in the coming days. I hope your votes in part reflect my perspective.

With Respect,

Jacob Bera

jacobbera@yahoo.com

907-688-2372

19323 Starflower Circle

Chugiak, AK 99567

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:40 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Comments on Senate Bill 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: AllyCr@aol.com [mailto:AllyCr@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 01:02
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: Comments on Senate Bill 278

Dear Senator Kelly, Senator Fairclough, Senator Bishop, Senator Dunleavy, Senator Meyer, Senator Olson, and Senator Hoffman,

My name is Allyson Lambert. I am the newest member of the Fairbanks North Star School District Board of Education. I wanted to provide you some last thoughts on a few areas as you finalize SB278. I am commenting as a member of the Board of Education (not for the School Board as a whole), as well as a parent of two public elementary school children.

First, thank you all for dedicating your time and energy this legislative session on education. It is quite apparent from listening and watching the daily sessions that all of you are passionate about education and about providing the best quality education to Alaska's children.

1. Student Funding/BSA. As a snapshot of the caliber and excellence of our district's students, the first 1 1/2 hours tonight of our school board meeting recognized outstanding achievement by our students in multiple areas of education. We recognized 14 Interior Alaska Science Fair Winners, seven State DECA Champions, six State History Day Winners, 39 John Kelly Scholarship Recipients, five Alaska Statewide High School Science Symposium Winners, and 20 Up with Art and Alaska Scholarship Art and Writing Award Winners. Additionally, the West Valley High School music program was 1 of only 12 schools in the nation to be awarded a 2014 GRAMMY Signature Schools Enterprise Award by The Recording Academy and the GRAMMY Foundation for excellence of music programs.

I am providing this snapshot to let you know that your money is being put to great use in our schools. We have talented and outstanding students, teachers, and staff in our district (as well as statewide) with great programs that provide our students with the tools and resources necessary to succeed in any walk of life after graduation. As you can see from above, our students are achieving brilliantly. But this could change significantly depending on the outcome of this session.

I am asking for your help to ensure all of Alaska's students don't take the brunt of our statewide financial situation. I ask that you properly fund education now and for the next two years in order to allow us to maintain our current levels and properly plan for the future. In the meantime, you could direct the Commissioner, DEED, to commission a work group to provide you a report and recommendations in the next 18-24 months, that will provide a clear path for changes to our future education system to include cost containment measures, all the while increasing student achievement.

a. As you are aware and have heard many times, Fairbanks North Star School District needs the equivalent of \$250 - \$300 increase to the BSA to maintain our classroom size and our talented teachers and staff. Anchorage needs \$400 and other districts fall within the range provided. Our issues are not the result of unnecessary expenditures, but rather the natural result of the BSA remaining at its present rate for the last several years. I'm sure this is overly simplified, but the BSA is our main source of funding our classrooms. As costs go up yearly, whether it is energy, salaries, supplies, etc., our main source of funding has remained the same. We have been cutting staff and administrative positions over the last several years to maintain class size. Last year, we increased the classroom sizes minimally and made significant cuts in our administration and other areas trying to protect the classroom. This year our cuts will greatly impact our classrooms. Now, my daughter's second grade class has 29 students; next year, I expect her third grade class to be even larger. This is unacceptable.

b. You have taken on the almost impossible task to change the construct of our state education system in this session. I commend you for this. However, without a concrete plan and clear direction, to include cost saving measures, it has proven difficult. The Education Task Force was not the right tool for the legislature to use to provide this direction and plan. Change should come from the bottom, up on this issue, not from the top, down. If you properly fund education this year and the next two years, this will give you time to direct the Commissioner, DEED, to commission a work group/task force to provide you, in 18-24 months, concrete, well thought-out and vetted recommendations and a clear path for real change (if that is your goal) while providing cost containment measures. There are smart, dedicated educators and staff throughout the state who have brilliant ideas that could lead to significant change if only asked. DEED can lead the change and provide you the tools to make significant, positive changes during that third year of increase.

I ask that you consider this alternative, and in the meantime, fund education properly over the next three years to ensure continued success of our students.

2. Stars v. Grades for Schools. Just a quick commit/observation on this issue. Changing the current star system to grades could have a significant unintended consequence.

