

SJR

9

<TARGET><BILL>SJR 9</BILL><SUBJECT>SJR
9</SUBJECT><COMM>SFIN28</COMM></TARGET>

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 3/28/13

FURTHER:

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: _____

Finance Committee considered SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 9

SJR 9-CONST. AM: EDUCATION FUNDING

Proposing amendments to the Constitution of the State of Alaska relating to state aid for education.

and recommends:

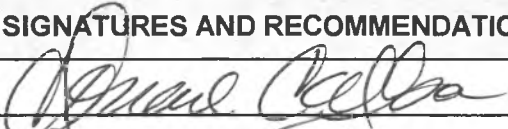
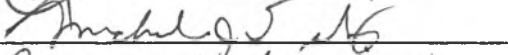
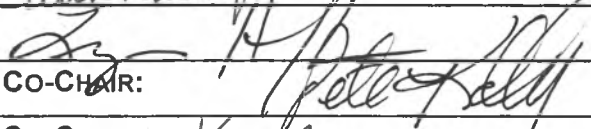
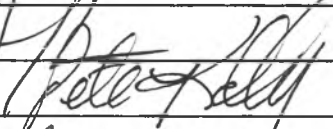
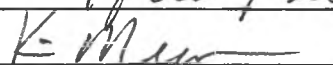
- be replaced with CS _____ (_____) Same Title New Title
- adopt previous CS _____ (_____) Same Title New Title
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt _____ Letter of Intent
- further referral to _____ Committee

Dept Abbr.	
ADM	LWF
CED	LAW
COR	LEG
CRT	MVA
EED	DNR
DEC	DPS
DFG	REV
GOV	DOT
DHS	UA

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S)				
Dept.	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN #
GOV	✓			

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S)				
Dept.	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN #

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME	Do PASS	Do NOT PASS	No REC	AMEND
	OLSON			✓	
	DUAL-ADJ	✓			
Anna L. Fairclough	FAIRCLOUGH	✓			
Cliff Bishop	Bishop			✓	
	Hoffman			✓	
CO-CHAIR: 	Kelly	✓			
CO-CHAIR: 	Meyer	✓			

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2014 Legislative Session

Bill Version: SJR 9
Fiscal Note Number: _____
() Publish Date: _____

Identifier: SJR009-OOG-DOE-1-21-14
Title: CONST. AM: EDUCATION FUNDING
Sponsor: DUNLEAVY
Requester: Senate Finance Committee

Department: Office of the Governor
Appropriation: Elections
Allocation: Elections
OMB Component Number: 21

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2015 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2015 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Services	1.5							
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits								
Miscellaneous								
Total Operating	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1004 Gen Fund	1.5						
Total	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues

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Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2014) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2015) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No
If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version:

Updated for second session to accurately reflect FY2015 and out year costs.

Prepared By: <u>Gail Fenumiai, Director</u>	Phone: <u>(907)465-2644</u>
Division: <u>Division of Elections</u>	Date: <u>09/26/2013 03:10 PM</u>
Approved By: <u>Guy Bell, Administrative Director</u>	Date: <u>09/26/13</u>
Agency: <u>Division of Administrative Services, Office of the Governor</u>	

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2014 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SJR9

Analysis

Passage of this resolution would require the constitutional amendment to appear on the 2014 general election ballot. The cost of providing information about the constitutional amendment in the Official Election Pamphlet, as required by AS 15.58, is \$1.5. Should the addition of this resolution require printing an 8-1/2 by 18 inch ballot, the cost will increase to \$22.0.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

600 East Railroad Ave., Ste 1
Wasilla, Alaska 99654
(907) 376-3370
Fax (907) 376-3157



State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 465-6600
Fax (907) 465-3805

Mike Dunleavy
Senator

SPONSOR STATEMENT

Senate Joint Resolution 9 Constitutional Amendment: Education Funding

Senate Joint Resolution 9, if passed by both bodies of the legislature, places a constitutional amendment before the voters in the general election in the fall of 2014. This ballot proposal provides voters a chance to amend the Alaska Constitution to allow the use of public money for the benefit of all Alaskans seeking educational/training aid, regardless of whether individuals enroll in public or private institutions.

Currently the Alaska Constitution prohibits the use of public funds for the direct benefit of any private educational institution. The courts have determined that this ban extends to state funds being allotted to individual Alaskans who choose to attend a private school. Meanwhile an increasing number of Alaskans are questioning the constitutionality of the long-standing practice of giving educational scholarships/grants to adults for educational and training purposes while denying children the same funding opportunities.

Passage of SJR 9 clarifies the question on the constitutionality of current educational practices. More than that, the ballot question allows the voters to decide whether to maintain or abolish the restrictions on the use of public dollars for the education of children. SJR 9 gives the voters the power to decide what is right for them, their families and the State of Alaska.

It is important to note that even with the adoption of this constitutional amendment by a majority of voters, the Legislature still needs to have a robust discussion on how to go forward. These deliberations will occur before any Alaskan child receives state funds to attend a private educational institution. The passage of SJR 9 allows these discussions to begin.

I strongly favor giving Alaskan voters, the very voters who elected each and every one of us, an opportunity to vote on this issue. Please join me in support of SJR 9.

Senator.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Fax (907) 376-3157



State Capitol
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Mike Dunleavy
Senator

Senate Joint Resolution 9 Constitutional Amendment: Education Funding

Quick Reference

Purpose: The purpose of SJR 9 is to allow Alaskans to vote on amending their constitution to remove the prohibition of using public funds for the direct benefit of religious or private educational institutions.

Primary goals include:

- To ensure that current educational practices within the state are constitutionally sound
- To open the door for future discussions on the distribution of state funds for educational purposes
- To measure the voters thoughts regarding their public education system including educational funding for public/private partnerships

Main Issue: Children come from diverse backgrounds with very different learning styles and issues unique to their particular circumstance. As a result, no one approach to education can meet the unique needs of all Alaska's children.

- To meet the varied and diverse needs of our children, many school districts have added programs and approaches such as public homeschool programs, dual credit with colleges, residential boarding schools, and other opportunities.
- Through public homeschool/correspondence programs, numerous non-public education vendors are used to support a student's individual learning plan.
- The constitutionality of some of these programs and approaches are in question.
- Section 1, Article VII of the Alaska Constitution states in part: "No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution."
- The framers of our constitution intentionally chose not to prohibit the use of public funds for the *indirect benefit* to any religious or other private educational institutions.
- The Alaska Supreme Court has issued opinions that effectively disallow *indirect* funding.
- The court's interpretation calls into question current practices enjoyed by many Alaska students.
- In order to protect these practices and approaches, as well as to add more public/private partnerships, language in the constitution needs to be changed.

What Does SJR 9 Do? SJR 9, if passed by the voters, in and of itself creates no program.

- Passage of this constitutional amendment merely allows current practices to continue.
- Contrary to what some believe, SJR 9 DOES NOT create a program, including a voucher program.
- In order for a program to occur, the legislature would have to create such a program.

Alaskans want choices in education. Alaskans want the opportunity to vote on their constitution. Alaskans need to be given this opportunity.



Dick Komer
Senior Attorney
rkomer@ij.org

Richard "Dick" Komer serves as a senior attorney at the Institute for Justice. He litigates school choice cases in both federal and state courts. Several of his current cases involve the constitutionality of allowing school choice programs to include religious schools among the private schools that can participate. He is IJ's resident expert on state Blaine Amendments.

Prior to his work at the Institute, Dick worked as a career civil rights lawyer for the federal government, working at the Departments of Education and Justice, as well as at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, first as a special assistant to the Chairman, Clarence Thomas, and then as Director of the Office of Legal Counsel. He ended his government employment as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the Department of Education.

Dick has worked at IJ since 1993, although most of that time he worked part-time, spending the rest of his time taking care of his two children, Bob and Anne, until they graduated from high school.

He received his law degree from the University of Virginia in 1978 and his B.A. from Harvard College in 1974.

Dick Komer is a member of the DC bar.

Colorado State Constitution

Section 7. Aid to private schools, churches, sectarian purpose, forbidden.

Neither the general assembly, nor any county, city, town, township, school district or other public corporation, shall ever make any appropriation, or pay from any public fund or moneys whatever, anything in aid of any church or sectarian society, or for any sectarian purpose, or to help support or sustain any school, academy, seminary, college, university or other literary or scientific institution, controlled by any church or sectarian denomination whatsoever; nor shall any grant or donation of land, money or other personal property, ever be made by the state, or any such public corporation to any church, or for any sectarian purpose.

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice

Advancing Milton and Rose D. Friedman's Vision of School Choice for All Children

School Choice Programs

Filter by Program Type <input type="text" value="None"/>		
State	Title	Type
AL	<u>Alabama Accountability Act of 2013 Parent-Taxpayer Refundable Tax Credits</u>	Individual Tax Credit
AL	<u>Alabama Accountability Act of 2013 Tax Credits for Contributions to Scholarship Granting Organizations</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
AZ	<u>Original Individual Income Tax Credit Scholarship Program</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
AZ	<u>Low-Income Corporate Income Tax Credit Scholarship Program</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
AZ	<u>Lexie's Law Corporate Tax Credits</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
AZ	<u>Empowerment Scholarship Accounts</u>	Education Savings Account
AZ	<u>"Switcher" Individual Income Tax Credit Scholarship Program</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
CO	<u>Douglas County Choice Scholarship Pilot Program</u>	Voucher
DC	<u>Opportunity Scholarship Program</u>	Voucher
FL	<u>John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program</u>	Voucher
FL	<u>Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
GA	<u>Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program</u>	Voucher
GA	<u>Qualified Education Expense Tax Credit</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
IA	<u>Tuition and Textbook Tax Credit</u>	Individual Tax Credit
IA	<u>School Tuition Organization Tax Credit</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
IL	<u>Tax Credits for Educational Expenses</u>	Individual Tax Credit
IN	<u>School Scholarship Tax Credit</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
IN	<u>Choice Scholarship Program</u>	Voucher
IN	<u>Private School/Homeschool Deduction</u>	Individual Tax Deduction
LA	<u>Elementary and Secondary School Tuition Deduction</u>	

Provided by Senator Dunleavy

<http://www.edchoice.org/School-Choice/School-Choice-Programs>

1/28/2014

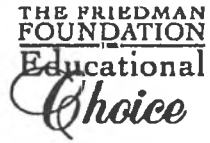
		Individual Tax Deduction
LA	<u>Louisiana Scholarship Program</u>	Voucher
LA	<u>School Choice Program for Certain Students with Exceptionalities</u>	Voucher
LA	<u>Tuition Donation Rebate Program</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
ME	<u>Town Tuitioning Program</u>	Voucher
MN	<u>Education Deduction</u>	Individual Tax Deduction
MN	<u>K-12 Education Credit</u>	Individual Tax Credit
MS	<u>Mississippi Dyslexia Therapy Scholarship for Students with Dyslexia Program</u>	Voucher
MS	<u>Nate Rogers Scholarship for Students with Disabilities Program</u>	Voucher
NC	<u>Special Education Scholarship Grants for Children with Disabilities</u>	Voucher
NC	<u>Opportunity Scholarships</u>	Voucher
NH	<u>School Choice Scholarship Program</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
OH	<u>Cleveland Scholarship & Tutoring Program</u>	Voucher
OH	<u>Autism Scholarship Program</u>	Voucher
OH	<u>Educational Choice Scholarship Program</u>	Voucher
OH	<u>Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program</u>	Voucher
OH	<u>Income-Based Scholarship Program</u>	Voucher
OK	<u>Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarships for Students with Disabilities</u>	Voucher
OK	<u>Oklahoma Equal Opportunity Education Scholarships</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
PA	<u>Educational Improvement Tax Credit</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
PA	<u>Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
RI	<u>Tax Credits for Contributions to Scholarship Organizations</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
SC	<u>Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
UT	<u>Carson Smith Special Needs Scholarship Program</u>	Voucher
VA	<u>Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits Program</u>	Tax-Credit Scholarship
VT	<u>Town Tuitioning Program</u>	Voucher
WI	<u>Milwaukee Parental Choice Program</u>	Voucher
WI	<u>Parental Private School Choice Program (Racine)</u>	Voucher

WI [Parental Choice Program \(Statewide\)](#)

Voucher

WI [K-12 Private School Tuition Deduction](#)

Individual Tax
Deduction



One American Square
Suite 2420
Indianapolis, Indiana 46282
Phone: 317-681-0745
Fax: 317-681-0945
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Moving now to education...

38) Student graduation and test scores in Alaska consistently rank among the lowest in the nation, despite significant increases in overall state funding for education during the past decade. Given that fact, in your opinion should the state insist on demonstrated student performance improvements in our schools before increasing the state K through 12 education funding formula, or should student performance not be used to determine education funding? [Below options were not read]

- Insist on improvements before increasing funding 48%
- Do not take performance into account 43%
- Unsure 9%

39) How familiar are you with the concept of school choice programs as they pertain to K through 12 education? Are you...

- Very familiar..... 16%
- Somewhat familiar 29%
- Not too familiar..... 22%
- or- Have you never heard of the school choice program 31%
- Unsure 2%

40) A school choice program allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. The goal is to improve overall performance by creating healthy competition among the schools. If this program is adopted, a portion of state funds that are currently allocated to a student's school district would instead follow the student to the school of their parents' choosing.

Would you support or oppose amending Alaska's constitution to allow a school choice program in Alaska? ...and is that strongly or somewhat support/oppose?

- Strongly support..... 39%
- Somewhat support..... 17%
- Somewhat oppose..... 7%
- Strongly oppose 29%
- Unsure 8%

Split
sample
Set A

40) Please tell me which of the following two statements comes closest to your view:

Allowing public funds to be used for private schools will lead to an erosion of Alaska's public school system (skipped next question)..... 31%

-or- Allowing parents to choose where to send their child to school, and allowing a portion of the public funds to follow the child, will create a healthy competition and improve the overall performance of Alaska's schools 61%

Neither/Other (volunteered) (skipped next question) 3%

Unsure (skipped next question) 5%

READ IN RANDOM ORDER

Split
sample
Set B

41) Would you support or oppose amending Alaska's constitution to allow a school choice program in Alaska?

- Support..... 84%
- Oppose 11%
- Unsure..... 5%

Provided by Senator Mike Dunleavy

Doniece Gott

From: GENE ZERKEL <kgz1926@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 4:06 PM
To: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Peter Micciche
Subject: SJR9

Senators, I urge your SUPPORT of SJR9. It is time parents had more say in their children's education. thank you Gene Zerkel

Doniece Gott

From: Tyler Desjarlais <tylerdesjarlais@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 2:25 PM
To: Sen. Charlie Huggins
Subject: Fwd: New School Choice System In ASD this year

Thanks,

Tyler Desjarlais
tylerdesjarlais@me.com

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tyler Desjarlais <tylerdesjarlais@me.com>
Subject: **New School Choice System In ASD this year**
Date: January 30, 2014 2:09:01 PM AKST
Bcc: Tyler Desjarlais <tylerdesjarlais@me.com>,

Please pass this on to other legislators who are unaware of the choice options available in schools new this year. Please be aware that new this year, all schools are based on a lottery system, which gives every student choice to attend any school they want which is based on a lottery system, then a first come first serve basis and overall priority based on students in its own community. It is not like it was before where only charter schools are on a lottery system. Our school at Russian Jack has over 100 students that come to our school outside its community and many other schools are like that.

Tyler Desjarlais

Doniece Gott

From: Sabrina Binkley <sabrina@sprucetreemontessori.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 12:19 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Spruce Tree Montessori School Supports School Choice
Attachments: PastedGraphic-2.pdf

1830 2nd Avenue | Fairbanks, Alaska | 907-479-TREE

January 30, 2014

Senator Kelly,

Thank you for your support of SJR9 and your attention regarding the benefits of school choice.

The *element of choice* is a key part of the Montessori philosophy and we appreciate that it has made its way into the Governor's education plan for our state. When individuals are respected, valued and given the opportunity to choose their own path – learning becomes an exciting process of discovery.

It is my hope that your fellow legislators, as well as the people of Alaska, will recognize that inspiration, not institution, is the right course for Alaskan families.

School choice – through public charters, lottery enrollment programs and private admissions processes – will add vitality to the educational community and will paint the broad strokes of success for the public system.

Per the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice article, "How does school choice affect public schools?", studies of school choice opportunities in Florida, Ohio, Milwaukee, Washington D.C., San Antonio, Vermont and Maine have found that vouchers improve public schools. No empirical study has ever found that vouchers harm public schools. These credible studies indicate school choice programs introduce more competition among all public and private schools, compelling them to work harder to attract and retain students. The article explains that one reason vouchers improve public schools is that they enable parents to find the right particular school for each child's unique educational needs.

Let's give parents the choice to do the best for their children.

We are all in this together.

Sincerely yours,

Sabrina Binkley

Sabrina Binkley
Director / Founder

Spruce Tree Montessori School
1830 2nd Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Doniece Gott

From: Bailey Ellert <bailey@afoc.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 11:37 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: School Choice Scholarships

Senator,

I would like to take a moment to encourage you to support Governor Sean Parnell and his endeavors to implement School Choice Scholarships. This would allow parents to choose if their children could go to a private school and public school. Please Refer to the House and Senate Bill numbers HJR1 and SJR9 for more information on this topic. Parents want their children to be taught the same values that they promote in their homes. Parents know what is better for their kids than teachers and educators that don't know them and haven't raised them. Please take this into consideration as many families are depending upon this.

Sincerely,

Bailey Ellert

Doniece Gott

From: Bucket <akbucket@alaska.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 10:38 AM
To: AK House; AK Senators
Subject: Just Say No To Public Education

All,

No more money for the public education gangsters.

The public education bureaucracy has redefined the definition of a "Black Hole" – truly giving it a bad name.

A black hole is a place in space where gravity sucks everything in – including light and **nothing** can get out.

The public education gangsters have taken the experience of a black hole a step farther on earth – destroying the lives of generations of our children.

And the spineless politicians seem to want to go along with these thieves to buy votes – their reelection being the most important issue in their respective lives.

It is time to remove the money from the public education gangsters and give it to those most concerned with the success of the children – the parents.

--

Thomas B. Wood
Eagle River, AK 99577
907.227.8844

Doniece Gott

From: Jennifer LeMay <jlemay@lemayengineering.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 9:45 AM
To: Jennifer LeMay
Subject: Please show your support of SJR9

Senator:

Please support SJR9. This bill will allow the voters (not special interest groups) to decide on what school is best for educating their children. As a concerned parent and Alaska super-voter, I am in full support of SJR9.