One of the criteria the Department of Defense considers when deciding basing issues or making BRAC decisions is the quality of schools in the given area. Changing the school grading system from stars to grades could have a significant impact on these decisions. Grades (A, B, C, D, F) are what we all grew up with; it's what we know. And we all know exactly what they mean. The military may not want to base a unit in a district where a majority of its military students may be attending schools graded C or worse. Whereas the current star system does not have that same psychological impact. I understand that this may be technical distinction between grades and stars, but with the impending decision of possibly basing the F35s either in Anchorage or Fairbanks, I would urge you to leave the current system in place.

3. Tenure. The system in place works for both district purposes and educators. There is no need to create disparities within the state between rural and urban areas. The new teacher evaluation system coming on line can be used by both the district administration and principals/teachers in determining whether to offer a teacher tenure and what areas a particular teacher may need improvement. Three years is sufficient time for districts to determine if a teacher will be a good fit and will provide high quality instruction, while at the same time providing stability and assurance to those teachers that they will have continued employment. Tenure is a tool used in rural and more isolated districts to recruit and retain high quality teachers. We are one of those districts.

4. Capital Budget. Please consider funding Phase IV, Barnette Magnet School. Governor Parnell stated he wanted to finish what we started. Barnette Magnet School falls squarely within the Governor's intent. It is #4 on the state's Capital Improvement List. Barnette's students call the old section - the Dungeon. Imagine walking from a modern, bright, cheery section through a door into a dark and dreary old section in the same school. It is not conducive to high quality education. Please finish what has been started.

I appreciate you and/or your staff taking the time to read my comments. I know you are working hard on this issue as well as other important matters with only days left in the session. But please remember - our students are our future. We can change the construct of education but until we do, we need to properly fund the current construct to ensure continued student success.

v/r
Allyson Lambert
Clerk, FNSBSB
Parent
703-626-4322 cell
907-328-4001 hm
allyson.lambert@k12northstar.org

Doniece Gott

From: Jackie Becker <jbecker@dgsd.us>
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 10:08 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: District School Deficit in Delta Junction

Hello, my name is Jackie Becker, my son attends Delta High School. My son is an honor roll student and a multi-sport athlete, who carries a 4.0.

Please increase the funding for the per/student allocation. My son is having a difficult time fitting in the classes he needs to obtain college scholarships and the classes he needs for his future profession due to limited class scheduling. Delta High School cut it's class schedule from 7periods/day to only 6/day due to funding deficit and this has caused problems for many of our students.

I would be more than happy to answer any questions you might have regarding my request to increase the funding for our Alaskan students.

Sincerely,
Jackie Becker
Delta Junction, AK
907-895-5210 (evening phone number)

Doniece Gott

From: Susannah Olnes <sqolnes@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 4:19 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Don't stop public school funding

Dear senator:

I have three children in public schools on Anchorage. One on gifted and two others with special needs. It is shocking to hear that my children's needs may not be met due to lack of understanding of the needs of our children who will be the next generation of american voters and tax-payers. These children need a complete education that certainly will be limited by cutting school funding! Please think about those who will come after you. Do not cut school funding!

Susannah Olnes
Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 8:55 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education Bill HB278- SB2119

Public testimony



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



From: WILLIAM PASTOS [<mailto:William.Pastos@matsuk12.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 08:38
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: FW: Education Bill HB278- SB2119

From: WILLIAM PASTOS
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 8:30 AM
To: 'Senator.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov'; 'Senator.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov'; 'SenatorPete.Kelly@akleg.gov'; 'Senator.Kevin.Meyer@akleg.gov'; 'Senator.Anna.Fairclough@akleg.gov'
Subject: Education Bill HB278- SB2119

Senators,

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 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 20 years and of those years I have worked the last 14 years as an alternative school teacher, working with at risk youth.. This proposed change would have a 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 -

Bill Pastos

Disclaimer Notice: This email and any attachments to it may be confidential and are intended solely for the use of the individual to whom it is addressed. Any views or opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the **Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District**. If you are not an intended recipient for this email, you are hereby notified that this is not a waiver of confidentiality and that you must not take any action based upon its contents, and any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this information is strictly prohibited.