Sincerely,

Jennifer LeMay, PE, PMP

Doniece Gott

From: Peter Knox <peter.knox@suddenlink.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 7:18 AM
To: Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Pete Kelly
Cc: Jim Minnery
Subject: Thank you for supporting SJR9

Senators -

I am a parent of 4 school age children who all attend a small private school in Anchorage. I am also a property owner who pays taxes. Therefore, I end up paying twice for the education of the younger generation. I am happy to do my part to contribute to a healthy education system in the state but perhaps this education system is better thought of as a "system of systems," which would include public, private, charter and vocational schools. Thought of in this way, the \$20000+ per year that I devote to my children's education IS my contribution to Alaska's educational "system of systems." But since I also pay taxes, which in part go to the public schools, I end up paying twice, which is frankly unfair. There appear to be two remedies: either reduce my taxes individually or provide me a school voucher. I would be content with either solution.

Thank you,
Peter Knox
Anchorage, AK

Sent from my iPad

Doniece Gott

From: Mark C. Wiggin <mwiggin@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 3:44 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Mark Wiggin; Diane Wiggin
Subject: To Senate Finance -- Fund Adequately Public Schools, NOT Private or Religious Schools

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members Pete Kelly, Sen Anna Fairclough, Sen Mike Dunleavy, Sen Click Bishop, Sen Donald Olson, Sen Lyman Hoffman:

I am writing to ask you to fully fund public schools across Alaska. By fully fund, I mean a BSA that would return Alaska schools to an inflation-proofed 2011 level. I am writing to also express my absolute opposition to use of public money for either private or religious schools.

My two children (10th and 7th grade) attend West High and Romig in Anchorage. They have attended public schools for years. And while we have had infrequent disappointments, my spouse and I are generally extraordinarily happy with the education our kids are receiving. Every parent we know with kids in public schools would express similar sentiments. Kids are getting a great education! Teachers and staff are dedicated and give more of themselves than should be expected in any profession. And as a long-time oil and gas professional who is very well compensated, I would never give of myself as my kids' teachers do! The school teachers and staff should also not be expected to work as they do under the constant threat of termination or increased work load as a consequence of irresponsible budgeting at the state level.

Good public education is important! Public funding of religious schools should never be allowed, as is enshrined in the Alaska Constitution. Do not pass SJR9.

Thank you for your time.

Diane and Mark Wiggin
2213 Douglas Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517
907.244.5041

Doniece Gott

From: Patrick LeMay <patrick.lemay@lemayengineering.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 12:42 PM
To: patrick.lemay@lemayengineering.com
Subject: Thank you for your support of SJR9

Senator:

Please support the constitutional amendment to expand educational opportunities and the school choice scholarship program. This bill will allow the voters (not special interest groups) to decide on what school is best for educating their children. As a concerned parent and Alaska super-voter, I am in full support of SJR9.

Sincerely,

Patrick M. LeMay, PE

President/CEO

LeMay Engineering & Consulting, Inc.

(907) 250-9038

Doniece Gott

From: Ronald Kruckenberg <namu@alaska.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 11:28 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: School Choice

I just want to thank you for supporting so many of the citizens of Alaska. I am pleased to see you support SJR9 for School Choice. It is good to see representation for the people for a change. I expect this from you and that is why you were elected to work for us. We do not have a lobbyist and a lot of public school money talking for us. We Thank the Governor also for his State of the State speech. Please help get this accomplished.

My wife and I have three home schooled sons and we have been educating the kids since the beginning of their lives. We are the ones that have given all we can to our kids because it has been our responsibility as parents. It was our choice to have children. Now we need choice for our children. We need government to get out of the way and not hinder their education and give us a hand instead. All though we have two sons in UAA now and doing very well there seeking their careers, we have a twelve year old still here at home being schooled. We use A Beka Curriculum and it has a religious back ground and we are not funded for it because it uses God as a reference. It still does the job of teaching! It is not an easy curriculum to do. We as parents know that our kids learn because of us. And learn well they do! We as parents also want the best we can for our children, do you? Stand up and fight!

Doniece Gott

From: Ron & Marji Illingworth <lilyvale@awcable.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 11:07 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: JSR9 Opposition

Senator Kelly:

I understand that educational issues are a priority for the legislature this year. That is good. However, I am greatly concerned about the proposal to allow public money to be diverted from funding public schools and to be used to provide funding for private schools. In times of limited resources, it is not a time to be using public money to fund private enterprises, particularly when the public schools are already underfunded. As one columnist in the News Miner indicated, all that will happen with this initiative is that the public education system will become mediocre, something we need to avoid. Private schools have their own funding sources and should rely on them, not public money.

Thanks and hope to see you or one of your aides at the peony conference this weekend in Anchorage.

Ron
Ron & Marji Illingworth
North Pole Peonies
5730 Eielson Farm Road
North Pole, Alaska
907-488-0446 (H)
1-866-535-6459 (fax)
northpolepeonies.com

Doniece Gott

From: Lee Ann Kreig <leeann@kreig.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 4:35 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Thank you for supporting SJR9!

Dear Senator Kelly,

Thank you for co-sponsoring SJR9. You are such a hero! I am so pleased with the governor's support and hope that it is enough to kick this bill through the goal posts!

Thank you!

Lee Ann Kreig

3818 Clay Products Dr.

Anchorage, AK 99517

Doniece Gott

From: Richard Carr <richcarr@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 12:05 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: thanks

Thank you so much for your co-sponsorship of S-jr9 school choice. Keep the good work up.

John Richard Carr-Wasilla

Doniece Gott

From: Tony Roof <firemanak@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2014 9:59 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Anna.Fairclough@akleg.gov; Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov; Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov; Donny.Olson@akleg.gov; Click.Bishop@akleg.gov
Subject: please pass SJR9

Please think of our kids and the rights of the parent to have their kids taught right..

Thank you

Tony Roof
Fairbanks, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Lance Roberts <roberts.lance@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 5:18 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Doug Isaacson; Rep. Eric Feige; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Rep. Pete Higgins; Sen. Pete Kelly; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Hopes for 2014 Session

Howdy All,

This is my list of stuff I hope you'll be able to do something about this session (only representing myself here). The big stuff was handled well last time, now we can get some other things done. There is no ordering here, except for the first one, which is the most important thing that can be done. I'll be down there the first week of February with the Chamber and hope to see you all then.

- In line with the Governor's education package, please let's get SJR9/HJR1 passed, so that the people can vote on whether to remove the prejudicial (was originally anti-catholic based) Blaine amendment from the state constitution. We already allow public funds through the performance scholarship to go to any school of the student's choice, so we should allow people to vote one whether we should line up our Constitution to the de-facto practice of the state.
- A huge need for the Borough to cut the upwards spiralling costs of Solid Waste (thanks to the Federal government regulations they have to work under) is to do large upgrades of the transfer sites and build some new ones. Way more important than turf fields.
- Please DO NOT support the bill to not allow texting at intersections and while waiting for trains to pass (which can easily be up to 10 minutes in Fairbanks). It's complete wrong for the government to be involved in that kind of regulation anyways, so we don't need to make it worse and just give the police more excuses to stop someone.
- Change the auto passing statute to allow exceeding the speed limit while passing. I can't think of something much more unsafe than trying to pass someone and keep under the speed limit, hanging you out in the left lane. This isn't just an imagined problem as I received a ticket for that exact cause this last year.
- DOT has taken the Dennis Road Bridge project off of their list because of lack of funding. This is an important infrastructure project for the interior, it needs \$11 million. The TIP# I have is 17545.
- Of course, I support moving the gasline and susitna projects forward.
- I do hope you'll at least get the general permitting part of HB77 through.
- PERS/TERS Termination Studies, please get rid of this whole concept, it's costing the municipalities too much
- Please re-implement the Regional Review Panels for Permanency Planning. There are too many horror stories of children being taken from their parents (without due process or reason) and then put in bad situations.

- Please at least release subdivisions of the state from Title 36, or at a bare minimum, Road Service projects. The costs of roads are just escalating.
- The statute suggested by the Borough, that would allow lots to get out of the Fire Service areas without an election, if they don't create a donut hole would really help. There are a lot of lots of here that have fire service taxes paid on them, but they don't get fire service and can't because they're either too far from the fire station or just empty land.
- It'd be nice to only allow property owners to vote in Road Service elections, currently all residents can vote even though they don't pay the taxes.
- Please get us out of the psuedo-Common Core standards that have been shown in other states to lower achievement and cost a ton of money.
- Please support the bill that would have the State fulfill its constitutionally mandated roll of funding education.
- Please allow vet care in the Bush without all of the stupid regulations that have stopped good men like Eric Jayne from doing animal care out there.

Thanks,

Lance Roberts

Doniece Gott

From: richard zimmer <rzimmer@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2014 10:04 AM
To: legis.state.ak.us/poms@gci.net; gov.alaska.gov/parnell/contact/email-the-governor.html@gci.net; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Pete Kelly; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Sen. Anna Fairclough
Subject: Funding Public Education

I am a supporter of the Anchorage public schools and I vote. That the school districts of Alaska have to beg for funds from the legislature each year is a travesty. Public education should be the crown jewel of Alaska and an economic driver for the state. Instead we face a manufactured crisis each year, driven by a party in Juneau with an ideological agenda, creating uncertainty among teachers, schools, parents and children. The true agenda should be the education of our students and support for our teachers. A long term funding solution is urgently needed but in the short term the Base Student Allocation, which has not increased since 2011, should be increased and inflation protected. Without adequate funding support from our legislature, one of the cornerstones of our Democracy, public education, will fail to produce the educated citizens that an effective democracy needs.

Richard Zimmer

Doniece Gott

From: Maria Rensel <shapeitup2013@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 4:16 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Click Bishop
Subject: SJR -9

Dear Senate Finance

I'm writing in support of SJR 9; please schedule a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee; I am in favor of repealing the Blaine Amendment and would like your assistance in putting the question to the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Maria Rensel

Fairbanks, Alaska

907-455-7008

907-590-4164

Doniece Gott

From: mcanallycharles@yahoo.com
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 10:01 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly

Dear Senator Kelly

I support SJR9 and request that you send the bill forward for a vote of the people.

Charley McAnally

Willow, Ak

Sent via the Samsung GALAXY S®4 Active™, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

Doniece Gott

From: Ray Kreig <ray@kreig.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 9:46 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Yes to SJR9

Dear Senator Kelly

I support SJR9 and request that you send the bill forward for a vote of the people.
Ray Kreig

=====
Ray Kreig
RA Kreig & Associates
201 Barrow #1
Anchorage Alaska 99501-2429
(907) 276-2025 * fax: (907) 258-9614 * home: (907) 243-8951 * cell: (907) 360-7462
ray@kreig.com www.kreig.com
=====

Doniece Gott

From: Lantz_Lydia <lantz_lydia@asdk12.org>
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2014 11:03 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Education Today

Dear Pete Kelly,

With so many important issues on this year's docket, it's often tough to pinpoint an issue that affects all Alaskans wherever we live; but there is one issue that will affect us all now and in the future, and that is education.

As a high school teacher it is easy to see why I have a vested interest in education because of what I see and do on a daily basis. As a future parent I continue to worry about the quality of education my son will have, but it's as a citizen of Anchorage and the state of Alaska that causes this issue to hit me the hardest.

We are not just graduating students from a system; we are creating the future employees and employers in all facets of the job market. They will not only clean, cook our food, build our roads, but they could one day be our future bosses. Ask yourself, how educated do you want your employees, coworkers and bosses to be?

These kids are going to make important decisions for us as voters, legislators and politicians. How educated do we want our general population to be?

The rates of violent crimes being committed have recently gone up in Anchorage and according to Forbes Magazine, with 813 violent crimes per 100,000 residents this city now ranks number 10 on their "America's Most Dangerous Cities List." It is no surprise that dropouts and poorly educated individuals are specifically linked as the perpetrators of these kinds of crimes. Yet the state refuses to focus its attention on education and we are forced to continually make cuts due to flat funding. The money spent on corrections goes far beyond the millions when you take into account the money pumped into prisons, the police, medical facilities, courts, property insurance; not to mention the value of human lives. If we can keep counselors in our Title 1 elementary schools working with children on their social emotional learning and counselors in the high school who can keep at risk kids in school and off the streets, we have a shot at changing this city.

Schools don't just teach math, science, reading and writing; we teach many kids how to interact with each other. On a regular basis we teach the skills that can keep these kids employed, out of jail and on their way to becoming contributing members of society.

The kids who need our help the most are not going to benefit from vouchers to private schools, the blanket masses of these students will gain their knowledge from public education. Our future cannot afford another cut due to flat funding. Please increase the BSA and give Alaskans a chance.

Thank you,

Lydia Lantz

Doniece Gott

From: Kathleen Heinle <skheinle@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 3:45 PM
To: Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Bob Herron; Rep. Doug Isaacson; Rep. Wes Keller; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Dan Saddler; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Eric Feige; Rep. Max Gruenberg; Rep. Pete Higgins; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Charisse Millett; Rep. Kurt Olson; Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Andy Josephson; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Harriet Drummond; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Shelley Hughes; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux; Rep. Benjamin Nageak; Rep. Lora Reinbold; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: Education funding

AK State representatives,

As a parent of a child who attends an Anchorage area public school, I need to let you know that I am opposed to the current plan to rewrite the AK state constitution and allow public monies to be used for private and religious schools. Families who elect to send their child to public schools should be responsible to pay for their child's education out of their own funds. Public education is suffering as a result of your decisions and weighs terribly on our schools, administrators, and teachers. This is unacceptable. Please take into consideration how this affects the entire state of Alaska. This is not good politics and is not in the best interest of ALL kids.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Heinle

Doniece Gott

From: Maria Rensel <shapeitup2013@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 4:16 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Click Bishop
Subject: SJR -9

Dear Senate Finance

I'm writing in support of SJR 9; please schedule a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee; I am in favor of repealing the Blaine Amendment and would like your assistance in putting the question to the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Maria Rensel

Fairbanks, Alaska

907-455-7008

907-590-4164

Doniece Gott

From: Bob Hadaway <hadaway.bob@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2014 12:24 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: funding for public schools

Dear Senator Kelly,

As a Fairbanks resident and informed voter I am appalled and outraged over the proposals for educational funding coming from the governor and our legislators in Juneau.

Our state's future success and prosperity lies in having a well educated populace. Misguided attempts at school reform that strip schools of the funding necessary to properly provide education are a recipe for disaster. Worse, ultra conservative agendas that seek to give public money to private schools at the expense of properly funding public schools are abhorrent.

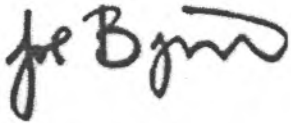
We have great public schools we need to keep them strong. I urge you to stand in opposition to those politicians in our state who refuse to do their duty of helping improve schools through increased funding to public education.

Sincerely,

Bob Hadaway

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2014 8:48 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Please increase the Base Student Allocation



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



From: Alison Arians [<mailto:alison@riseandshinebread.com>]
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 22:49
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Please increase the Base Student Allocation

January 25, 2014

Dear Senator Kelly,

Thank you for your work on the Senate Finance Committee. I'm writing to ask you to work with your colleagues to please pass legislation to increase the Base Student Allocation. Please bring the level up to what it would have been if the BSA had been increased in tandem with inflation since 2011. What is being called "flat funding" by some is actually a dramatic decrease in public school funding, since costs have increased for health care, energy, technology, and insurance.

I was born and raised here in Anchorage, and I attended my local public schools. I then earned my B.A. at Dartmouth College, and went on to get a Ph.D. in Geography at the University of Colorado in Boulder. After completing my dissertation research in the Brooks Range of Alaska, I returned home to work as a land use and forestry planner for the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. Anchorage schools prepared me extremely well for higher education, which then allowed me to come back and help plan for Alaska's future.

Now my nine-year old daughter is in third grade at Rabbit Creek. She even has the same P.E. teacher than I had, 35 years ago! I am very happy with the teachers and principal at Rabbit Creek Elementary School, but have been frustrated and saddened by how big the classes sizes are already. I am now a small business owner, and spend time every week helping in my daughter's classroom. I also work with the Rabbit Creek PTA. I'm sure that our teachers appreciate parents' help, but we can't do it all. If we can't keep our state BSA funding abreast of inflation, our teachers will be crippled. They can't possibly teach our children properly if they are managing huge class sizes.

With layoffs as proposed for next year, our children and young people are really going to suffer. Please, help us put our resources into educating our young people! Their knowledge and excitement and passion, if channeled and encouraged by great teachers, and supported by counselors, can make a huge difference to the future of Alaska. A well-educated cohort of graduating seniors is going to be ready to take on jobs in our workforce. If they decide to go Outside to college, they are more likely to come back if our schools are top-notch. Why would they want to raise a family in a state that doesn't support its public schools?

Alaska is a wealthy state: please, let's put some of these financial resources back into our most important resource: our children. Please, let's make funding our public schools a top priority, and pass legislation to inflation-proof the Base Student Allocation. We will all benefit from a well-educated community.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Alison Arians

12900 Badger Lane

Anchorage, AK 99516

907.677.3712 (h) 907.748.3712 (c)

alison@riseandshinebread.com

SJR 9
OPPOSITION LETTERS

Doniece Gott

From: mark mitchell <markkimmitchell@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 10:47 AM
To: Doniece Gott
Subject: Say no to vouchers

Under no circumstances should we open the door to giving public money to private or charter schools. First we should not give away public control of the education system in this state. Second it would be a direct violation of the state constitution. 3rd it would take \$100 million dollars from public education in an already tight money situation. 4th it would be a serious blow to the children in rural Alaska.

Mark Mitchell
markkimmitchell@hotmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Helen Nienhueser <helenldn2@gmail.com>
nt: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 7:31 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR 9

I oppose SJR 9 because vouchers will take money away from the public school system.

Please include this in the public record of the Senate Finance Committee hearing on SJR 9 earlier today. I sent this message to you this morning but for some reason my ACS server refused to "relay" it. Hence I am now forced to send it thru my wife's g mail.

Thank you.

Gayle Nienhueser

2561 Lovejoy Dr

Anchorage

nyleak@alaska.net

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 10:32 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: SJR 9 and HJR 1 Vouchers and Quality of Public Schools and Longer Term School Budgeting Process



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



From: David Nyman [<mailto:DNyman@restorsci.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 10:26
Subject: SJR 9 and HJR 1 Vouchers and Quality of Public Schools and Longer Term School Budgeting Process

I would like to express my opposition to the recent movement to amend the constitution to distribute public funds to private schools. I have 4 teens in the public school system in Anchorage. They have variously attended Nunagach Optional, Central Middle School of Science, Steller and West High. My step daughter attended Girdwood Elementary and now attends South High. It is a challenge to keep up with the scholastic and extracurricular activities but in doing so I have come to the opinion that Anchorage Schools offer a wide range of options and in most cases excellent educational environments. When there is a problem it is up to me the parent to work with the child and school system to identify it and resolve the issue. Thus when I hear others grouse about the public school system I think to myself that perhaps they need to be more involved with the school system.