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

From: denise roselle <droselle1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 2:36 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education Bill

PLEASE do the right thing and allocate the BSA at 400 with 125 for each of the following two years - please fix this ineffective system to include cost of living increases - the lack of forward funding seems archaic and incredibly ineffective for all concerned! Thank you for supporting our future leaders, our future Alaskans, our future workers of all kinds - do the right thing - Denise Roselle

Denise Roselle

Home: droselle1@yahoo.com

Dimond High School: 907.742.7000 ext.7165 roselle_denise@asdk12.org

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 3:04 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education for our kids must be adequate and sustainable and a top priority

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



From: Marti Pausbeck [<mailto:Billandmarti@gci.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 13:00
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Education for our kids must be adequate and sustainable and a top priority

Dear Senator Kelly

Please support adequate and sustainable educational funding for Alaska's kids. If the BSA is not increased significantly Alaska Schools will face three additional years of teacher and staff cuts across the state. It is a governments fundamental responsibility to fund quality public education. This is what makes our economy strong and our country resilient.

It is unsustainable for schools to provide adequate education for our children under the predicted budget shortfalls. Under the current plan our schools will fail to provide the education needed for our children.

Please fight for our schools and our children and put education at the top of your priorities.

Thanks so much
Marti Pausback

Doniece Gott

From: Patrick G. Carnahan <pgc@bpc.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 12:49 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education funding

Honorable Senators:

Please include in any bill addressing funding for education:

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

Our kids work hard, our teachers work hard and it is time for you to work hard to provide the resources they need and deserve. Thank you for your consideration.

Patrick G. Carnahan

232 E. 10th Avenue

Anchorage AK 99501

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:40 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education funding

Public testimony



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



From: Megan Charles [<mailto:meganrosecharles@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 20:40
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Education funding

Senator Kelly,

My name is Megan Charles and I am a concerned constituent. I have never contacted a member of a political office before, so please forgive me for sounding rather awkward in my communication.

I am writing to you asking for your consideration on the current funding in place for education. I am asking for your help in increasing the base student allocation for Alaska's public schools. I realize this is unfortunately a rather controversial subject. I am really hoping you will listen and take to heart what I am saying. As you know the BSA has not seen an increase since 2011. It is critical to raise the BSA to support our public schools and our children. Supporting public schools is essential for the well being of our society. Our kids will be taking care of us someday, and it is critical they are educated properly. By not increasing the BSA school districts across the state are being forced to make very difficult decisions in laying off very talented educators. I am very lucky to work in an amazing school with wonderful staff who have many years of experience. Some of them have lost their positions at my school this year, and more will be coming unless a change is made regarding the funding.

One such teacher who has been displaced is our Choir teacher, she offers so much to our students it is remarkable. She has such passion for what she teaches and dedication to her career. There are students in high school who sometimes struggle to fit in, the programs our teacher offers have been a solace for those very students, and it offers a way for them to feel connected to their peers, staff, and even the community as a whole. Those students often do better in their academics when having those social and emotional connections fostered. Those programs have been greatly reduced, and it will not be the same.

My own child will be entering the public school system this fall. I worry about the opportunities and education my daughter will have available to her as a result of the lack of funding. My daughter is just starting her educational career, I have very high hopes and dreams for my child. Part of that requires teachers who have that dedication, commitment and passion for their profession. That is difficult to retain when there is a constant fear regarding the funding of our schools.

I understand that you are probably contacted by many unions and people with political affiliations, I am just me, a concerned voting member of our society.

Please consider increasing funding for the base student allocation.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Megan Charles
907-441-0761

Sent from my iPad

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 9:03 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education Funding

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: Sheila Curran [<mailto:scurranak@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 08:37
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Education Funding

Dear Senator Kelly --

Once again I am asking for your support of education. Our children need the best education we can provide. That means teachers in the classroom. The middle school model has been VERY successful, without full funding it will be cut. I am in numerous schools and see what a positive impact teachers have on students. Please increase the BSA \$400 this year and \$125 next year and another \$125 the following year.

Please support full funding of education.

Thank you.

Sheila Curran
PO Box 929
Girdwood AK 99587

Doniece Gott

From: Brooke Dudley <brookedmail@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 8:18 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 278: 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 graduate of ASD (now a working professional-with a positive impact on our economy), 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 Student 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, parents, educators, employees, in fact everyone across Alaska. I believe this is the best investment we can make for a strong community and economic future.

1. Working professionals seek out great schools, they will not want to stay in or move to this state if their children don't have access to a quality education. Businesses rely on strong schools to recruit and retain a quality workforce.
2. Graduates are far more likely go on to be productive members of society providing our state with an educated workforce (like me) instead of filling up prisons and drawing on social welfare. Therefore, cutting education will be WAY more expensive in the long run than funding it up front.

Please, invest in our future now and forever.

Thank you again for your time and your efforts.

Sincerely,
Brooke Dudley
3000 McCollie Ave
Anchorage, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:40 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education Funding

Public testimony



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



From: Jeff Friedman [<mailto:jfriedman@alaska.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 17:57
To: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Cc: Sen. Johnny Ellis; Rep. Les Gara; sean.parnell@alaska.gov
Subject: Education Funding

Alaska's system of public education is not sustainable at the funding levels being proposed by most legislators. You have an opportunity to make a difference. Please support a \$400 increase in the BSA, followed by two years of \$185 increases each year. Or you can sit by and watch the destruction of public education here in Alaska. I am sure none of you intentionally want to see that happen, but that will be the legacy you leave for our children if we don't start reversing the harm from the last few years of low funding.

I hear no one complaining about paying for retirement benefits for corrections officers, highway department employees, or legislators. But it was previously suggested that we pull the financial foundation away from TRS, and only for education do we count the supplemental payments towards restoring the financial health of the retirement system as "increased" funding for operations.

I hear no one complaining that it costs more each year to run the Governor's office, or the State Troopers, but you say not a dime more for education until we "see" some improvements, and then you close your eyes to the evidence that Alaska's schools have been improving.

You have an opportunity to make a difference. You can stand with Great Alaska Schools and support public education, or you can help hurry its demise.

Jeff Friedman

Anchorage, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Linda's AEA <linda.hulen@anchorageea.net>
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2014 5:00 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: education funding

Dear Senators -- I urge you to increase the BSA significantly.

You are ignoring the many, many requests lodged by constituents in petitions, calls, emails, rallies and personal testimony to adequately fund education. WHY?

The funding increase to \$400 in year one and \$125 in each of the two following years will show that you are listening and that you DO truly care about educating Alaska children.

How can you NOT listen? What do you not hear?

I know you have a difficult job with many demands. But all of you Alaska lawmakers need to prioritize spending to meet the constitutional obligation to adequately fund education. THEN, and only then, allocate money to other projects.

The displacements of teachers in Anchorage School District this year is more than alarming. It's tragic.

The displaced teachers who are interviewing for openings at my building are amazing in their skills, dedication to their profession, and love of teaching youngsters. To think that they are having to leave their school homes and students because of the deep budget cuts the ASD is forced to make -- due to flat BSA funding -- is deeply sad.

It's been said before and worth repeating. What home or business can plan efficiently without knowing how much money is coming in each year. Forward funding would let districts know. That way, they could avoid the disruptions that layoffs and displacements of staff cause.

There are many more things I would like to say such as NO to the changes in tenure and NO to grading schools with the A-B-C method. And I hope the bill about remedial reading, this unfunded mandate, dies in committee today.

You can do a lot to restore my faith in the democratic institution of the legislative branch by listening and ACTING to meet your constituents requests with increased education funding.

Thank you, Linda Hulen, Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Judith Meidinger <dingarak@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 9:19 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education funding

Dear Senators:

Before the vote on the education bill, please make the CS on education as generous to our schools and supportive of our children's education as you possible can. BSA should keep up with what schools need to help our kids ensure a bright future for Alaska.

Thanks from two grandparents,

Judith and Glenn Meidinger.

Doniece Gott

From: Joann Mitchell <joann.mitchellak@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 1:07 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education Funding

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am the mother of 3 children who all attend public schools. They have been receiving an outstanding education thus far but I know with the current proposed budget, their education will suffer. Their classroom sizes are already maxed out and the teachers are stressed to the max as well. Please make education a priority and increase the BSA by \$400 this year and \$125 for the following two years. As Senator Fairclough said (ironically during the Knik Arm Bridge funding debate), you "have the opportunity to do some great things this session." Please, make fully funding education one of those great things!