In my opinion the initiatives identified above as SJR9 and HJR1 are flatly misguided and will detract from continuing to promote and build the best public education system possible. Thus I object to these measures and the constitutional changes they would require. Alaska's constitution has been shown time and time again to be well crafted as it is based on sound principles. What I see in the current efforts is some folks who are in a position of authority believe they should change the current system based on their perception of what is occurring versus the reality of the situation.

With that said, Alaska can always do better in managing the expenses or the quality of the school system. The year to year budgeting process, I believe, detracts from any manager's ability to plan over a longer time frame as proposed by forward funding. The herky jerky nature of our annual budget scramble affects all branches of our government, allows for easy insertion of poorly justified projects into the process. Mega projects that are sexy like the Knik Arm Crossing or the Susitna Hydro siphon capital away from basic services including our schools.

In conclusion I hope everyone has a productive session and works toward the benefit of all Alaskans!

Best Regards,

David Nyman

Doniece Gott

From: LIO Fairbanks
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:25 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: against SJR-9

Please enter into the record the following constituent testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on SJR 9: Constitutional Amendment, Education Funding dated 2/4/2014

From: Stephanie Rudig
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 9:22 AM
To: LIO Fairbanks
Subject: against SJR-9

For your consideration:

I am a retired public school educator who came to Alaska 30 years ago. I was a nationally recognized, published and awarded professional who chose to work in what I felt was the best school system there was at the time.

Sadly, I have watched as the Alaskan legislature has carved away at the quality of our schools by decreasing funding. This has happened year after year, culminating in the biggest cuts last year. It continues this year by the introduction of SJR-9, signaling the death knell of quality education in this state.

On behalf of my former students, their children, and the rest of the students in this state, STOP. Do not approve SJR-9.

the way, I vote in every election, but not for you if this travesty passes.
Stephanie S. Rudig

Doniece Gott

From: LIO Fairbanks
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:24 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: testimony on SJR9

Please enter into the record the following constituent testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on SJR 9: Constitutional Amendment, Education Funding dated 2/4/2014

From: Charley Basham
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:54 AM
To: LIO Fairbanks
Subject: testimony on SJR9

February 3, 2014

To the Alaska State Senate Finance Committee:

I would like to testify against Senate Joint Resolution 9 (SJR9). As a grandmother and former educator (UAF), I am concerned about the future of our public schools. My concern lies with both moral and economic issues.

First, I believe we have a moral obligation to provide all of our children with an opportunity for quality education. This means we should not siphon off public funds to support unaccountable private and for-profit religious or secular schools. Public dollars should go to public schools.

It is also clear that vouchers for students enrolled in private schools will be very expensive and will likely result in further cuts to public schools. Private schools should remain as a choice, not an entitlement. We need strong public schools.

Please consider the fact that Diane Ravitch, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education under G.W. Bush, changed her thinking about vouchers when she examined the data. She says, "Protecting our public schools against privatization and saving them for future generations of American children is the civil rights issue of our time."

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Charlotte Basham

1649 Red Fox Drive

Fairbanks, AK 99709

Charley.basham@gmail.com



Doniece Gott

From: Brinna Wojtalewicz <brinnalouise@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:13 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Please do NOT vote for SJR 9

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am opposed to SJR 9. Amending Alaska's constitution to allow public funds to be used in support of private and religious schools will not improve the quality of Alaska's schools. We need to focus our time, energy and funding on strategies that give EVERY student in Alaska access to a great education. The students who a resolution like this will take away from are often the those who do not have parents who speak out. For the most part, students who are in private schools, are supported, financially, emotionally and physically by their families. Please do not take even more away from the students who families don't make decisions that bid them well. Do NOT punish the child for their family's mistakes.

Put money into the BSA to ensure all students get the interaction, support and attention we all need to be successful, active community members.

Thank you for making education, of ALL students, a priority.

Brinna Wojtalewicz

907-342-9207

6943 Riddell St

Eagle River, AK 99577

brinnalouise@gmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Rebecca Bernard <rbernard.ak@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:14 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: Fwd: Testimony on SJR 9

To Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am submitting this written testimony in opposition to SJR 9. I have an 8-year-old son in one of the Anchorage School District's public charter schools. He loves going to school every day, and my family is very happy with his school. We are also very appreciative of the richness of school choice that is available to families in Anchorage within the public school system. Indeed, our Alaska charter school law is viewed by school systems in other states as one of the best in the country.

Proponents of SJR 9 trumpet the need for parents to have school choice. But in Alaska, at least in the larger towns, we already have school choice within the public school system.

SJR 9 would actually take us down a path in which the school choices we already have are diminished. If a voucher system were established, public money would be siphoned away from the public school districts to private and religious schools. With less money, it seems unlikely the school districts would be able to maintain the variety of schools that are available now, and so our public school choices would likely be reduced.

Private charter schools are not accountable to the public in the same way that public charter schools are, and there is something fundamentally wrong about giving away public money to schools that do not have to answer to the public through the public schools districts. Conversely, if a voucher system were established that imposed some controls on private schools receiving public money, then this would require another bureaucracy in addition to the existing public school system, requiring more money that would be siphoned out of the public schools.

The public schools are already hurting for funds. The solution to this is not to bleed away more money by opening the door for public money to flow to private schools. The solution, instead, is to preserve the existing diversity of school choice within the public schools by raising the base student allocation by a meaningful amount and inflation-proofing it so that school budgets are not constantly falling behind inflation.

Please say no to SJR 9.

Thank you for considering my views,

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

Doniece Gott

From: Helen Nienhueser <helenldn2@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 9:46 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9

To: Senate Finance Committee

From: Helen Nienhueser, 2561 Lovejoy Dr, Anchorage

Re: SJR9

I oppose SJR 9 and vouchers for private and religious schools for the following reasons:

---public education is the foundation of our democracy

---public education is the most important function of government

---private and religious schools are not accountable; public schools are

---if vouchers were issued to all those now attending private schools it would be very expensive

the job of public schools is to educate all of us. They cannot turn away those who are handicapped or do not speak English. Our Alaska schools are doing a good job with a difficult task.

---vouchers for private schools will undermine public schools

I am the parent of two sons who are graduates of the Anchorage public school system, the grandparent of two granddaughters who are graduates of the Anchorage public school system and of one granddaughter who is currently enrolled in that system.

Instead, please increase the base student allocation!

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Helen Nienhueser

Doniece Gott

From: Karla Hart <karlahart@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:02 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR 9 - oppose

I oppose SJR 9. I'm a lifelong Alaskan.

For those who complain they are double taxed to pay for public schools while paying tuition for private schools, I reply that I am paying for their children's and grand children's educations and I have no children. I personally have paid and will continue to pay many thousands of dollars in property taxes towards local schools. I have also volunteered in local public schools and donate to non-profits that provide services and sports in public schools.

I hear some testifying that the state funds are not "our" tax dollars since we don't pay state income taxes. The revenues and taxes received from oil are Alaskans' tax dollars and there is opportunity cost in how public funds are spent. As a side note, I opposed ending state income tax and strongly support re-imposition to provide a more diverse revenue stream, to capture dollars from non-resident workers, and to perhaps further engage Alaskans in how all of our public funds are spent.

If this program is passed I will work with others to see that there are regulations to strictly regulate schools that are allowed to receive vouchers with public funding.

In recent years I received an education credit through Americorps Service and find that my choices are limited to those educational institutions that meet strict federal requirements. I expect the same of public funding going to private K-12 schools. This additional regulation and monitoring will be expensive and further stress education.

Regards,

Karla Hart
Juneau, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Thea Agnew Bemben <thea@agnewbeck.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 11:10 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: No public money for private school

I am writing to express my opposition to SJR9 and the Governor's proposal to use public money to support private schools. Public education is the bedrock of a productive society. For Alaska to supply a skilled, educated workforce, to foster new business development and to be a thriving community into the future, we must have high quality public schools.

I went to public school here in Anchorage during the 70's and 80's and believe I had a very good experience. My son is in public school in Anchorage now and he has so far had an excellent experience. I know, however, that many children need more support than is currently available. **Specifically, we should have universal preschool for all 3-5 year olds in order to give all children, specifically those without good support at home, the best chance to enter school ready to learn. Also, all students deserve access to public transportation to get to and from school.** In Anchorage, we have variety of excellent charter schools and special programs, including language immersion, but without bussing only higher income children have easy access to the full diversity of options here in Anchorage.

summary, NO public money for private schools. SPEND public money on universal preschool for ALL Alaskan kids. And SPEND public money on bussing for ALL kids in public schools.

Three studies that demonstrate the economic impact of investing in early education:

<http://abc.fpg.unc.edu/>

The Abecedarian Project

Perry Preschool Study: <http://www.highscope.org/content.asp?contentid=219>

James Heckman video at <http://www.heckmanequation.org/content/resource/early-childhood-education-has-high-rate-return>

Thank you for considering my input on this important topic,

Thea Agnew Bemben

 Managing Principal

907.222.5424 office

www.agnewbeck.com

Engage, Plan, Implement. Agnew::Beck



PETERSBURG LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: petersburg.lio@akleg.gov
907-772-3741/ phone/ 907-772-3779/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
(Please Write Clearly and Legibly)

YOUR FULL NAME: Daniel Sullivan Circle one: Support **Opposed**

REPRESENTING (ORGANIZATION OR SELF): Self

BILL #: STR 9 Subject: Proposed Constitutional amendment

COMMITTEE NAME: Senate Finance HEARING DATE: 2-3-14

I'd like to speak against STR 9. I have been in the teaching profession since 1998. In those 16 some years, I've taught in charter schools, private schools and parochial schools, in 3 states and two countries.

The Governor and Legislature has seen fit to flat fund and defund education to the point where failure will be inevitable. The layoffs we see in Anchorage and Fairbanks and Juneau will certainly make it difficult to maintain the quality of education students there now receive. My district, with high achievement but declining enrollment, may soon be in the same situation. Allowing public money for private and religious schools will further dilute the scarce resources available for public education. I encourage you to reject this proposal and instead focus on providing a adequate funding now and in the future for Alaska public schools.

Thank you for submitting my written comments to the record.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Sullivan

(Updated 4/9/2013)

KODIAK LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kodiak_LIO@akleg.gov
907-486-8116/ phone, 907-486-5264/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Grian March

REPRESENTING: Kodiak Community

BILL#/ SUBJECT: Vouchers

COMMITTEE &
HEARING DATE: 2/3/14 SAR-9

~~to now do my job with kids
Larrel's~~

Vouchers are not the answer-

Please take time to study

the real reason kids struggle

in school! We all need to

get on the same page to

help our kids

I am not in favor of vouchers for the following reasons:

1. We often turn to our founding fathers for reference when we discuss constitutional issues. Jefferson is known for his proposal for public education. He opposed providing children in public schools religious texts, since he believed the children heavily would be influenced by adults other than their parents in religious matters. He supported secular education-keeping the important aspect of religion in the hands of the parent. However, Jefferson was in favor of showing children that happiness does not depend on the condition of life in which chance has placed them, but is always the result of a good conscience, good health, occupation, and freedom in all just pursuits. Public education does just that. It provides an atmosphere of ethical treatment to all, while pursuing academic standards on which to build a career.
2. What is the real cost of having a good public education? This excellent question was brought up in an Anchorage Daily News article by Diane Hirshberg and Alexandra Hill. So often calculating the cost of education is clouded by money not directly spent on instructing a child. Adding to this is the additional supports needed by children who need accelerated growth. Some children come into school already reading, some do not. Some children leave a well organized home that meets the primary needs of safety, and wellness (both emotional and physical). Public schools are a mirror of our society. It is the place where children not only learn academics, but how to work as a functioning citizen in a community. Let's take the time to understand what the real cost of having an excellent public educational system is! It will pay off in the long run.
3. Julia O'Malley's article in this past Sunday's Anchorage News paper compares schools in wealthy and less wealthy neighborhoods. She states, "Take the Anchorage Hillside. A recent state study found that the Hillside is the fastest-growing part of town, having tripled in population since 1980. Roughly 30,000 people now consider themselves Hillsiders. Sixty percent of those households make more than \$100,000 a year. The only other neighborhood that wealthy is Turnagain. Hillside schools are good. Look at their scores. At South High, for example, 64 percent of female students are considered advanced in reading. Now look at East Anchorage, a neighborhood with large pockets of poor families with children. In Mountain View, only 31 percent of households have an income above \$50,000. In Russian Jack, 49 percent of households make more than \$50,000, 16 percent make more than \$100,000. Reading scores for girls at East High, which those neighborhoods feed? Only 33 percent are considered advanced. The picture in elementary schools is even starker. Now expand the pattern statewide. Parts of rural Alaska have poverty rates near 30 percent. Few places in the country are higher. Where poverty is high in Alaska, students struggle more." Her article speaks to the heart of educating the masses in public education. Children must have their primary needs met before they can achieve academically. Maslow, a psychologist I studied during my education stated that primary needs are being fed, being safe, and being emotionally available to learn. We need to look further at how we are providing basic needs to our children.

Finland has done this and they are considered one of the premier educational systems in the world.

Let's not drain more money from our public schools to try some new experiment to help children succeed. Vouchers have been tried in Wisconsin and the academic results with children who come from homes at poverty levels demonstrated little or less than satisfactory results. This comes from a legislative report in which our own Senator, Gary Stevens, research on. Instead, let's take the time to improve our educational system from the bottom up. If we all come together for a common goal, we can provide a pathway for great achievement.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the _____ Senate Finance _____
Committee

on SJR9 dated 020314 .

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing a brief comment concerning SJR-9, although "brief" doesn't cover the issues adequately. I strongly oppose the idea of taking monies supporting the public schools' educational programs and creating vouchers for private education. I have no qualms about private schools, charter schools, or home schooling; but, personally knowing the immense responsibilities the public schools have attempting to educate the entire spectrum of population socially, economically, and racially, I cannot see justification of removing ANY funds, but could see adding additional funds. As a teacher myself, I know the public classroom and the incredible challenges of teaching the public sector. Beyond the evident need for educational basics, the public schools are also havens for safety and warm meals, and they are classrooms for social and moral education. Removing funds does not create a better environment for teaching and learning; instead it causes cuts in funding for important programs that help the poor and underprivileged, and it raises class sizes that hampers effective teaching by even the most gifted and competent educator. Please DO NOT SUPPORT SJR – 9.

Sincerely,

Susan Biggs
Soldotna, Alaska
907-252-3582

SEWARD LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Seward_LIO@legis.state.ak.us
907-224-5066/ phone, 907-224-5067/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: S. HILARY BEAN
REPRESENTING: myself - Seward
BILL#/ SUBJECT: 3JR
COMMITTEE &
HEARING DATE: 2-3 SFIN2

I am a parent of an elementary aged child and I am against amending the Alaska Constitution for the purpose of ~~using~~ ~~and~~ allowing public school funds to be used for private and religious schools.

I live in a community where there is no of schools. My concern is that the money leaving the system would leave our public schools with fewer resources needed to educate all the children of Alaska.

To siphon money from the public schools would undermine and destroy the educational system.

Doniece Gott

From: Gretchen Nelson <glnelson19@gmail.com>
Content: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 2:02 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Thank you for comment opportunity...

Dear Senators of Alaska,

I am opposed to SJR9. My daughters attended East High School in Anchorage and were rewarded with a diverse community of students, an excellent teaching staff and an experience to move them forward to become responsible, considerate citizens because it is a public school serving all students of society. I believe it is the largest high school in the state with no "majority" of ethnic group. This represents our country and it's amazing diversity of people living, working, caring together. It is an ideal of our constitution and democracy we've established.

I believe SJR9 will harm our public schools that work to offer a place for students of all needs and backgrounds. It will be an expensive endeavor that will provide opportunity for a privileged minority who most likely already meet each day with supportive home base.

My daughters also attend a private school from grade K - 8th. We made that choice as a family and decided to adjust our budget to make it happen. That will remain to be a choice for families who want to pursue an education outside of our public schools.

Please maintain public funds only for public institutions.

Thank you,
Gretchen Nelson

Doniece Gott

From: Alison Arians <alisonarians@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 1:13 PM
To: doniece.gott@akleg.gov
Cc: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: Although I'm not an NEA Member...

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

Thank you very much for your service on the Senate Finance committee. Thank you, too, for listening to such a long public testimony last night on SJR 9. I was at the Anchorage LIO yesterday evening, and was fortunate enough to be called on fairly early in the proceedings. I appreciate your listening to my testimony, and to my fellow Alaskans. I am one of the many people who are opposed to the bill.

I noted that every person who testified in the first two hours was asked by someone on your committee whether they were a member of the NEA. (I'm not sure who was asking, since we were on a teleconference.)

I am not, nor have ever been, a member of the NEA. But I have a lot of respect for those people who are educators, and who have been educators in the past. Just because a person has been or is a teacher does not mean that their testimony on educational issues should be disregarded. In fact, I think that we should be listening especially carefully to teachers about a bill that could change our current school system.

Perhaps your committee did not mean to be disrespectful of the many educators and other NEA members at the meeting. I'd like to suggest, though, that educators are a wonderful resource of information when we are debating school issues.

Thank you again,
Alison Arians

Doniece Gott

From: susan rainey <sue.rainey.alaska@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 12:49 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Public funds for private schools

Senator Kelly,

I want to register my opposition to making any change to our state constitution that would allow public funds to be used for private schools.

Susan Rainey

--
NOTE: The information contained in this message is intended only for the addressee or the addressee's authorized agent. The message may contain information that is privileged, confidential or otherwise exempt for disclosure. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient or recipient's authorized agent, then you are notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this message is prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender by reply e-mail and delete the message immediately.

Susan Rainey
Broker/Owner
Riverview Realty
(907) 479-4000
www.suerainey.com

Doniece Gott

From: Kathleen Finn <hundredthmonk21@gmail.com>
Content: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 12:02 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton; Sen. Peter Micciche
Cc: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Gary Stevens; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: SJR 9 (Stealing money from a marginally funded public program-for private benefit)

Dear People's Representatives in the AK Legislature,

I attended my local Homer LIO tele-meeting concerning SJR 9, last evening for 2 1/2 hours. At the end of this time listening and testifying, my count was 48 opposed and 3 pro this resolution.

One Congress person began asking whether or not each testifier was a member of the NEA. The strong suggestion of this questioning, is that the testifiers comments were suspect and not credible. IF that was the Congress person's intention, i would suggest just the opposite. If a person is a member of the NEA, then they are highly involved in the process of, and committed to educating our Alaska kids in a public setting, for the collective good of an informed community of citizens!

So many people articulated very well the obvious arguments against this Resolution i.e.:

- 1-There is currently no accountability of academic standards or certification of teachers.
- 2-Private schools can be highly selective as to whom they enroll--discriminating against sex, race, religion, etc.. And as Amy Bollenback pointed out, we could be in the interesting position of possibly needing to offer \$ for children whose parents want them to attend a Wahhabi School of militant and political Islam, right here in AK!!
- 3-Siphoning money from our already underfunded School budgets, will only result in reducing the # of teachers and current academic offerings in our public schools.
- 4-Several teachers/parents told of the wide variety of educational offerings currently available within our public schools, as the individual student needs and styles of learning are addressed, so each student leaves High School educated and ready to be a productive citizen in this state, country and world.
- 5-The AK courts have already decided that "payment from public funds for the direct educational benefit of students", is really just an indirect way to fund private institutions, so would be unconstitutional! If this amendment were to pass in an election, it will surely end up in court!!!