Joann Mitchell
23521 St. Elias Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517

Read more here: <http://www.adn.com/2014/04/12/3423219/senate-votes-for-knik-arm-bridge.html?sp=/99/188/189/295/#storylink=cpy>

Doniece Gott

From: Stephanie Buss <buss.steph@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 7:14 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education Funding - Raise BSA

I am a parent of two children in the Juneau schools. I am so impressed with how well our teachers do with so little but even with their hard work and dedication, it is not enough. We need to raise funding to schools. Please raise the BSA to at least \$400 this year. Please raise it more to see our students excel and our schools start to be competitive with other states. We need to value our students for Alaska's future. As a Juneau District budget committee member, I am frustrated with the cuts the district has had to make in the last few years. We've cut gifted programs, nurses, counselors, college prep classes, cultural education, and raised class sizes. This cannot continue. As a business owner, I wonder if it is worth keeping my business in Alaska if it is at the cost of my children's education.

I appreciate all you do. Thank you. With so many conflicting priorities, it must be a very difficult job. But, please make education Alaska's top priority.

Thank you,
Stephanie Buss, parent

Doniece Gott

From: Janel Walton <janelwalton0880@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 5:36 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education Funding

As you are thinking this evening on what, if any, increase you will put into the Alaska budget for education funding, I would like to take one last opportunity to please urge you to use one-time funding somewhere else. Education needs to be pre-planned for and it needs predictable funding. Please significantly increase the BSA in order to stop future cuts to teachers. Alaska's youth deserves to have adequate access to their teachers, and this just isn't possible if teachers and counselors are cut and classroom sizes are increased in order to deal with lack of education funding. There is no way to achieve Alaska's destination 2020 plan for graduation and proficiency if the schools are not adequately funded in order to address the needs of ALL students. Thank you for all of your hard work. I know you will all do the right thing tonight.

Sincerely,
Janel Walton
Anchorage resident

Doniece Gott

From: Dawn Danner <dawn.danner@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 8:24 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education funding highest priority


Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Please, please fully fund our schools. Education should be our first priority--one that will lead to success for business statewide. A BSA increase of the full \$400/125/125 would provide our future work force with a strong, stable educational environment. For all interested voters, please support our schools and our future. --Dawn Danner

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:39 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education funding

Public testimony



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



From: michellethomas533 [mailto:michellethomas533@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 21:00
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Fwd: Education funding

Sent from Samsung Mobile

----- Original message -----

From: michellethomas533 <michellethomas533@gmail.com>
Date: 04-09-2014 8:46 PM (GMT-09:00)
To: Sen.Kevin.Meyer@akleg.gov
Subject: Education funding

Dear Senator Pete Kelly,

I'm asking that you please provide adequate funding for all schools to prevent library and teacher positions from being cut. The increase in funding will also keep class size at an acceptable level, allow teachers to give individualized attention to students, keep important library programs in schools and insure students receive a quality education. The graduation rate has increased and the drop out rate has decreased because teachers are doing an excellent job in educating our students. In addition, library staff are training students how to use new iPad apps and online library resources which enhances a students critical thinking and problem solving skills. In conclusion, please increase education funding so that teachers and support staff can help students become productive members of society.

Sincerely,
Michelle Thomas

Sent from Samsung Mobile



Doniece Gott

From: andrea cordano <acordano@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 1:56 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education is the foundation of a Democracy

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

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 consistent, quality education for our children.

Our daughter turns 32 in nine days. She is a product of the Anchorage School District and a caring and 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 and expected displacements can cause enormous stress for our students.

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

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

From: Joseph Byrnes
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 4:05 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education legislation

From: Elizabeth Alexander [<mailto:rubynjem@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 15:32
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Education legislation

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am a taxpaying, voting constituent in your district and with all that is going on during this "education session" I thought it was important for you to know how I feel about some of the current bills.

We should increase the BSA to \$400 this year and \$125 for the next two years in order to attract and retain quality teachers and maintain programs, support staff, specialty classes, and reasonable class sizes. Vote against HB 278 CS because it inequitably distributes school funding and sets up larger / urban schools with an unfair advantage that doesn't solve the baseline issue for either rural or urban schools. Increasing teacher tenure to 5 years and changing the retirement system and payout are also regressive moves in attracting and retaining quality teachers in our schools. Cutting people and funds from our schools hurts the entire community in the short and long term. Please help Alaska become the state that sets high standards for quality schools by making sure that every school gets the funds and the personnel that they need. If the children are indeed our future then we should make that our top priority for investment.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider these thoughts.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Alexander
277 LeAnn Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99701
cell phone 907-388-1069

Doniece Gott

From: Jen Harmon <harmona23@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 9:45 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education matters!