It seems like an "Emperor has no clothes" kind of discussion really. **OF COURSE PUBLIC \$ IS TO BE SPENT ON PUBLIC EDUCATION**, not syphoned off for the benefit of exclusive private (vs inclusive/integrative public) schools. If parents want their children to attend private schools then, OK no problem, send them to private schools, but let the parents pay for that themselves!!!

Thank you for your attention to the above comments, and please get back to work finding more money to improve our **Public Education** system in this fabulous state.

Kate Finn
Home: Anchor Point
Mail: POBox 3364 Homer

Disclosure: I am not a mother, grandmother, teacher, or in any other possibly prejudiced category. I am a 36 year AK resident, semi-retired nurse, and citizen very concerned that our next generation be good community/global citizens, and, i believe that a robust public education system is an excellent way to make that happen.

I support public education. I oppose anything that dilutes support of public education. I oppose amending the constitution to allow public money to flow to private schools. I urge the finance committee to kill SJR-9.

On a strictly economic note, a recent study done by a labor economist at Princeton University shows that each new high school graduate will confer a net return to taxpayers of nearly \$130,000. It makes sense to invest in public education. The same study went on to say that those who do not complete high school have higher levels of unemployment, contribute less to tax revenue, are less healthy, are more likely to need emergency care, and are more likely to turn to the criminal sector when other opportunities vanish. All this comes at a high cost to society.

It should be clear, then, that support for education is in society's best interest.

So...do vouchers advance this goal? No. They do not. Research, including that of voucher advocates, shows that public school achievement is as good as, and sometimes better, than students with vouchers who attend private school.

Three such studies done by the General Accounting Office, by the Ohio Department of Education, and by Princeton University all demonstrate that there is no statistically significant difference in achievement between students in public schools and those in private schools who have voucher assistance.

This not to say that rich kids in private schools don't do better than poor kids in public school. Rich kids do better. Some private schools do a bang-up job. That's not the point.

The point is that *public funding* of private schools does not improve student performance.

Since there's only so much money, public funding of private schools will take money away from those things that have repeatedly been shown to improve student performance in public schools. Smaller class size, good teachers (especially in the early grades), and high-quality preschool are all known to boost achievement.

Funding vouchers does not improve student performance. Rather, by diluting funding available to those things that do, it makes things worse and society suffers.

We know what works; it's not vouchers. It's intelligent funding of public education. R. Lynn Highland

Doniece Gott

From: Celia Rozen <rozencelia@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 10:33 PM
To: Celia Rozen
Cc: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Anna Fairclough
Subject: Re: Question on the SJR 9 Hearing at the Anchorage LIO

Dear Senators Meyer, Dunleavy, Dyson, Kelly, Coghill, Giessel, McGuire, Huggins, and Fairclough:

I listened for quite a while to the testimony of so many educated Alaskans regarding SJR9 on 2/3/14 and many were able to express their opposition very eloquently. I hope you listened carefully to this testimony. I am concerned that SJR9 is speedily progressing through the Senate Finance Committee, which I can only assume is due to the \$1,500 fiscal note for getting the vote printed in the election booklet. Why is this bill not being heard by the Education Committee, which has more expertise on this subject matter?

This bill is attempting to delete the words the Alaska constitutional framers prudently agreed upon in 1959: NO MONEY SHALL BE PAID FROM PUBLIC FUNDS FOR THE DIRECT BENEFIT OF ANY RELIGIOUS OR OTHER PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION. The fact that they left the word "indirect" out is being used as justification by some to gut the entire passage. It is obvious that most Alaskans find these words dear, as dear to them as the public education they received.

I am proud of the education my children received at West Anchorage High School, and judging by the number of well-placed graduates, the best colleges in the country understand that students are getting a great education here. Our family believes that America's public education system is the best in the world and has always been the great social equalizer in terms of having the potential for achievement, productivity, and prosperity. This bill interferes with that excellence by the potential of diverting much needed funds from the public school system.

I also watched the Anchorage School Board tonight struggle with the budget cuts it has to incorporate which serves only to diminish the quality of the school experience due to flat funding. Last year's cuts of graduation and career counselors have been extremely painful and hurtful to the secondary school students in the current year. The quality of Anchorage schools will only diminish with going from the middle school model to the junior high model, and with going from 6 to 7 periods in the high schools. The finance and education committees should instead consider how to keep the excellence of our public schools strong and let this "voucher" bill die in committee.

Thanks for your attention to this matter,
Celia Rozen
3711 Amber Bay Loop
Anchorage, AK 99515

On Mon, Feb 3, 2014 at 9:52 PM, Alison Arians <alisonarians@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Senators Meyer, Dunleavy, Dyson, Kelly, Coghill, Giessel, McGuire, Huggins, and Fairclough,

Thank you very much for listening to such a long public testimony tonight on SJR 9. I was at the Anchorage LIO this evening, and was fortunate enough to be called on fairly early in the proceedings. I appreciate your listening to my testimony, and to my fellow Alaskans. I am one of the many people who are opposed to the bill.

I noted that every person who testified in the first two hours was asked by someone on your committee whether they were a member of the NEA. (I'm not sure who was asking, since we were on a teleconference.)

I am not, nor have ever been, a member of the NEA. But I have a lot of respect for those people who are educators, and who have been educators in the past. Just because a person has been or is a teacher does not mean that their testimony on educational issues should be disregarded. In fact, I think that we should be listening especially carefully to teachers about a bill that could change our current school system.

Perhaps your committee did not mean to be disrespectful of the many educators and other NEA members at the meeting. I'd like to suggest, though, that educators are a wonderful resource of information when we are debating school issues.

Thank you again,

Wison Arians

Doniece Gott

From: Donna Matthews <dwmatthews@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 5:08 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: SJR9

To Members of the Senate Finance Committee

As a 50-year Alaskan, I believe in our public education system. As so vividly stated by your witness, Dr Deena Paramo, Superintendent of the Mat-Su schools, Alaska already has the capacity to have incredible options through public education. If you recommend stripping our constitution of the protective words—as suggested by ALEC and its legal arm, the Institute for Justice—

you do indeed open a box, a Pandora's box which could have the effect of public funds being used not merely for student tuition, but potentially to build private schools, pay for private student transportation, support private colleges or any other "direct educational benefit of students

Further, I am profoundly disappointed SJR9 is being considered for passage by your committee with no examination of its potential financial effects. In Milwaukee, for example, private school funding with public funds led to increases in local property tax when state funds were diverted.

I urge you to reject SJR 9. Public education is an essential institution of our democratic society. We must make it better, not privatize it.

Donna Matthews
8916 Gloralee St
Anchorage AK 99502

Doniece Gott

From: Dave Scarbrough <trout@ak.net>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 10:30 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough
Cc: Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: A note in opposition to SJR9

Dear Senators,

As a parent of two teenagers currently enrolled in Anchorage Public Schools I'm firmly opposed to SJR9 which as I understand it would put an initiative on the November ballot that would change the Alaska Constitution to allow the state to spend public money on for-profit, private and religious schools. Key concerns that I share with others are:

- **Oversight:** Private schools can choose which students they accept and can dismiss students at will. There is limited or no state or federal oversight of private schools' educational standards in comparison to the many federal and state benchmarks public schools must meet and the safeguards in place to protect student rights.
- **Voucher programs** in the Lower 48 have not improved graduation rates or led to better classroom performance or student success. Vouchers do not improve overall student performance but rather deny already scarce funding from our public schools in favor of private institutions not currently enrollment challenged
- **The use of public funds** should always have accountability tied to it. Public schools have multiple statutes requiring strict accountability. Testimony in the Senate Finance Committee the spring session of 2013 centered on data from states that have public money going to fund private charter schools and showed that in many not only were there NO improvement gains for students, but many have even returned to their local public schools and are behind in academics. Public funding of private schools has not been the magic answer to school reform.
- **Alaska's constitution** has clear intent that public money is for public schools. Article 7, Section 1: "...Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution." Opening up the constitution is a serious step and one that should be thoroughly examined IN PUBLIC before placement on the ballot.

I would appreciate your thoughtful consideration to the long term impacts of this proposed action on the overall school population in the State given the outlook for continued challenges to basic school funding systemwide.

Thanks and regards,

Dave Scarbrough
2413 Lord Baranof Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517
243-4975
trout@ak.net

Doniece Gott

From: Mary Bogan <pprmt@chugach.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:28 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Senate Joint Resolution No. 9

February 4, 2014<?xml:namespace prefix = "o" ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

Re: Senate Joint Resolution No. 9

To set the record straight, I am not, nor have ever been, a member of the NEA.

I do not agree with SJR 9 because:

- It will dilute the education money and spread it too thin. School funding should continue to separate government and religion. It would only become a matter of time before people going to religious schools demand they remove God as they have in the public schools.)
- A private school should be just that ... parents who want them can pay for them.
- Education should not be a competition like the cheapest price for phone service.
- There is already a push to reduce school funding and parsing it out to even more schools would provide less public education funding per public school than there is now.

This idea to fund religious and private schools appears to be a way to give more to the haves and take away from the have-nots. Parents who want private and religious can and should pay for them, not subsidizing those schools on the backs of parents who cannot afford to send their children to these elite schools.

I am the public, I am a supervoter, and I do not want public funding spent on private and religious schools.

Mary P. Bogan

PO Box 220103

Anchorage, AK 99522

(907) 243-8621

Doniece Gott

From: Mike & Gretchen Stoddard <mgstoddard@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 1:40 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Pete Kelly
Cc: Sen. Cathy Giessel
Subject: Left Anchorage LIO without being called- after 2nd round of testimony in Anchorage

I am Gretchen Stoddard, Senate District N, Mother of a 7th grade son who attends Goldenview Middle School. Senator Kelly, I am not a teacher and I am not a member of NEA. I can't find the current listing of the Senate Finance Committee on the state website. I am sending this to you & including Senator Giessel from my district. Generally, I am pretty happy about the state politicians representing me on many economic issues, but I am not satisfied about education issues.

I attended the LIO meeting in Anchorage. I left about 8:45 pm without being called to speak. I stayed through the second "Visit" to that room, but I was not called to testify. I know I was on the list and I could have waited, but I was frustrated with that process. When I arrived, parking was tight. I parked about 1.5 blocks east of the LIO. It isn't a nice neighborhood for a stroll on a nearly deserted winter Monday night at 8:45 pm. I support moving to a different part of town next time the lease is up on the LIO- or have an alternate location for night time testimony in midtown. That location on a dark night is not pleasant. I even went in to the Gaslight on the way there to check my cell phone and see the address of the LIO... I was late and it was the only nearby place with a collection of people where I felt safer about digging through my purse & checking my phone. Ridiculous start and it didn't get better.

My statement would have been:

I am here to speak in support of public schools. I am here to speak against vouchers and a new state department devoted to management of the voucher system. I fully believe this voucher discussion divides my friends, neighbors and coworkers. I am glad to hear that the state has an extra \$ 90- 100 million or more to spend on education funding and I have suggestions on how to spend that money. I support increasing the Base Student Allocation, and I support inflation proofing the BSA.

You have my attention now. I don't want to be here tonight, but I will be here until I feel my son's education is in better hands. I don't feel the state legislature has paid the appropriate level of attention to my son's education for the past several years, and this voucher discussion will make it worse.

How many divisive issues are we bringing to the front & center this year? In my neighborhood, if you are trying to create divisions between committed, involved, parents, then you are doing a great job. I think that is a terrible idea. Funding for Tennis, "vs". Hockey "vs." Libraries? Public vs. Private school? Congratulations you have divided the concerned parents of South Anchorage in to factions of discontent. I hope concerned parents can rally, and we have to move beyond this and discuss the real economic issues in the budget of the State of Alaska. If committed South Anchorage parents at my son's activities are at each other's throats, we aren't going to be able to fix the problems that need attention. I won't leave this discussion until it is decided, but I fully hope we won't be discussing this through the very important August election.

If this voucher program goes through, will the state be delivering \$90 million dollars to private schools and business entities without oversight & strings attached? Will there be a new state division and lots of new state employees to oversee the money? I know that comments at ADN.com discuss the voucher system in "23 states & Canada." This is delivered to us as if all of Canada & 23 states have a universal voucher program like

that being discussed in Alaska. I don't read that at all in the citations. I mostly read about a localized and very different system than what we propose here. I see a system in select cities and a couple provinces. I see locations that have determined that state funding should target low income students. I see systems here many people agree that more state funding requires more oversight of private schools.

I have been generally happy with my son's education, but the flat funding for the past several years has hurt my family and my son's education. Adding "one student" to each elementary classroom had a BIG effect on his class in fifth grade. "One more student" was the straw that broke the camel's back for his school class size, and more funding from the state could have solved that problem. After the change, there were 5th grade classes, 1 combined class of 5th/ 6th, and 6th grade classes. Students per class rose a lot. 5th graders learned 6th grade science . It set off a cascade I did not like. You did that. State fighting about education is affecting my son's education and that is a core value of mine.

Please transfer your proposed budget for these vouchers to adding funds to the Base Student Allocation. Please end this controversy and move forward. Thank you.

Doniece Gott

From: LIO Fairbanks
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 4:08 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee

Please enter into the record the following constituent testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on SJR 9: Constitutional Amendment, Education Funding dated 2/4/2014

To: Senate Finance Committee
From: Patti Skondovitch, Fairbanks District 4
Date: 2/4/2014
Subject: SJR 9

I have been a resident for 62 years.

I went through the public school system 6th grade all the way through high school.

I am not an NEA member, although don't know why that would make a difference.

I think public monies need to pay for public schools only! We need to put public money into the public school system where it belongs.

To be quiet honest I think SJR9 is ludicrous and I am truly amazed and find it embarrassing that such an idea has made it this far.

And therefore I WOULD VOTE NO and I ask that every voting Alaskan do the same.

Please stop SJR 9.

Sen. Murkowski wary of Parnell's school vouchers proposal

Jeff Richardson/jrichardson@newsminer.com | Posted: Sunday, January 26, 2014 12:00 am

FAIRBANKS — Sen. Lisa Murkowski sees things she likes in a proposed overhaul of Alaska's education system but said a plan to offer vouchers to private schools isn't among them.

Murkowski, who spoke at a News-Miner editorial board meeting Friday, said she's wary of legislation to change the state constitution to allow public funds to go to private schools. Gov. Sean Parnell is touting the voucher proposal as part of a package of reforms to overhaul education in Alaska.

Murkowski — who, like Parnell, is a Republican — said she's a “very, very strong advocate” of the government's responsibility to provide a free public education. She's wary of a plan that could redirect funding outside of that system.

“I have always had great anxiety with the thought that we'd take public money, state money, and send it to private schools,” Murkowski said.

Parnell said he supports the Mat-Su lawmaker-backed Senate Joint Resolution 9, which would put a constitutional amendment allowing vouchers on the ballot. The shape of the voucher program would be up to a future Legislature if the amendment is approved.

Parnell said he supports vouchers as part of his sweeping education reform plan that increases school choice but said the fate of the omnibus education bill he introduced Friday isn't linked to SJR 9.

Murkowski said she believes the government should first focus on making the public school system as good as possible. Sending resources to the private sector could ensure that “mediocre schools” become inevitable in the public system, she said.

Murkowski has had experience with the issue as a student, parent and lawmaker.

She graduated from Monroe Catholic High School, and her sons are products of private schools in Washington, D.C. She had good memories of their public school experience in Anchorage, however, which included the opportunity to attend a Spanish immersion program.

She said flexibility was a benefit and was pleased Parnell's plan appears to include more options for parents.

While she hasn't studied the governor's proposal extensively, she did recognize some appealing elements, Murkowski said. Greater opportunities for students to attend charter schools and regional boarding schools seem like good options, she said.

She said the voucher concept briefly emerged as an issue when she was in the Legislature in the mid-1990s but said there wasn't enough support for it to proceed.

Contact staff writer Jeff Richardson at 459-7518. Follow him on Twitter: @FDNMbusiness.

ADN.com

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Compass: Lawmakers should be wary of school vouchers

By ANDREW HALCRO March 20, 2013

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As state lawmakers face the reality of declining oil revenues and calls from Alaska's leading economist to spend billions less, one issue under consideration that should be given extensive public vetting is the proposal to fund private and religious schools.

Senate Joint Resolution 9 (SJR9) would amend Alaska's Constitution to allow public dollars to directly fund private and religious schools. Since this is a constitutional amendment, it requires a two-thirds majority of both the House and Senate to be placed on the 2014 ballot, where voters would make the ultimate decision. If approved by the public, lawmakers could begin adopting school voucher programs as early as 2015.

Supporters of SJR9 have long believed that government should use public tax dollars to pay tuition at private and religious schools. With 94 percent of Alaska's children attending public schools, this change would turn public school funding on its head. It would also open the floodgates to the state treasury while setting up cost shifts to local property taxpayers, which is a major concern of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce.

In Alaska, because residents don't pay any personal state taxes, the burden of funding this new entitlement program would fall on current state oil revenues, or shift costs to local property taxpayers. While some supporters of SJR9 have attempted to stifle any discussion on the issue of cost exposure, this should be viewed with suspicion.

A constitutional amendment by its nature demands a higher level of debate and deliberation before it is put before voters. The refusal to send SJR9 to the Senate Education Committee and the effort to restrict legitimate questions about the process should set off alarm bells. Attempts by school voucher advocates to downplay this legislation as just a simple change and nothing to worry about are incredibly disingenuous.

Opening the treasury to fund private and religious schools would come at a time when oil revenues are declining and local property tax payers are contributing almost 50 percent of their annual property tax bill to public schools. In addition, any voucher program would ensure direct access to over \$1 billion in annual state education funding for some of the most well-connected groups in politics.

The political reality is that many private schools are religion-based and the religious community carries significant weight with many lawmakers. If vouchers were approved, advocates would soon push lawmakers for greater tuition allowances. They'd lobby to operate without the same requirements and facilities as public schools. And if there were any objectionable rules, lawmakers would be pressured to issue waivers or exemptions. Just look at history.

In 2006, following a disagreement with Anchorage city officials over tax exempt properties, one religious group flexed their legislative muscle by lobbying state lawmakers to broaden the home property tax exemption to include religious school teachers. As a result, Anchorage property taxpayers were forced to absorb the cost shifts. With a state-sanctioned voucher program, increased cost shifts to local property tax payers will be inevitable.

More importantly, the proposed constitutional amendment is so vague and broadly written it could eventually be interpreted to mean any type of private school funding. The proposed amendment to Alaska's constitution simply states "nothing in this section shall prevent payment from public funds for the direct educational benefit of students as provided by law."