Dear Senators of the Finance Committee:

Thank you for your service to our state. I am writing to express my support of public education. I truly hope you share that support, and that it is reflected in your Committee Substitute decisions.

We need significant increases to the BSA to stop the deep cuts that the past three years of flat funding have inflicted.

My family and I ask you to increase it \$400 this year, and \$125 the next two years.

Adequate funding for public schools is our greatest concern as voters at this household.

Sincerely,

Jennifer and Arthur Harmon (and children)
2504 Glacier St
Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Jim Babb <jimb66089@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 2:49 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education

Thanks for all you have done, particularly Sen. Kelly, and please try to keep our schools as good as they are and get better, not less! And relieve the anxiety that kids, their teachers and counselors, their parents, and the common good they must needlessly suffer year by year due odd state and local funding ironies.

Kid don't learn as well as they should, teachers don't teach as well as they want, counselors become over loaded, parents frustrated, the necessity of an educated public ignored -- all due stress and anxiety needlessly imposed on them by a flawed school financing tap dance every year.

That must be sensibly fixed.

But in the meantime, thank all of you for doing your duty to all of us and the state.

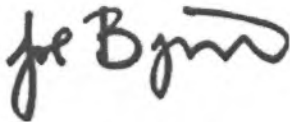
Jim Babb

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:50 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education HB 278

Public testimony



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



From: Chris and Tina Bernoski [<mailto:ctbernoski@msn.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 19:24
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: Education HB 278

Dear Senator,

I am writing you in regards to HB 278, I have been following it and watched it most recently pass through House this week, many amendments that would have helped our kids failed and I am so saddened by that but hopeful that you will do the right thing. I am deeply concerned by many components of this bill and am hoping that you vote no on some and/ or amend the bill so that it is reflective of what the Alaska voters are asking and what Alaska's children deserve.

*Tenure changing from 3-5 years only in urban areas not rural- I truly believe that this needs to be equitable across Alaska. If it is going to remain 3 years to reach tenure in the rural areas, I also believe that the urban areas deserve the same justice.

I will tell you that many of those "bad" teachers people talk about are already tenured and there is a process to fire them. Also many of the new educators into the field who are not "cut out" for education or struggling will leave on their own after one year. They leave because they do not have a pension, fear of being laid off every year due to flat funding, over crowded classrooms and increased case loads. The ones who stay are truly in it for the love of the students and the profession. How do we repay them?? extended wait to reach tenure.. If this goes through I guarantee you many talented young educators will leave, so I ask you to please not pass this portion of the bill and vote NO.

* The other portion of the bill that I am concerned about is the amount of the Based student Allocation. Although, I appreciate that it was increased, it simply is not an adequate amount. In order to stop any further cuts that negatively impact kids, I am asking you to increase the BSA to at least \$400 this year and \$125 the following 2 years. I recognize that people are saying that with depleting resources, we simply cannot afford this. However, with billions in savings and kids who are deeply at risk I don't see how we cant afford to do this for our future and Alaska? Although there is added money in other areas to education, it will NOT go towards staffing and thus many schools will need to cut positions and kids will lose out on great educators and

programs.

Lastly, due to the continued cuts to education many counselors have been laid off and many schools are without. As a parent of 8 year old twins, I am concerned about this due to the increasing violence and challenges in schools today. Please help keep my kids and other kids safe by significantly increasing the BSA.

I appreciate your time and recognize the long hours you are putting in to do what is best for the people of Alaska, I guarantee you, this is what is right for ALL of Alaska.

Thank you for your time and I am hopeful that you will vote to amend the BSA and will vote down the tenure portion of the bill.

Sincerely,
Tina Bernoski
7030 Apollo Dr.
Anchorage, AK 99504

Doniece Gott

From: Catherine Mannix <mannixalaska@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 12, 2014 1:26 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

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 it needed to raise the BSA. I

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, is too destructive to the very fabric of teaching and learning in our Great State.

The social and economic base has changed in Anchorage and 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, who 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 charter and private schools. It only creates less understanding, compassion, and 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

From: William Theuer <wrtheuer@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 1:43 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education

Dear Senator

Kindly request you do all things possible to advance opportunity for students of Alaska. Invest in our future by support of 400 increase of the bsa with follow on of 125 and 125.