From a fiscal standpoint, this arguably will mean that public funds can be used to directly build private schools, directly pay for private student transportation or any other "direct educational benefit of students." In 2015 we're funding private school tuitions, in 2016 we're funding private school improvements.

To a former lawmaker who served with some voucher advocates still in the Legislature, these attempts to mask the true end game of SJR9 are simply dishonest. At the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, one of our legislative priorities is fiscally responsible and sustainable budgeting. Given the current condition of state finances and the specter of structural budget deficits, lawmakers should stop and think about the full ramifications of this amendment before unlocking the doors to the treasury with SJR9.

Andrew Halcro is the president of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and served as a Republican in the Alaska State House of Representatives from 1998 to 2002.

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Join The Conversation

Anchorage Daily News is pleased to provide this opportunity to share information, experiences and observations about what's in the news. Some of the comments may be reprinted elsewhere in the site or in the newspaper. We encourage lively, open debate on the issues of the day, and ask that you refrain from profanity, hate speech, personal comments and remarks that are off point. Thank you for taking the time to offer your thoughts.

Tanana Chiefs Conference

Chief Peter John Tribal Building

122 First Avenue, Suite 600

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4897

(907) 452-8251 Fax: (907) 459-3850

March 8, 2013

The Honorable Mike Dunleavy

State Capitol Room 510

Juneau, AK 99801

SUBREGIONS

UPPER

KUSKOKWIM

McGrath
Medfra
Nikolai
Takotna
Telida

LOWER YUKON

Anvik
Grayling
Holy Cross
Shageluk

UPPER TANANA

Dof Lake
Eagle
Healy Lake
Northway
Tanacross
Tetlin
Tok

YUKON FLATS

Arctic Village
Beaver
Birch Creek
Canyon Village
Chalkyitsik
Circle
Fort Yukon
Venetie

YUKON

KOYUKUK

Galena
Huslia
Kaltag
Koyukuk
Nulato
Ruby

YUKON TANANA

Alatna
Allakaket
Evansville
Fairbanks
Hughes
Lake
Minchumina
Manley Hot
Springs
Minto
Nenana
Rampart
Stevens Village
Tanana

Dear Senator Dunleavy,

I am writing to ask for your vote against the amendment to the Constitution of the State of Alaska, Senate Joint Resolution No. 9 and House Joint Resolution No. 1. Changing the Constitution of the State of Alaska and using public school funds to pay vouchers to private and/or religious schools will have the most impact on Alaska's rural schools. The schools within the villages are already facing financial problems. The oil & gas prices in the rural areas are significantly higher than urban areas, which leads to higher costs to run the school buildings in the villages. Rural villages do not have tax dollars to pay for the schools. Airline costs for traveling to and from the village as well as freight are extremely high. These financial hardships in the rural regional education attendance areas all have a devastating impact on rural village schools.

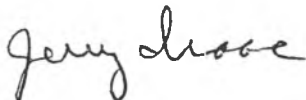
Rural schools are already facing the problem of low student enrollment, lack of resources due to high costs of shipping, and high teacher turnover rates. Taking funding away from these rural schools can mean more schools shutting down and students not having the educational opportunities as their urban counterparts. Parents will have to home school or relocate their families and this is hard to do for families who are already living in poverty.

We ask for your most serious attention to this issue, and request that you vote against this amendment. We consider your participation in this matter imperative in fighting for equal rights and education for the students who want to live in their hometown and learn their culture within their communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and thank you for your demonstrated commitment to providing educational opportunity for *all* Alaskans.

Sincerely,

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE



Jerry Isaac, President/Chairman



909 West 9th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

907 265 4100 MAIN
907 265 4123 FAX

www.nana.com

March 15, 2013

Alaska State Senate
State Capitol Room 510
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senators,

Senate Joint Resolution 9, if passed by both bodies of the legislature, places a constitutional amendment before the voters in the general election in the fall of 2014.

If passed, this Resolution would allow Alaskans to weigh in on the question of whether public funds should be also made available to private educational programs. We have not taken a position on the proposed amendment. However, we do believe it is important for the citizens of the State of Alaska to have the opportunity to express their views on this critical question. For this reason, NANA Development Corporation supports the Resolution. A vote of the citizens as a means of gauging the views of Alaskans on this subject would be beneficial.

Sincerely,

Helvi K. Sandvik
President
NANA Development Corporation



ALASKA FEDERATION
OF NATIVES

April 10, 2013

Honorable Pete Kelly
Co-chair, Alaska Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol Room 516
Juneau AK, 99801

Honorable Kevin Meyer
Co-chair, Alaska Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol Room 518
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Co-Chair Kelly and Co-Chair Meyer:

On behalf of the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) I am writing this letter to express AFN's opposition to HJR1 and SJR9. The AFN Legislative and Litigation Committee, a standing committee of the AFN Board of Directors met on April 5, 2013 and the committee passed the attached RESOLUTION 2013-03, entitled "OPPOSING AMENDING THE ALASKA STATE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW STATE FUNDING FOR RELIGIOUS AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS."

As you may know, AFN represents more than 120,000 Alaska Natives residing in Alaska, 12 regional tribal consortiums, 12 regional corporations and over 227 tribes and villages across the State of Alaska. AFN's mission is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community.

In addition to the reasons presented in the whereas portion of the resolution, private and faith-based schools are located in urban areas as well as areas with access to the road system giving those school districts the option for school choice. These options are not available to the parents and students in the Regional Education Attendance Areas unless they move to districts that currently have private or faith-based options.

Accordingly, AFN urges the Alaska State Legislature to oppose bills HJR1 and SJR9 and any future bills that would allow for the amendment of the Alaska State Constitution to provide funds for religious and private schools. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Julie Kitka
President

CC: Senator Fairclough, Senator Dunleavy, Senator Bishop, Senator Donny Olson, Senator Lyman Hoffman



**ALASKA FEDERATION
OF NATIVES**

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES, INC.

AFN LEGISLATIVE/LITIGATION COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION 2013-03

**TITLE: OPPOSING AMENDING THE ALASKA STATE CONSTITUTION TO
ALLOW STATE FUNDING FOR RELIGIOUS AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS: The State of Alaska provides funding for public education through the base student allocation and for transportation, energy costs, and PERS/TRS allocations; and

WHEREAS: A majority of the 53 Alaska school districts have had to make significant cuts to their budgets in the past few years resulting in the loss of staff, increased class sizes, and programs supporting special education and English language learners; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Native students are consistently represented as students needing additional support to meet the academic core and to graduate and who are the most impacted by budget cuts to public education funding in rural districts and urban schools that continuously struggle to balance strained budgets; and

WHEREAS: HJR1 and SJR9 would amend Article VII of the Alaska Constitution to delete language specifying that no public funds can go to religious or private educational institutions and adds language that states funding is not prohibited "if the funds go toward the direct educational benefit of students," but provides no mechanism to address accountability measures; and

WHEREAS: Academic choices are already available in the public education system as Alaska students can enroll in publicly funded correspondence schools or charter schools and other alternative programs are available to many local school districts such as Native language and culture programs including the Mount Edgecumbe Boarding School; and

WHEREAS: The majority of the 53 Alaska school districts continue to face reduced state and federal funding and overall state and federal funds are projected to continue to decline; and

WHEREAS: Amending the Alaska State Constitution to allow for state funding to go to religious or private educational schools will result in further funding reductions to Alaska public schools; and

WHEREAS: Widespread opposition to the proposed amendment and HJR1 and SJR9 has been expressed by the educators and major education organizations across the state.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc. shall urge the Alaska State Legislature to oppose bills HJR1 and SJR9 that would allow for the amendment of the Alaska State Constitution to provide funds for religious and private schools.

ADOPTED THIS DAY 5TH OF

APRIL 2013



Julie E. Kitka
President

March 6, 2013

The Honorable Mike Dunleavy
State Senate
State Capitol Room 510
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: Opposition to SJR 9 to Be Included in the Bill Packet

Dear Senator Dunleavy:

My name is Betsy Brennan and I am president of the Nome Public Schools Board of Education. As a former school board member, you know school boards have a huge responsibility to educate all of our children. The goal of public education is to take ALL children that come to us and help them grow, learn and develop. When students leave our district we want them to have the tools to be successful in whatever they choose to do in life. The outcome of public schooling is important to the future of Alaska and our Country. Nome Public School staff are working hard to make progress in student learning and to address the challenges.

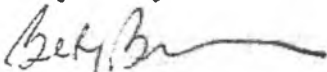
I oppose SJR 9. I believe the outcome, if this resolution were to pass, would be extremely harmful to our public education system. Your resolution would take more money away from our public schools, which would weaken public education opportunities for our children.

SJR 9 creates a dual education system in Alaska. Public funds would be diverted to private and religious schools, which would not be required to account for how the monies are spent. Unlike our public schools that serve ALL our children, private and religious schools can choose the students they wish to educate.

I am proud of Nome Public Schools and I am proud of the education our students receive. I am not interested in seeing state and taxpayer monies go to schools that have a for-profit or non-secular agenda. It is important that we continue to improve our children's public education through adequate funding and not through a diversion of public monies to non-public schools. **I oppose SJR 9.**

Please include this letter in the bill packet.

Respectfully,



Betsy Brennan, President
Nome Public School District School Board
PO Box 131
Nome, Alaska 99762

David Scott

From: Sen. Donny Olson
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2014 6:24 PM
To: David Scott
Subject: Fwd: Education NOME constituent Erika Rhodes

David,
please respond, thanks - S

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Erika Rhodes <eeaton@alaska.com>
Date: January 25, 2014 at 12:46:58 PM AKST
To: "Senator.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov" <Senator.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>
Subject: Education

Dear Senator Olson,

I am writing to express my strong opinion against using public monies for private/religious schools.

Public education is THE foundation of a democratic society. All children need a decent education to be able understand and participate in politics even at the most basic level. Diverting money from public education creates a downward spiral: reduced funding causes reduced educational services and options, which then causes reduced satisfaction of public education, which leads to reduced funding, which leads to a continued decline in the quality of public education. The privatization of education creates a system in which only the wealthy have access to excellent teachers and rigorous courses in a variety of subjects. What does everyone else get? whatever they can afford, should they even choose to prioritize education in their budget.

The other thing to remember is that private schools aren't regulated and they have no requirement to accept (and keep) all students. So first of all, why allow public money to go somewhere that has no accountability? And second, what happens if a kid gets kicked out of (or fails out of) private school? The kid transfers to public school, of course, except that his/her parents' tax dollars didn't help pay for it!

I can see the appeal of increasing school choice for students & families, but let's do it within the public school system, and without religion. That should be done at home, in accordance with each family's individual beliefs.

Sincerely,

Erika Rhodes
Nome public school teacher

Nome Education Association president
Lifelong Alaskan resident, educated in AK public schools

Doniece Gott

From: LIO Fairbanks
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 5:55 PM
: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: SJR-9


Please enter into the record the following constituent testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on SJR 9: Constitutional Amendment, Education Funding dated 2/3/2014


From: oldchasehensel@gmail.com [oldchasehensel@gmail.com] on behalf of Chase Hensel [chasehensel1@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 5:32 PM
To: LIO Fairbanks
Subject: SJR-9

I am opposed SJR 9. I also want the base student allowance for Alaska students raised.

--

Chase Hensel, Ph.D.
1674 Redfox Dr.
Fairbanks, AK 99709

907-479-5911  phone

907-479-5912  fax

907-699-2107  cell

Doniece Gott

From: Arran Forbes <arran.forbes@gmail.com>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 8:00 PM
: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: public money for public schools

Julia O'Malley's column in the Anchorage Daily News (though it strayed off-topic) summed it up perfectly:

"What's scary is that the solutions under discussion seem so disconnected from the actual problem."

Listen to your constituents, not your Virginian consultants.

Read more here: <http://www.adn.com/2014/02/01/3302709/julia-omalley-to-improve-education.html#storylink=cpy>

Doniece Gott

From: Mary Deming Barber <mary@barbergp.com>
Content: Monday, February 03, 2014 6:56 PM
Subject: Senate Finance Committee
SB 9

Members of the Finance Committee,

Please. I beg of you. Preserve our education system in Alaska. Do not advance the misguided bill that is SB 9.

Our schools are NOT broken. But they will be if you in Juneau continue to not pay for the costs needed, and strive to advance bills allowing public funds for private education. Please. Stop. Now.

My two children graduated from high school and want to raise families here. Their ASD educations were good enough, with parental support, for them to excel at two of the top colleges in the NW.

Please. No SB 9. No public money for private schools. Instead, please raise the BSA so our schools can continue to teach our children.

Thank you,

Mary Barber
7242 Hunter Circle
Anchorage, AK 99502

Doniece Gott

From: Heather Roach <hakroach@gmail.com>
Content: Monday, February 03, 2014 7:18 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Heather Roach and I am a science teacher for the Anchorage School District. I have been teaching for 18 years as a science teacher in the School-Within-A-School Program. I have two sons who have benefited from the exceptional educational provided by ASD.

I am writing to express my displeasure and to urge our state legislators to **NOT SUPPORT SJR9**.

Anchorage provides a quality education to our students. Through the various charter programs available, we also offer wonderful choices for families. SJR9 would weaken these choices and compromise the quality of education our children receive by weakening the financial support our schools need during a time of rising operating costs.

The current public school charter law ensures that schools are held accountable for how public funding is used. SJR9 would allow public funds to get diverted to private and religious institutions. The public would have no recourse on how public funds are spent in those institutions.

Religious and private schools can legally discriminate. Choice is not necessarily in the hands of the parents: the schools can pick and choose whom they accept. In addition, educators within these institutions are not held to the same high standards as those of the public education system. As a public educator, I am required to hold a Bachelors degree as a minimum requirement, renew my license every 5 years, and to take continuing education/subject area courses - *at my own expense*. This is not the case in private and religious institutions. I know I do NOT want my tax dollars supporting schools that are not held to the same standards as my own and that have the ability to discriminate against the students in our communities.

Contrary to what those who support SJR9 believe, our public schools are *not failing* our students. Research supports that the number one factor affecting students educational success is their socioeconomic background - *a factor that schools can not control*. I have a bachelor's degree in physiology from a top notch university (UCSD), a master's degree in teaching from UAA, and have earned my National Board Certification in chemistry. I am excellent at what I do and provide my students every opportunity to succeed in school.

I am asking you to do what's best for the students of Alaska and support funding for public education through an increase in BSA and not allowing the dismantling of public education through a constitutional amendment that would use public funds for private and/or religious institutions.

Many Thanks,

~Heather Roach

Proud Teacher in the Anchorage School District National Board Certified Teacher of Chemistry FIRST
Robotics Coach - East High School

Doniece Gott

From: Suzanne Smerjac <suzanne.smerjac@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 7:18 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: I oppose SJR 9

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

I understand you are meeting this evening (Monday, February 3rd) to discuss Senate Joint Resolution 9 which proposes to amend our state Constitution to allow public funding for private schools. I do not support the use of public money to fund private schools and want to go on record that **I adamantly oppose SJR 9.**

I am an Anchorage resident and parent of two young children, one of whom is school aged and is enrolled in a public school. This proposal to allow public funds to get funneled into private education under the guise of school choice does not address where we as a state are failing our children and future workforce, namely funding current public schools and addressing childhood poverty which has a much greater impact on a child's success than the specific school that they attend. In Anchorage there are numerous options for school choice - world languages, various educational philosophies, and public charters. If we really want to increase school choice, we should be funding the public schools and giving them adequate resources to expand the current optional programs that are working, most of which have wait lists. More importantly, let's give neighborhood schools the funds to continue the great work they are doing with our kids. According to a recent survey, 90% of ASD parents would recommend their child's school. This is not a broken system that we should be pulling money away from.

Suzanne Smerjac
3850 Knik Ave
Anchorage, AK 99517

Doniece Gott

From: Arran Forbes <arran.forbes@gmail.com>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 8:00 PM
: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: public money for public schools

Julia O'Malley's column in the Anchorage Daily News (though it strayed off-topic) summed it up perfectly:

"What's scary is that the solutions under discussion seem so disconnected from the actual problem."

Listen to your constituents, not your Virginian consultants.

Read more here: <http://www.adn.com/2014/02/01/3302709/julia-omalley-to-improve-education.html#storylink=cpy>

Doniece Gott

From: LIO Fairbanks
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:15 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: An Alaska Voter's Opinion on SJR-9

Please enter into the record the following constituent testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on SJR 9: Constitutional Amendment, Education Funding dated 2/3/2014

From: Maura Jean Barry-Garland
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 6:49 PM
To: LIO Fairbanks
Subject: An Alaska Voter's Opinion on SJR-9

To whom it may concern,

My name is Maura Barry-Garland and I am an Alaskan voter as well as a graduate of Lathrop High School. My twelve years of public school gave me the academic knowledge and study skills necessary to gain admittance to an Ivy League university and earn a place on the Dean's List. Without my public school teachers, I never would have had many of the opportunities I've taken in life. It hurts to see students just a few years younger than me be deprived of those same opportunities.

Every child deserves an education. This includes high-achieving students who need ELP programs and AP classes to be competitive in college. It includes students with behavioral issues or learning disabilities who need specialized attention to learn vital skills for adult life. It also includes students in the middle of the spectrum, who shouldn't have to deal with class sizes of 35+ and the termination of their favorite teachers.

I'm unsure what Alaska's state government hopes to achieve by cutting education funding. Will oil companies really want to invest in a state that doesn't invest in its own future? If the focus is on economic development, Alaska should have an interest in preparing young residents for the workforce. Education is vital to our state's future.

Funding should not be diverted from public schools to private school vouchers. The Base Student Allowance needs to be raised so that all Alaskan schools can have reasonable class sizes, access to advanced classes or specialized programming, and diverse electives. Senate Joint Resolution 9 should not be passed. Public school funding is vital and cannot be diverted to private school vouchers.

Thank you for your time. Please pass along my concerns about SJR-9 and the defunding of Alaska's public schools.

Sincerely,
Maura Barry-Garland

Doniece Gott

From: LIO Fairbanks
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:15 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: School Funding

Please enter into the record the following constituent testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on SJR 9: Constitutional Amendment, Education Funding dated 2/3/2014

From: Jill O'Brien
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 10:01 PM
To: LIO Fairbanks
Subject: School Funding

Hello,
I am an Alaskan voter and proud graduate of West Valley High School in Fairbanks, Alaska. I am writing to oppose bill SJR-9. This bill ignores the intention of the original Alaska constitutional convention which made it very clear that it did not want public funding to go to private schools. We must keep the separation of church and state. This bill will take money from our already financially strapped public schools. We need to focus on educating the youth of this state so we can have a strong workforce and a strong Alaska!

The Base Student Allowance needs to be raised so that all Alaskan schools can have reasonable class sizes, advanced classes, specialized programming, and diverse electives. Senate Joint Resolution 9 should not be passed. Public school funding is vital and cannot be diverted to private school vouchers.

Thank you for your time. Please pass along my concerns about SJR-9 and the defunding of Alaska's public schools.

Jill O'Brien
Fairbanks, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Alex and Peggy <Werts@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 9:49 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9

My name is Alex Wertheimer. I have been a resident of Alaska since 1972, and lived in Juneau since 1980. I am testifying in opposition to Senate Joint Resolution 9 as a supporter of public schools and as the father of two children who had the good fortune to receive excellent K-12 educations in Juneau public schools. Under our Alaska Constitution, the State of Alaska has the mandate to provide public education open to all children, of all religions, ethnicities, and all economic and social background. Children with disabilities, children learning English as a second language, children from functional and dysfunctional families: all are welcome in our public schools. The schools are overseen by our fellow citizens elected to local school boards, and the operation and budget of the schools are transparent and public. The authors of our Constitution recognized that in order to have such an egalitarian public education system, public funds should not be diverted to religious or private schools. It is ironic that the legislature would consider this action at a time when our public schools are laying off dozens of teachers and stripping activity budgets because of the State's unwillingness to maintain funding for our public schools that keeps up with increasing costs. For years, there has been no increase in the Education Foundation formula, and the increase proposed by the Governor in his budget this year only covers a small part of the ground lost to inflation over those years. As a result, class sizes are rising and educational resources are declining. This has been done under the banner of fiscal responsibility. Yet if the public coffers are opened to support religious and private schools that some parents choose for their children, estimated costs to the State education funds are upwards of \$100 million dollars. In all likelihood, that money will be a direct drain on our public schools, resulting in more lay-offs, ballooning class sizes, and a self-fulfilling prophesy of poor performance. Senate Joint Resolution 9 is a bad idea that will seriously degrade or destroy the public education system in Alaska.

Alex Wertheimer
17200 Andreanoff Drive
Juneau, AK 99801

Doniece Gott

From: LIO Fairbanks
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:14 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: School funding

Please enter into the record the following constituent testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on SJR 9: Constitutional Amendment, Education Funding dated 2/3/2014

From: nancy fresco [nancyfresco@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 5:47 PM
To: LIO Fairbanks
Subject: School funding

To Whom it May Concern,

As a parent with two young children in the Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Schools, I am writing to urge you to protect the quality of our public education system -- a system that is intended to serve all children equally, regardless of their parents' wealth, politics, or religion. As such, I urge you to do two things.

First, it is crucial that you raise the Base Student Allowance. Without this additional funding, we will be forced to lay off more and more hard-working and talented teachers. Classes will become larger and larger, and students will inevitably suffer. Yes, education is costly, but pinching pennies will cost Alaska so much more in the future! Educating the next generation will make our kids better equipped to hold steady employment, be productive citizens, and, in turn, raise their own children to be healthy, informed, Alaskans.

Second, I ask you to vote against SJR-9, which would provide vouchers for private and religious schools. While parents may choose to exercise their right to educate their children outside of the public system, such schools to not cater to all children, and should not draw funds away from the public, equitable, free-to-all public school system. Providing such vouchers would stretch the already thin public school budget to the breaking point.

Too many talented and dedicated educators have already been fired. Classes are already too large. In first grade, both my twins were in classes with over 25 students. First grade is a crucial year in which kids gain early reading and math skills. While their teachers did an admirable job with such huge hordes of six-year-olds, we need to think about our priorities before it's too late. I repeat, please raise the Base Student Allowance, and please vote against SJR-9.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

Nancy Fresco
93 Roxie Road
Fairbanks AK 99709

February 2, 2014

Senators Pete Kelly and Kevin Meyer, Co-Chairs
Senate Finance Committee, Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Kelly and Senator Meyer:

I am writing to express opposition to Senate Joint Resolution 9 under consideration by the Senate Finance Committee. SJR 9 seeks to change the constitution to allow public funds be used for private, for-profit religious and secular schools. I think that the most important responsibility of the members of the Alaska State Legislature is to accept responsibility for providing for an educated and strong Alaskan community, and provide adequate funding to support that ideal by sufficiently managing our plentiful resources. The voucher legislation is in direct conflict with that goal. It will deplete limited resources and provide more resources to students whose families have demonstrated that they are be able to afford the religious alternatives in which they have enrolled their children.

Providing an adequate education within the public education system for children of our Great State is of utmost importance. When you travel throughout the regions of our state, you will find schools that have failed to provide an adequate, minimal level of education for a lot of complicated reasons. As policy makers, there needs to be great attention to what must be done to support those schools in crisis and help their students make adequate academic growth. Instead of providing more resources to the families that have demonstrated they can afford options, we need to find ways of better supporting those school districts with the lowest student achievement performance. The effect of SJR 9 is to divert potentially over \$100 million for a purpose that does not benefit the ideal goal of government providing basic needs.

Another important point is that when families want to exercise their right to choose, they have many choices. Families can choose to have options within our public education system or they can choose private education. Private education is often subsidized by the primarily religious organizations which provide the private education system. Private education, more often than not, experiences low taxes as non-profit organizations or are tax-free. Private education choices can be provided at a low cost to the consumers. When I was growing up, my parents enrolled my two sisters and me in a religious school in Anchorage. There was only one wage earner in the family. There was a lot of financial support opportunities for those who wanted the assistance.

The fact of the matter is that within public education, there are choices. It is not a one size fits all type of education program. School districts have encouraged options within public education by providing choices, outside of the typical charter school model.

I've worked as a professional educator for over 20 years in three school districts, which include the Juneau School District, the Anchorage School District, and the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. I own property in each of those school district boundaries and have connections to those communities. During my years of public service, I've witnessed a number of education options become more available to parents. Parents have wanted options and districts have provided many options, as long as they could be options provided to the good of the whole, instead of a religious few. Please find the enclosure an overview of options available within two of the largest five school districts in the state. The information is available on the Juneau and Anchorage School Districts' webpages.

Best wishes,

Kimberly Homme

Attachment: Alternative Programs within the ASD & JSD

Public Education Programs Offering Alternatives (2 school district examples)

Anchorage School District Alternatives

Elementary Alternatives

Anchorage Basic Curriculum (ABC):

- Birchwood ABC
- Northern Lights ABC
- Northwood ABC

Montessori:

- Denali Montessori

Open Optional:

- Bowman Elementary
- Chinook Elementary
- Chugach Optional
- Eagle River Elementary
- Polaris K-12
- Susitna Elementary

At-risk teens:

Note: These programs are for students who have fallen behind in credit and are more likely than others to drop out of high school and not attain a high school diploma.

- AVAIL, Ages 16-19
- Benny Benson/SEARCH, 7-12
- SAVE, 11-12

International Baccalaureate:

- Romig Middle School, 7-8
- West High School, 9-12

Online:

- ASD iSchool, 9-12

Open Optional:

- Polaris K-12
- Steller Secondary

School-within-a-school:

- East High School, 9-12
- School through the Arts
- West High School, 9-12

Seminar:

- Service High School, 9-12

Continued

Page Two of Three

Science focus:

- Central Middle School of Science, 7-8

World Discovery Seminar:

- Chugiak High School, 9-12

Types of charter schools:

- Cultural & language
- Alaska Native Cultural Charter School
- Rilke Schule Charter School

Note: these charter schools provide resources and support to families interested in home schooling their children:

- Home-school
- Family Partnership Charter School
- Frontier Charter School

Open optional:

- Aquarian Charter School

Structured:

- Eagle Academy Charter School

Technology:

- Highland Tech Charter School

Waldorf-inspired:

- Winterberry Charter School

Continued

Page Three of Three

Juneau School District Alternatives:

School Programs:

Tlingit Culture, Language and Literacy, K-5

Montessori Borealis 1-8

Charter School:

Juneau Community Charter School, K-8

Online School Program:

HomeBRIDGE, K-12

At-risk Teens:

Yaakoosge Daakahidi Alternative High School, 9-12

C.A.R.E.S., a credit recovery program, 9-12

Doniece Gott

From: tanya iden <tanyaiden@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 5:02 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
CC: 'Tanya Iden'
Subject: I OPPOSE SJR 9

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

I understand you are meeting this evening (Monday, February 3rd) to discuss Senate Joint Resolution 9 which proposes to amend our state Constitution to allow public funding for private schools.

I would like to go on record in opposition of SJR 9. I do not support the use of public money being used to support private schools.

I am an Anchorage resident, I am a product of the Anchorage School District (attended Baxter Elementary School, Wendler Junior High School, and East High School - class of 91). I also have a child who is in kindergarten at Aquarian Charter School. I feel that the Anchorage School District offers innumerable choices to families and students and we needn't dismantle a system that is working.

If you are truly concerned about the state of education in Alaska - you should, at a minimum, raise the current base student allocation to keep up with inflation.

Thank you for your time.
Have a good meeting tonight.

Best,
Tanya Iden
907-382-8555
2303 McRae Rd. Unit #1
Anchorage, AK 99517

Doniece Gott

From: rpbrooks12@gmail.com on behalf of Regan Brooks <regansheltonbrooks@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 5:12 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please do not vote in support of SJR9

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to SJR9.

Public funding should not be used to support private schools. If your concern is providing school choice, do not worry: we have plenty (possibly too much) school voice.

Public funds should remain in public schools.

Please, if you are concerned about the state of education in Alaska, consider raising the BSA. But do send public money into private schools.

Thank you for your time.
Regan Brooks
2316 Douglas Drive
Anchorage, AK
99517
907-602-7428

Doniece Gott

From: Kristin Sholton <ksholton@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 5:13 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Changing the constitution to fund private education

I find it hard to believe that after one public discussion on the subject of diverting public education funds to private education options, the committee feels it has heard all the voices and is prepared to change the constitution! We need a comprehensive plan for how the State will maintain the public funding support, provide a cost of living increase from year to year of this funding, and add your desire to fund private education.

We need to continue the dialogue.

Kristin Sholton
Anchorage Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Jennie Hafele
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 4:11 PM
Subject: FW: SJR 9

Please enter into the record the following constituent testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on SJR 9: Constitutional Amendment, Education Funding dated 2/3/2014.

From: mfwiltse@acsalaska.net [mfwiltse@acsalaska.net]
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 3:55 PM
To: LIO Fairbanks
Subject: SJR 9

Juneau Senators and Representatives:

I have lived in Fairbanks for forty years and have voted in every election. I am a registered Republican. We have an excellent state Constitution and I do not believe it should be changed at this time.

Public funds should go towards public education!!

Thank you for this opportunity to give my opinion, Flora Wiltse

Doniece Gott

From: Tamara de Lucia <tamaradelucia@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 3:57 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: VOTE NO ON SJR 9

I am writing to express my disapproval of SJR 9. I do not think the path to solving the education crisis in this state is to divert public funds away from public schools. Public dollars SHOULD NOT be diverted from public schools and funneled to unaccountable private and for-profit religious or secular schools.

I am the mother of two young children. I want my government to protect their right to attend high quality, WELL FUNDED, public schools. Vouchers are expensive, they don't work, and they will compromise the public school system in this state.

We owe it to our children to **FUND PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOT VOUCHER PROGRAMS.**

Please VOTE NO on vouchers.

Thank you,
Tamara de Lucia
3512 Stanford drive
Anchorage AK 99508
907.301.0444

Doniece Gott

From: Roger & Contessa Gossett <messa@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 5:19 PM
To: Doniece Gott; sean.parnell@alaska.gov
Cc: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. John Coghill
Subject: My opposition to SJR 9 -I would call in, but won't be available at that time) - Please share this with fellow Senate members

Thank you for taking the time to accept my testimony against SRJ9. I am COMPLETELY against our/MY taxpayers dollars being used for school vouchers that in turn could be used to pay for religious or private schools for the following reasons:

Public schools are at the heart of a democracy, and have been since the beginning of our country.

They are inclusive and open to ALL children. Public schools are where students learn to cooperate with a diverse group of others, just as they must do in the larger society. The children are not all the same creed, race, religion, or social or economic status, and cannot be turned away because they are different or may not "fit the desired mold" of a private school.

-Public schools provide a free education and an equal opportunity to ALL children. They tie a community together, linking neighbors to the common good. Society has a responsibility to provide an education to its citizens, and this benefits everyone.

-America has been called both a "melting pot" and a "salad bowl" – and public education is a local example of that. It is a solid base upon which to build good citizens who must work together.

-Public education has many challenges, but it deserves our full support. Tax dollars should not go to private schools, which often have a "bias" in one direction or another and are "exclusive" and are not open to all children. Our son has been a life-long public school student and I simply do not agree having MY taxpayer dollars paying for the choice of private or religious schools.

Thank you, Contessa S. Gossett, Palmer Alaska

SITKA LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Sitka_LIO@legis.state.ak.us
907-747-6276/ phone - 907-747-5807/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Tim J Fulton
REPRESENTING: SITKA School Board.
BILL#/ SUBJECT: SJR 9
COMMITTEE &
HEARING DATE: Senate Finance. 2-03-2014
(FAX 465-3476)

I am writing to state my objection to SJR 9. As a long-time Alaskan, and a member of the Sitka School Board, I do not see evidence that using public funds for private education will benefit all our students' education. What I do see is that it may help a select few students while potentially profiting private education enterprises.

Legislators argue that Alaskan graduation rates need to improve and that our test scores are too low. There is no evidence that the result of this bill will be improvements in those areas. In Sitka, there is a huge achievement gap between those who qualify as low income and those who do not. Of the low income group, 65% of those are Alaska Native students. How does this bill benefit them? How does this bill address the inequality gap in a meaningful, practical way? In fact if legislators do their research, they will find many examples of voucher programs instituted elsewhere merely benefiting a very small proportion of students.

SITKA LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Sitka_LIO@legis.state.ak.us
907-747-6276/ phone - 907-747-5807/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Tim J Fulton

REPRESENTING: Sitka School Board

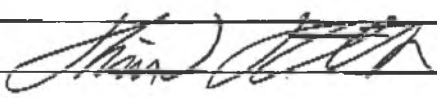
BILL#/ SUBJECT: SJR 9.

COMMITTEE &
HEARING DATE: Senate Finance 2-03-2014

While the bill comes with a possible "incentive"
increasing the BSA funding to Sitka, I cannot support
it in good conscience. All students throughout this
state deserve the same opportunities for education,
but that is not what this bill provides. It is not going
to help students who are struggling, but it will benefit
those who are already likely to graduate prepared
for career or college.

I strongly encourage you to think about Alaska's
children, all of them and find a valid means of helping
them be successful. I believe the best use of public
funds is the improvement of public schools, not the
funding of private education.

Thank you for your service.



Doniece Gott

From: Kathleen Heinle <skheinle@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 3:45 PM
To: Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Bob Herron; Rep. Doug Isaacson; Rep. Wes Keller; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Dan Saddler; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Eric Feige; Rep. Max Gruenberg; Rep. Pete Higgins; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Charisse Millett; Rep. Kurt Olson; Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Andy Josephson; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Harriet Drummond; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Shelley Hughes; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux; Rep. Benjamin Nageak; Rep. Lora Reinbold; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: Education funding

AK State representatives,

As a parent of a child who attends an Anchorage area public school, I need to let you know that I am opposed to the current plan to rewrite the AK state constitution and allow public monies to be used for private and religious schools. Families who elect to send their child to public schools should be responsible to pay for their child's education out of their own funds. Public education is suffering as a result of your decisions and weighs terribly on our schools, administrators, and teachers. This is unacceptable. Please take into consideration how this affects the entire state of Alaska. This is not good politics and is not in the best interest of ALL kids.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Heinle

Doniece Gott

From: Bob Hadaway <hadaway.bob@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2014 12:24 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: funding for public schools

Dear Senator Kelly,

As a Fairbanks resident and informed voter I am appalled and outraged over the proposals for educational funding coming from the governor and our legislators in Juneau.

Our state's future success and prosperity lies in having a well educated populace. Misguided attempts at school reform that strip schools of the funding necessary to properly provide education are a recipe for disaster. Worse, ultra conservative agendas that seek to give public money to private schools at the expense of properly funding public schools are abhorrent.

We have great public schools we need to keep them strong. I urge you to stand in opposition to those politicians in our state who refuse to do their duty of helping improve schools through increased funding to public education.

Sincerely,

Bob Hadaway

Doniece Gott

From: Jennie Hafele
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 3:39 PM
Subject: FW: SJR-9 School Vouchers

Please enter into the record the following constituent testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on SJR 9: Constitutional Amendment, Education Funding dated 2/3/2014

Jennie Hafele
Fairbanks Legislative Information Office
1292 Sadler Way Suite 308
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone: 907-452-4448
Fax: 907-456-3346
Click [HERE](#) to visit the Alaska State Legislature Website
Click [HERE](#) to watch live streaming of the Alaska State Legislature
Click [HERE](#) to send your legislator a Public Opinion Message during session

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Nicole Stellon O'Donnell <nicolestellon@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Feb 3, 2014 at 12:38 PM
Subject: SJR-9 School Vouchers
To: Fairbanks_LIO@akleg.gov

I would like to register my opposition to SJR-9 School Vouchers.

I am the parent of two children in Fairbanks schools, I do not believe that public money should be taken to support private and religious schools.

Our district already provides choice--charter schools, homeschool programs, the options for parents to take their children to another school as long as the parents provide transportation. The school district, already terribly underfunded, would suffer more if some parents pulled their kids out and took the funding with them.

In addition parents who need special education services would stay in the public system. Private schools are not required to provide special education services, so the population in our schools would radically change. Mainstreaming would be undermined.

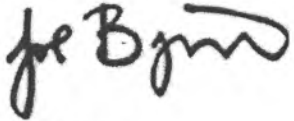
This bill would undermine the education my children are receiving in this school district.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Nicole Stellon O'Donnell
697 Fordham Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 2:55 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Organized Village of Kasaan's Resolution in opposition of SJR9
Attachments: Resolution OVK-14-02-001, Opposition of SJR9 Adopted 2_3_14.pdf



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: paula@kasaan.org [<mailto:paula@kasaan.org>]

Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 14:50

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

Cc: Richard Peterson; Jean Bland; Frances Natkong; Anna Guthrie; Clinton Cook, Sr.; Doreen Witwer; John Skan; Lauren Burch

Subject: Organized Village of Kasaan's Resolution in opposition of SJR9.

Dear State of Alaska Finance Committee,

Please find attached the Organized Village of Kasaan's Resolution, No. OVK-14-02-001, in opposition of SJR9.

The Organized Village feels strongly that Public funding should stay for Public schools as the cuts that have and continue to happen, already are hurting the educational wellbeing of our students. That Public dollars should not be diverted away from public schools to pay for unaccountable private and for-profit religious and secular schools.