Beyond strict funding support be more involved with schools and staff. I heard a heart felt appeal just yesterday from a counselor who feels a terrible career vulnerability every year. That uncertainty is a result of a failure to advance sufficient funds as a priority. Really there are two prime responsibilities of legislative attention education and public safety. Before all else take care of those two.

Kind regards
William Theuer

Doniece Gott

From: Tom Malloy <tmllyjr@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 10:36 AM
To: Sen. Hollis French
Cc: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education spending

Senator French:

I urge you to strongly consider the \$400/\$125/\$125 over three years expansion to the BSA proposal. Our children are our greatest resource and are worth investing in. Quite frankly, we can pay now and reap the benefits of a well-educated populace later or we can pay later and keep paying. Poor education and literacy rates always run hand in hand with increased crime (increased police and correctional spending) and even those who stay on the right side of the law will cost us more due to their under-performance and low earnings (increased spending on social programs and services coupled with less income from taxes).

Even ignoring the social obligation we have to do right by the children of this state, it just makes fiscal sense to invest now and reap the benefits later.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Tom Malloy

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 9:06 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education

Public testimony



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



From: Alex Price [<mailto:alexpricedr@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 21:34
To: Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: Education

Senators,

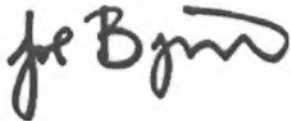
I wish to ask that you do all you can to increase the B.S.A. in the education bill now before you. I consider it a priority over any other project the state is considering (bridges,dams, offices, and even a pipeline). Education as places it can become more efficient, but please fund it then fix it - not underfund it, watch it fail, then claim it is broken. Please increase the BSA to \$405 this session and put improvement of how schools are funded in next years legislative session.

Thank you,
Alex Price
3841 Truro Dr.
Anchorage, 99507

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 11:43 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Education

Public testimony



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



From: Felicia Riedel [mailto:f_riedel@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 18:27
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Education

I'm glad the House raised the BSA and decided to not favor big city schools over rural schools, but I'm furious that the BSA wasn't at least raised to make up for what has been lost to inflation and hope the Senate can rectify that.

I've heard reasons for that. Let me explain why I vehemently disagree with a couple:

1. We won't be able to sustain that level of spending. If we can't sustain paying for education, then we are violating the state constitution. If we can't sustain supporting our future, then it's all over. Divide up all the money, hand it out to individuals, and let us go crazy because there is no future worth itself without great education. If you think education needs to be improved, which of course it does, and that 'throwing money at it' isn't the way to do it, fine. But support it financially until you get the fixes figured out because to let it slip while the adults duke it out is to let some of our kids slip, and we must never let that happen.

If we are worried about sustainability, then don't have a long list of pie-in-the-sky megaprojects, like the Ambler Road, the stupid bridges, or the horrendously flawed Susitna-Watana Dam that are funded for \$1+ billion. Do the work to pick the two that will make the most difference to the most people and are attainable, and get them done. Use the money that is saved for what has to be the #1 priority, Alaska's children. Always, the kids must come first.

Another way to help with financial sustainability would be to not have the tax credit for businesses that help with private schools and quit flirting with ways to use public money for private education, both of which will undermine public education. Not only does this spit on the Constitution, it edges toward hurting an institution that I am sure has helped to make us a great nation. I am not biased toward education that isn't public; I went to private schools and homeschooled, both for a few years. I support those; but even more so, I support public education.

2. Education is not performing well enough to be funded to keep up with inflation. If money for our kids –our hopes- is based on some performance standard, then all the other departments have to be held similarly accountable. It's said that schools need to produce better skills and higher graduation rates, goals that should be ongoing, not punishment. Using the stated goals and the approved measuring methods, then that is happening because test scores and graduation rates are going up. So withholding money in the face of demonstrated improvement, while not making other departments have to prove themselves to have their funding keep up with inflation, makes it seem that those are dishonest arguments.

I imagine it might seem over the top to plead for so much:

-that education gets the money it needs

-to slim down the megaprojects wish list so that money can be used for our children

-to remove the tax credit and other ways of public money going to private education.

But I'm also going to add:

-make the BSA permanent and able to go up with inflation

-forward fund education

-take care of the Teacher Retirement System

so time, talent, energy, and good will aren't wasted every spring in fighting for what has to be the foundational reason for all decisions, our kids.

Thank you,

Felicia Riedel

Kenny Lake, AK