Haw'aa, Gunalch'eesh (Thank You),

Paula K. Peterson
Tribal Administrator
P.O. Box 26 - Kasaan
Ketchikan, AK 99950-0340
(Work) 907-542-2230
(WFax) 907-542-3006
(WCell) 907-617-9951

"We Do Not Inherit the Earth from our Ancestors; We BORROW it from our Children".

Please consider the environment before printing this email.



ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF KASAAN

P. O. Box 26-Kasaan * Ketchikan, Alaska 99950-0340
(907) 542-2230 * (fax) 907-542-3006

RESOLUTION OVK-14-02-001

A Resolution of the Organized Village of Kasaan, in opposition of Senate Joint Resolution 9, a proposal to change the Alaska State Constitution to allow for public funds to be used for unaccountable, private and for-profit religious and secular schools.

WHEREAS, the Organized Village of Kasaan is a federally recognized Tribe organized pursuant to the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984) and May 1, 1936 (49 Stat. 1250); and

WHEREAS, the Corporate Charter of the Organized Village of Kasaan (Ratified October 15, 1938) states in its Purpose and Existence, "In order to further the economic development of the Indians residing in the neighborhood of Kasaan, Alaska, by conferring upon the Organized Village of Kasaan corporate rights and powers; and to enable this Village and its members to undertake enterprises designed to secure for the members of the corporation an assured economic independence..."; and

WHEREAS, the Organized Village of Kasaan (hereinafter "OVK") is governed by a Council of elected representatives composed of a President and six members who act in accordance with the powers granted to it by its Constitution and By-Laws (Ratified on October 15, 1938); and

WHEREAS, it is in the OVK's Tribal Constitution and Mission Statement to protect, promote and defend our access to equal education; and

WHEREAS, the cuts that have and continue to happen to our public schools already are hurting the educational wellbeing of our students; and

WHEREAS, the state of Alaska needs to meet the funding needs of the public schools; and

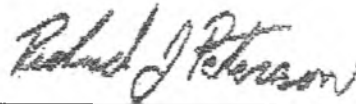
WHEREAS, the OVK strongly feels that Public dollars should not be diverted away from public schools to pay for unaccountable private and for-profit religious and secular schools; and

WHEREAS, protecting our public schools against privatization and saving them from future generations of American Children is the civil rights issue of our time;

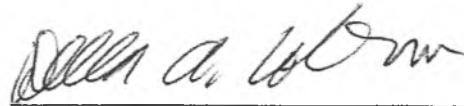
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Organized Village of Kasaan Tribal Council strongly apposes Senate Joint Resolution 9.

CERTIFICATION

APPROVED, PASSED AND ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the OVK Tribal Council on this 3rd day of February 2014; by a "Telephone Poll"/ Vote: Della Coburn: Yes, Glenn Hamar: Yes, Stephanie Hamar: Yes, Ronald Leighton: Yes, Frederick Olsen: Yes, and Paula Peterson: Yes.



Richard J. Peterson - President



Della A. Coburn - Council Secretary

ATTESTED:

Doniece Gott

From: Diane <dewiggin@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 2:08 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: SJR 9

Greetings,

I am writing to express my strong opposition for SJR9. I have two children in the Anchorage School District. Throughout their tenure in the ASD, they have had many dedicated teachers who worked many hours outside of the school day to enrich their students' education, subsidizing their dwindling pay and resource budgets with their family time and money.

Any parent with a rising kindergartner entering our major school districts will tell you that they are overwhelmed with very good to excellent choices in schools. A majority of our citizens do not need more choices. Those who do do not need the choices you are trying to offer them.

The public education via the ASD is helping my husband and I produce strong citizens. They have won awards at Science Fairs and the World Language competition and have tested into elite programs. They receive accolades for their behavior when working with adults in the community and traveling Outside. They perform regular volunteer work for their peers in Anchorage.

I implore you not to try to fix something that is not broken. The Anchorage School District has been wounded by your underfunding, and there are students in the system who need help getting basic needs met as well as preschool education. Your attempt at diverting funds will NOT cure any of these problems.

Thank you for your time and consideration, Diane Wiggin

Doniece Gott

From: Sharon Waisanen <janibear@acsalaska.net>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 1:50 PM
o: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Senate Joint Resolution 9 (SJR9)

Hello,

The Constitution of the State of Alaska has worked well for Alaskans for 57 years. It is respected far and wide. It should not be sullied or demeaned. Separation of church and state is not just part of the Constitution of the USA, but, also in Alaska. There is a strong belief that public money should only be used for public schools across the nation. We support this.

Currently, this legislature is not funding public schools appropriately today. Public schools are suffering. Why would you even consider adding another burden to our finances when you cannot support the existing public school structure?

As legislators, we hope you realize your have a responsibility to protect public schools. Public school education is the legacy of our past and the promise of our future for a greater Alaska and America.

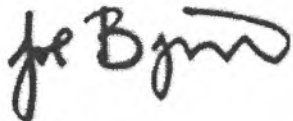
This definitely should not pass.

Sharon and Richard (Dick) Waisanen
44932 Eddy Hill Drive
Soldotna, AK 99669

2-6298

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 2:34 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Funding for the Anchorage School District (and other districts across the state)



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly

907-456-3709



From: Kate Slyker [<mailto:kateslyker@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 14:31
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; harrietdrummond@alaska.com
Subject: Funding for the Anchorage School District (and other districts across the state)

Legislators,

Education isn't just an issue for parents. It is an issue for our community. My husband and I have attended the Anchorage budget meetings regarding the school district, volunteer at our kids' school weekly, and take our parental responsibility seriously.

Now we are contacting our government leaders urging you to fund education in Anchorage. It's a priority for all of us. We write asking you to strongly consider supporting an increase to the Base Student Allocation, that could drastically alter funding for the Anchorage School District's operating budget (as well as other districts across the state). We also ask that you amend the law that caps the amount the municipality can contribute to schools. As parents of two grade school children, there are few issues we believe that are more important than properly funding our schools. In addition, as president of the board of Covenant House Alaska, Kate sees first-hand the support our youth need on a daily basis. This is not just a personal request, it is one we make as a part of our larger community.

Furthermore, we believe that the recent under-funding of the schools by the State of Alaska is intended to privatize public education and legitimize vouchers. I can hear the advocates saying, starve the schools and then punish them for not doing their job. The voucher proposal will take more money away from the public schools by sending tax dollars to private schools. The downward spiral for public education will continue. Our community can not afford this.

We must recognize that public education is an essential institution of our democratic society. We must make it better, not privatize it.

I vigorously oppose SJR9 to amend Alaska's constitution, and I hope you do, too.

Just maybe, if we all work together, we can make real impact to keep our community thriving.

Please note, this is the reason we stay non-partisan. We will vote again only for those of you who actively support a positive change to education funding. Period.

We look forward to rapidly seeing your active support on this matter.

Thank you,
David Slyker and Kate Swalling Slyker
907-248-0019

Doniece Gott

From: Cheryl Myers <ckmalaska@gmail.com>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 12:49 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: School vouchers

Dear Senator Kelly - My father was a school district superintendent and my mom a teacher. I am an avid advocate for public schools and co-chair of the Anchorage Rotary Club's 90% by 2020 committee. Our club currently has over 80 Rotarians volunteering in Central Middle School in some capacity, 22 of whom regularly tutor remedial math in the classroom. I see the struggle of these remedial students first hand through my tutoring experience.

I think we need to marshall every resource available into our public schools and adamantly oppose public monies going to private schools via vouchers. If we do not improve our schools, the future of our community is at stake. Many of the students our Rotary Club work with are challenged by suboptimal home lives and need every available resource within the public schools to help them succeed. In this day and age of constant budget struggles, I can't support taking more money away for our public schools. Without strong public schools, our community suffers.

Cities look to 3rd grade literacy rates to determine future jail cell needs. Please, join Rotary and support these students success but doing everything in your power to strengthen public schools. Say no to vouchers.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Cheryl Myers
Past President, Anchorage Rotary Club
Co-Chair Anchorage Rotary Club 90x 2020 Committee
Anchorage Interact Club Mentor
ATHENA Society Member

Doniece Gott

From: Frank Vondersaar <vondersaar@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 12:23 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: Don't change AK Constitution

I strongly oppose changing the Alaska Constitution to allow public funding of religious, or any non-public school.

Frank Vondersaar
Homer

CAVE FASCII veritas vos liberabit

Doniece Gott

From: Anna Brawley <annab.brawley@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 1:18 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: E-mail testimony for SJR9 - I do not support this bill

Hello,

I am a constituent of Rep. Harriet Drummond and Sen. Berta Gardner, and an active member of the Spenard Community Council in Anchorage. I am also a product of public schools in multiple states, and strongly believe in the value and necessity of quality public education for our state's children. I am against SJR9.

Diverting public money away from the public school system in favor of privatized education will dilute the quality of public schooling, undermine one of the fundamental services government is intended to provide, and channel funding into a system which is not accountable for how it educates children or uses that money, as public schools are required to do.

I am also concerned about the specific quality of education that private schools provide, because proponents of privatized education argue that having private alternatives improve children's options and, by extension, provide a better education. While some private schools provide such a high quality education, many others do not, and are not always held to the same mandatory standards as public schools. The results from school to school are generally mixed, whether private or public, in all parts of the country. Furthermore, many private schools are explicitly parochial, and include religious education. Providing public funds for these schools is not in keeping with the First Amendment of the US Constitution, and is an inappropriate use of funds.

People may have the right to choose an educational setting for their child, but private schools should be operated with private funds. Diluting public schools' quality by diverting some of their funding away to private schooling not only goes against the entire purpose of funding education, but also limits the choices of those families who cannot in reality "choose" a quality education because of the fragmented system we have now.

I believe for many reasons that SJR9 is a bad idea, and not in the spirit of either the U.S. or Alaska Constitutions.

Best,
Anna Brawley

Spenard, Anchorage, AK

annab.brawley@gmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Christina Zafren <czafren@alaska.com>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 1:09 PM
to: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: school vouchers

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am totally against allowing public monies to flow to private and religious schools in the guise of vouchers. Taking more funds from already strapped public school budgets will only compromise public education further. Private schools do not have to take all comers.

Special education, socially challenged, transient, behavior disordered and other difficult to education students are generally counseled out of private schools. Accountability requirements do not exist for private and home schooled students. In my career as a school psychologist, I evaluated many students from private and home school situations. When they did not thrive in the private/home school setting, they were referred back to the public school. Many home school students had no records of their progress. Please do not vote to allow consideration of school vouchers. Thank you.

Christina Tower Zafren, NCSP
School Psychologist (retired)

Doniece Gott

From: J. Pearce & E. Manning <jpem@gci.net>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 12:55 PM
o: Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Kevin Meyer
Subject: opposition to SJR9

Dear Legislators,

If I am understanding what I've heard right, SJR9 would put an initiative on the November ballot that would change the Alaska Constitution to allow the state to spend public money on for-profit, private and religious schools. I don't write my legislators often, but I am **STRONGLY OPPOSED** to this idea. It is a terrible idea for so many reasons -

1) Public schools are not adequately funded now. If there is money, it should be spent on public education, which is available to ALL students, more or less equally.

2) One thing that's great about Anchorage (and probably other Alaska communities too) is there is not a visible and unsurmountable stratification between the haves and have-nots - not like in other communities in the Lower 48. We don't have gated communities here (except for a very few) and many schools here are a big melting pot of cultures and income-levels. And most families I know, even wealthy families, choose public schools over private schools. All this makes Alaska a great place to live and our strong public schools as a whole mean that for most families, a good education is attainable even if they can't drive their children to a charter school or have the money to pay for private school. I pray we can keep it this way!

3) To those who argue that this would create more opportunities and choices for poor families, I say let's see the facts... I have a hard time believing that would happen. A few families might get lucky and it might work out well for them but most families would suffer from the siphoning off of public school funding for private schools. The vouchers likely wouldn't be enough to pay for the entire tuition of a private school, so again, families of means would be the ones to most benefit.

4) From what I hear, voucher programs in the Lower 48 have not really improved things. They just increase the gap between rich and poor. This is not healthy for Alaska, or for democracy in general.

5) Please reinstate adequate funding for public schools and reverse this pattern of starving them and hoping they will fail. It's not in anyone's best interest. We are happy with the Anchorage School District but the credit is due to talented teachers and administrators, not to legislators who have chosen in recent years not to support our excellent public schools. **YOU CAN CHANGE THAT!!! PLEASE DO!** My kids are getting an excellent public school education right now, and I will fight to make sure that remains the case.

Thanks for your time to listen to these comments,
Elizabeth Manning
Parent of two children at Government Hill Elementary
1517 W. 15th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99501

Doniece Gott

From: Patricia Stark <pstark@mosquionet.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 12:58 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Senate Joint Resolution 9

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am opposed to SJR9 to change the Alaska State Constitution. Public funds should not be diverted away from public schools to pay for unaccountable private and for-profit religious and secular schools. Vouchers for all students currently enrolled in private schools will be hugely expensive. A recent non-partisan legislative research report indicates that it could cost upwards of \$100 million dollars.

I agree with Senator Lisa Murkowski when she said she believes the government should first focus on making the public school system as good as possible. Sending resources to the private sector could ensure that "mediocre schools" become inevitable in the public system, she said. "I have always had great anxiety with the thought that we'd take public money, state money, and send it to private schools," Murkowski said. This is my sentiment exactly.

Sincerely yours,
Patricia Stark
P.O. Box 82525
Fairbanks, Alaska
99708

Doniece Gott

From: Cathy McCorquodale <cathymcc@gci.net>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 12:10 PM
o: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: senate joint resolution 9

Dear Senators:

I strongly oppose this resolution! Public funds should not be used to support ANY private school. Financial support in any form to a religious based school is clearly a violation of our Federal Constitution. I also do not want our state constitution "opened-up" without going through a constitutional convention. We just voted against that recently. It will come up again (every ten years) and we can then re-evaluate the situation at that time.

Thank you.

Sincerely, Cathy McCorquodale

Doniece Gott

From: Shanna Zuspan <shannazuspan@hotmail.com>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 10:35 AM
o: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Against SJR9

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

I am writing to say that I am against SJR9 and do not support using public money for private schools. Please fund our public schools adequately.

Sincerely,

Shanna Zuspan

shannazuspan@hotmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Mary Spalding <mspalding@gci.net>
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 9:03 AM
Subject: Sen. Pete Kelly
SJR9

I vigorously oppose SJR9 to amend Alaska's constitution to allow public funds to be directed to private schools. It is a matter of separation of church and state. It is the promise of a public education to all citizens. It is the obligation to provide sufficient funds to make this public education result in an strong educated society. This cannot happen if funds are split from the allotment to public schools.

Mary Spalding
5406 W Dimond Blvd. No 3
Anchorage, AK 99502

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Mike Dunleavy
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2014 6:51 PM
To: 'Gary Miller'; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Cc: Sen. Dennis Egan; Rep. Cathy Munoz
Subject: RE: SJR9

Thank you Mr. Miller. Actually the U.S. Constitution allows for school choice and is more open to even the concept of vouchers than the Alaskan courts have ruled regarding Alaska's constitution. I agree totally there should be no "direct" benefit to religious schools. What is being proposed would continue to guarantee no direct benefit to religious schools but allow students (just like college students) to decide where and how they wish to be educated. Thank you again.

From: Gary Miller [mailto:gmler_juneauak@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2014 5:21 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Cc: Sen. Dennis Egan; Rep. Cathy Munoz
Subject: SJR9

Senators, the following statement needs to stay in our State Constitution, "NO MONEY SHALL BE PAID FROM PUBLIC FUNDS FOR THE DIRECT BENEFIT OF ANY RELIGIOUS OR OTHER PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION". The founding fathers of the U.S. found it important to keep church and state separate. Our state's constitutional delegates felt the same way and put that protection into our constitution. If you pass this resolution then you should remove the tax free status of churches and start taxing their incomes.

Gary Miller
20135 Cohen Dr
Juneau, AK 99801-8211
(907) 789-3757
gmler_juneauak@hotmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Mark Parmelee <potterview@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 8:31 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough
Cc: sean.parnell@alaska.gov; Rep. Mike Hawker; Sen. Cathy Giessel; croft_eric@asdk12.org
Subject: No to SJR 9 - Private Schools do not always serve a public interest

Senate Finance Committee,

Private schools do not have to take all Alaskan children. They have application processes and often interviews. It is public schools that have the burden of educating all our children. Including those that are not accepted by the private schools. Alaska should not change the constitution to allow public money benefit religious or private education institutions.

In my neighborhood it is very popular to for kids to be sent to private schools. Parents are willing to fund their children's education outside the public school system. Although one neighborhood child, with learning disabilities, failed their private school interview and was not accepted. This child now goes to a public school. Private schools can pick and choose who they educate. Public schools have to take all kids regardless of learning disabilities.

There is no task of a government more important than educating our children. Our children are the citizens of tomorrow. Do not remove the constitutional prohibition of funding religious and private schools. Lastly, I know this is a difficult year for the State of Alaska to develop a budget, I though encourage the Legislature and Governor to consider more than an inflation adjustment to the base student allocation.

Sincerely,

Mark Parmelee

18630 Snowy Plover Circle

Anchorage, AK 99516

cc; Governor Sean Parnell, Senator Giessel, Representative Hawker, ASD School Board Member Eric Croft

Doniece Gott

From: Anne Adasiak-Andrew <anne_andrew@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2014 10:22 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: No on SJR9 - We can't afford it

Dear Members of the Senate,

I understand the leadership's desire to provide more educational options to parents and children, but our State can't afford it, neither financially nor educationally.

#1) Our State is facing a serious budget shortfall. The Governor has only proposed to increase the BSA this year by a fraction of what is needed to make up for losses over the last 4 years due to inflation; a mere \$85 per student of the \$404 per student needed to close the gap. If we can't afford to pay for our public institutions, how can we afford to pay for private ones?

#2) Accountability: If SJR9 were to pass, there will be a significant cost associated with supervising, tracking, and reporting on public monies given to private schools. I did not hear where this cost was accounted for in the Governor's proposed budget. The supervising of private institutions will be significantly more expensive in the first 2-3 years, and then there will be an annual cost to the State for this continued accounting. Our public institutions have both State and Federal standards as well as reporting requirements they must adhere to since they receive public money. If public funds go to private schools then they should have to meet the same requirements as public schools to ensure that the citizen's money is being spent wisely. Again, we have a budget shortfall; how can we afford this additional layer of administration?

#3) Vouchers will NOT help more needy students attend better schools: The single mother of three working two jobs does not have the time to drive her children across town to attend "better" schools, even if she has a voucher. The truth is, we offer "choice" right now through our optional programs and charter schools, but it is really only a "choice" to those families of a certain income level, who have the luxury of time to drive their children to and from those charter schools, or who have family members in town who can. Without also paying for busing for all of those students, we are not really offering a feasible "choice."

I strongly encourage you to read the article below from last week's Washington Post (1/28/14) on the issue of vouchers and charter schools. There is solid data out there that shows that vouchers and charter schools are not the silver-bullet solution to our education problems. Some private & charter schools are good, some are bad, and the majority are no better than most of our nation's public schools. In some cases, the private and charter school leaders have run off with the public's money, and the children have been left without their education! (We had a situation similar to this with a charter school-run-a-muck in Anchorage not too many years ago.)

Please, read the article below to learn how these vouchers are effecting other parts of the country.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/01/28/the-hype-and-reality-of-school-choice/>

I thank you for voting NO on SJR 9 and continuing to provide sustainable funding for our children's future.

Respectfully,

Anne Adasiak-Andrew

5251 E. 41st Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99508

Doniece Gott

From: Gary <alaskagary@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 7:21 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Subject: Please stop SJR9

Dear member of the Senate Finance Committee-

I am writing to ask that you put an end to the idea of putting public money into private schools in Alaska. As a lifelong Alaskan, who went to public schools, and with my own kids in public schools now, I find this idea absurd. The Constitution of Alaska has it right, and should not be changed by a costly, divisive vote on this issue.

I am against SJR9 because it will

- 1) Not have accountability for public schools
- 2) Possibly be used to teach material that does not benefit the public good
- 3) Be used as a profit mechanism for the private school industry, transferring public money to private entities
- 4) Cost our state a lot of money, which could really help our public schools
- 5) Will further divide Alaskans based on income, political views, and religion, rather than helping diverse groups to get along and understand one another. In other words, it won't serve the public good.
- 6) Benefit the wealthy more than the poor. For instance in Anchorage the public schools of choice (magnet schools) already draw overwhelmingly from upper income families, and this DOES harm the neighborhood schools. We need to do more to help the poor, not the wealthy.
- 7) Reject the wisdom of the Alaska Constitution
- 8) Reject the wisdom of the Founding Fathers of our Country
- 9) Likely lead to a costly and divisive election
- 10) Likely lead to costly and divisive court cases
- 11) Likely have unintended consequences that may not be what the public wants (How about a private school devoted to communism or witchcraft? We won't even know its happening!)
- 12) Be inconsistent with how we spend other public money. For instance I can't get a voucher for public roads money, to spend on my personal commute, just because I don't use a different particular road that the state chooses to maintain. Just because I might choose to use a private road or driveway, doesn't mean the state should pay for it, or that the state should pay less for roads that do need maintenance. This would be absurd, and it also is with education. Public money should be for public entities.

Please do the right thing, and kill SJR early in the legislative session so you can all focus on fixing our State's problems, rather than increasing them. Please do what you can to improve our public schools (like inflation proof the BSA) as good public schools lead to prosperity without fail.

Sincerely, Gary Snyder
Anchorage, Alaska
Non-partisan super voter

Doniece Gott

From: Yvonne Goldsmith <gldsmith@alaska.net>
Content: Sunday, February 02, 2014 6:22 PM
Subject: Sen. Pete Kelly
SJR 9- School Vouchers

Dear Senate Finance Committee: Please accept this testimony on SJR 9 on school vouchers -

I am vehemently opposed to school vouchers as proposed by Gov. Parnell and this proposed Joint Resolution for the following reasons:

1) the current public school system is strong and there is no data that indicates parents across the board want more choices in the private sector ; 2) if public resources were diverted to private schools, this would compromise the ability of the public school system to maintain its fixed cost overhead over the short term; 3) as public policy, public funds should not be used to finance schools owned, operated or associated with organized religion; 4) the cost-benefit of such a proposal has not been considered. What are the benefits to vouchers vs the benefits if we applied the cost of vouchers to the existing public school system? 5) This proposal would only benefit families in Anchorage and maybe Fairbanks and Juneau, where private schools exist. This is of no benefit to families in rural areas. This is of no benefit to families in communities where the only private schools are operated by religious institutions.

If you think school vouchers is a good idea, then I request you consider the following conditions - that schools receiving public funds should be required to operate under the same rules as public schools, that is, they would be required to: a) accept students of any religion; b) maintain separation of church and state, that is, have no requirements for school prayers for secular students; c) provide special education for disabled and handicapped children at the same level as public schools; d) provide subsidized lunches for children meeting poverty criteria.

If certain parents think the school system is bad, then the entire community should band together and fix the schools, not abandon them. I believe this terrible idea is being promoted by a small number of christian associated organizations. Let's have an independent, non-partisan survey and find out - does this idea have broad based support or not?

Thank you,
Yvonne Goldsmith
6035 Bluebell Drive
Anchorage, AK 99515

Doniece Gott

From: Kathie Cook <kathie.l.cook@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2014 12:26 PM
To: Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Click Bishop; Rep. Doug Isaacson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Pete Higgins; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Representative.Steve.Thompson@akleg.cov
Cc: Kathie Cook
Subject: Use of public funds for private schools

I am opposed to using public funds for private schools. I am not in favor of amending the state constitution. In Fairbanks, the state of Alaska provides parents with choice within the public school system by the use of Charter Schools, Magnet Schools, attending schools outside of their attendance area zone if the parent can provide transportation and Home School programs.

If you were to consider opening public funds to private schools it would only make sense to hold these schools to the same standards as the public schools.

Specifically...

1. all the staff must be highly qualified as specified by the federal government
2. all students must be allowed to attend
3. special education services must be given to any student on and IEP or 504 plan
4. the school must take the state assessments and report the scores to the public

If parents were allowed to move funds from the public to the private sector then it would further make sense to extend this to the UA system. Yes, students attending UAF pay a tuition however, the school is greatly subsidized by the state. Students who do not wish to attend UAF should be allowed to take their portion of the money and use it for Waylen Baptist or whatever school best meets their needs.

This would seem to me to add a lot of regulation. It would further seem to me that hiring all the people to do this oversight would cost a lot of additional money.

I do not support amending our constitution.

Kathie Cook
3400 White Spruce Drive
North Pole, 99705
kathie.l.cook@gmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Tom Klaameyer <klaameyer@gmail.com>
Content: Saturday, February 01, 2014 3:22 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: SJR 9

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am writing to request that you oppose SJR 9. You are in a position to safeguard public monies. Please use that responsibility wisely by choosing NOT to give that money to private interests. I wholeheartedly agree that parents know what is best for their own children, however it is not up to everyone else to pay for it.

This policy position is inconsistent with conservative values. Why should parents be entitled to public money to support their personal choices? If I choose to grow my own vegetables, I do not receive a voucher from the Dept. of Agriculture for the money covering the costs of inspection at the border that I did not use. I do not get a refund for choosing to plow the road in front of my house even though the government no longer had to plow that section. **The fact that parents want to be paid for not sending their kids to public school is entitlement mentality, akin to the person who chooses not to work, yet expects government handouts to support their personal life choices.**

While vouchers may allow an additional number of students to attend private schools, **vouchers will also require the State of Alaska to spend an additional amount equal to the BSA times the number of students already enrolled in private school.** As a fiscal conservative, I would think that you would laud and encourage parents who choose to pay for their children's education on their own. This reduces the public obligation, thus saving money. Why would we undo that savings during this time of fiscal uncertainty declining State revenue?

Sincerely,

Tom Klaameyer

Doniece Gott

From: Tyler Desjarlais <tylerdesjarlais@me.com>
Content: Thursday, January 30, 2014 2:25 PM
To: Sen. Charlie Huggins
Subject: Fwd: New School Choice System In ASD this year

Thanks,

Tyler Desjarlais
tylerdesjarlais@me.com

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tyler Desjarlais <tylerdesjarlais@me.com>
Subject: New School Choice System In ASD this year
Date: January 30, 2014 2:09:01 PM AKST
Bcc: Tyler Desjarlais <tylerdesjarlais@me.com>,

Please pass this on to other legislators who are unaware of the choice options available in schools new this year. Please be aware that new this year, all schools are based on a lottery system, which gives every student choice to attend any school they want which is based on a lottery system, then a first come first serve basis and overall priority based on students in its own community. It is not like it was before where only charter schools are on a lottery system. Our school at Russian Jack has over 100 students that come to our school outside its community and many other schools are like that.

Tyler Desjarlais

Doniece Gott

From: Ron & Marji Illingworth <lilyvale@awcable.com>
Content: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 11:07 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: JSR9 Opposition

Senator Kelly:

I understand that educational issues are a priority for the legislature this year. That is good. However, I am greatly concerned about the proposal to allow public money to be diverted from funding public schools and to be used to provide funding for private schools. In times of limited resources, it is not a time to be using public money to fund private enterprises, particularly when the public schools are already underfunded. As one columnist in the News Miner indicated, all that will happen with this initiative is that the public education system will become mediocre, something we need to avoid. Private schools have their own funding sources and should rely on them, not public money.

Thanks and hope to see you or one of your aides at the peony conference this weekend in Anchorage.

Ron
Ron & Marji Illingworth
North Pole Peonies
5730 Eielson Farm Road
North Pole, Alaska
907-488-0446 (H)
866-535-6459 (fax)
northpolepeonies.com

Doniece Gott

From: richard zimmer <rzimmer@gci.net>
Content: Monday, January 27, 2014 10:04 AM
Subject: legis.state.ak.us/poms@gci.net; gov.alaska.gov/parnell/contact/email-the-governor.html@gci.net; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Pete Kelly; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Sen. Anna Fairclough
Funding Public Education

I am a supporter of the Anchorage public schools and I vote. That the school districts of Alaska have to beg for funds from the legislature each year is a travesty. Public education should be the crown jewel of Alaska and an economic driver for the state. Instead we face a manufactured crisis each year, driven by a party in Juneau with an ideological agenda, creating uncertainty among teachers, schools, parents and children. The true agenda should be the education of our students and support for our teachers. A long term funding solution is urgently needed but in the short term the Base Student Allocation, which has not increased since 2011, should be increased and inflation protected. Without adequate funding support from our legislature, one of the cornerstones of our Democracy, public education, will fail to produce the educated citizens that an effective democracy needs.

Richard Zimmer

January 31, 2014

From: Mr. Lynn Willis
10140 Hillcrest Lane
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Testimony Regarding SJR 9 (Proposing amendments to the Constitution of the State of Alaska relating to state aid for education)

Absent a thorough financial analysis of the impact of this Resolution on state and local funding of schools, SJR9 should not be recommended for passage. Alaskans deserve to know, to the greatest degree possible, the impact of this constitutional amendment on our now dwindling financial resources.

Because this resolution is really about nothing other than vouchers, I do not believe that you would be intellectually honest to parse this bill into two phases; first pass it, then worry about the financial impact. Haven't we just learned from the national health care situation the folly of trusting those in office to: "just pass the bill and worry about the impact later"?

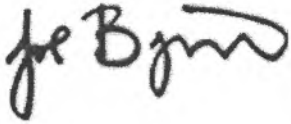
I suggest you address these questions:

1. If we grant vouchers to parents as allowed by court decision and supported by the Governor, are these vouchers to be for the exact tuition amount or will they be for some amount such as the BSA (Basic Student Allowance) with parents eligible to recoup the difference between actual tuition cost and the value of the voucher for other educational expenses?
2. Will the state insist on non-public schools retaining assets to insure solvency for a necessary period of time and/or be willing to assist local public schools to absorb the cost of a failed non-public school?
3. Will the state be obligated to fund a bureaucracy to oversee the academic performance and/or facility safety of non-public schools receiving state/local funds?
4. Will the state direct the closure of public schools or assist local administrations to cover the cost of operating schools due to the loss of funds diverted to voucher programs?
5. Are those who bear the cost of local schools be required to fund non-public schools to a degree equal to the current local contribution for public schools?

If you won't examine the cost of SJR9 then please don't recommend passage. Thank you.

Doniece Gott

From: Joseph Byrnes
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2014 4:23 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Please oppose SJR9



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



From: Marty Freeman [<mailto:martyw@ak.net>]
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2014 16:19
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Please oppose SJR9

January 31, 2014



Senator Pete Kelly, chair

Senate Finance Committee

State Capitol Room 516
Juneau AK, 99801-1185

Dear Senator Kelly,

Please oppose SJR9, the resolution to allow public funding to be used for private schools. Do not allow this initiative to consume more public time and money on hearings or on a Constitutional referendum.

SJR9 proposes an enormous change in the foundations of democracy in Alaska. Article VIII, Section 1 of the Alaska Constitution guarantees that public schools shall be free from sectarian control. SJR9 would allow public funding of school that are under sectarian control, a direct conflict with separation of church and state. It is an affront to me as an American and as an Alaskan, as well as to my religious beliefs.

Private schools are a move to RE-segregate Alaska. Few private schools reflect the economic, religious, or economic diversity in Alaska. In contrast, our public schools are a model of what our state must be -- a place where all can learn to cooperatively, constructively contribute to our society and economy.

My daughter went to East High, Alaska's largest high school. Not only did East prepare her well for college, it also prepared her to live in a diverse world. East High has a stunning range of diversity in its overall student population, and the same diversity on the honor roll -- a huge accomplishment and gift to our state. SJR9 weakens funding for our successful public schools at a time when budgets are already tight.

Please oppose SJR9.

Thank you,

Martha Freeman

1529 Sunrise Drive

Anchorage, AK 99508

Doniece Gott

From: Rita Hymes <rmsegrak@gmail.com>
Content: Sunday, February 02, 2014 2:56 PM
Subject: Senate Finance Committee
SJR9

Sen Kelly and committee members

this is to urrge you to vote against SJR9

Yes, private schools are already receiving state funds through the school buses. But, do we need to carry government involvement

any further? through a voucher system- were private schools obligated to participate, they would also then be obligated to abide by all the government rules. If parents should get cash, who will monitor where or how it is being spent?

Most private schools have a scholarship program, or work participation. So, if someone really wants their child to go to a 'private school' that option is there.

I do not see anything to be gained by taking the Blaine amendment out of our constitution, or even 'amending' it
thank you

rita hymes

Doniece Gott

From: Karen Benning <benning@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 10:52 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9

Dear committee members:

I'm unclear as to why Alaskans who profess fiscal conservatism would support using public funds for private schools. This is illogical on so many levels it is astounding. In short, I am against SJR9.

Thank you,
Karen Benning
Alaskan voter

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Mark C. Wiggin <mwiggin@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 3:44 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Mark Wiggin; Diane Wiggin
Subject: To Senate Finance -- Fund Adequately Public Schools, NOT Private or Religious Schools

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members Pete Kelly, Sen Anna Fairclough, Sen Mike Dunleavy, Sen Click Bishop, Sen Donald Olson, Sen Lyman Hoffman:

I am writing to ask you to fully fund public schools across Alaska. By fully fund, I mean a BSA that would return Alaska schools to an inflation-proofed 2011 level. I am writing to also express my absolute opposition to use of public money for either private or religious schools.

My two children (10th and 7th grade) attend West High and Romig in Anchorage. They have attended public schools for years. And while we have had infrequent disappointments, my spouse and I are generally extraordinarily happy with the education our kids are receiving. Every parent we know with kids in public schools would express similar sentiments. Kids are getting a great education! Teachers and staff are dedicated and give more of themselves than should be expected in any profession. And as a long-time oil and gas professional who is very well compensated, I would never give of myself as my kids' teachers do! The school teachers and staff should also not be expected to work as they do under the constant threat of termination or increased work load as a consequence of irresponsible budgeting at the state level.

Good public education is important! Public funding of religious schools should never be allowed, as is enshrined in the Alaska Constitution. Do not pass SJR9.

Thank you for your time.

Diane and Mark Wiggin
2213 Douglas Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517
907.244.5041

Doniece Gott

From: Lantz_Lydia <lantz_lydia@asdk12.org>
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2014 11:03 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Education Today

Dear Pete Kelly,

With so many important issues on this year's docket, it's often tough to pinpoint an issue that affects all Alaskans wherever we live; but there is one issue that will affect us all now and in the future, and that is education.

As a high school teacher it is easy to see why I have a vested interest in education because of what I see and do on a daily basis. As a future parent I continue to worry about the quality of education my son will have, but it's as a citizen of Anchorage and the state of Alaska that causes this issue to hit me the hardest.

We are not just graduating students from a system; we are creating the future employees and employers in all facets of the job market. They will not only clean, cook our food, build our roads, but they could one day be our future bosses. Ask yourself, how educated do you want your employees, coworkers and bosses to be?

These kids are going to make important decisions for us as voters, legislators and politicians. How educated do we want our general population to be?

The rates of violent crimes being committed have recently gone up in Anchorage and according to Forbes Magazine, with 813 violent crimes per 100,000 residents this city now ranks number 10 on their "America's Most Dangerous Cities List." It is no surprise that dropouts and poorly educated individuals are specifically linked as the perpetrators of these kinds of crimes. Yet the state refuses to focus its attention on education and we are forced to continually make cuts due to flat funding. The money spent on corrections goes far beyond the millions when you take into account the money pumped into prisons, the police, medical facilities, courts, property insurance; not to mention the value of human lives. If we can keep counselors in our Title I elementary schools working with children on their social emotional learning and counselors in the high school who can keep at risk kids in school and off the streets, we have a shot at changing this city.

Schools don't just teach math, science, reading and writing; we teach many kids how to interact with each other. On a regular basis we teach the skills that can keep these kids employed, out of jail and on their way to becoming contributing members of society.

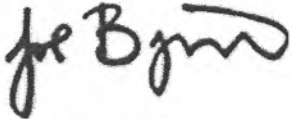
The kids who need our help the most are not going to benefit from vouchers to private schools, the blanket masses of these students will gain their knowledge from public education. Our future cannot afford another cut due to flat funding. Please increase the BSA and give Alaskans a chance.

Thank you,

Lydia Lantz

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2014 8:48 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Please increase the Base Student Allocation



Joe Byrnes

Staff for Senator Pete Kelly
907-456-3709



From: Alison Arians [<mailto:alison@riseandshinebread.com>]
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 22:49
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Please increase the Base Student Allocation

January 25, 2014

Dear Senator Kelly,

Thank you for your work on the Senate Finance Committee. I'm writing to ask you to work with your colleagues to please pass legislation to increase the Base Student Allocation. Please bring the level up to what it would have been if the BSA had been increased in tandem with inflation since 2011. What is being called "flat funding" by some is actually a dramatic decrease in public school funding, since costs have increased for health care, energy, technology, and insurance.

I was born and raised here in Anchorage, and I attended my local public schools. I then earned my B.A. at Dartmouth College, and went on to get a Ph.D. in Geography at the University of Colorado in Boulder. After completing my dissertation research in the Brooks Range of Alaska, I returned home to work as a land use and forestry planner for the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. Anchorage schools prepared me extremely well for higher education, which then allowed me to come back and help plan for Alaska's future.

Now my nine-year old daughter is in third grade at Rabbit Creek. She even has the same P.E. teacher than I had, 35 years ago! I am very happy with the teachers and principal at Rabbit Creek Elementary School, but have been frustrated and saddened by how big the classes sizes are already. I am now a small business owner, and spend time every week helping in my daughter's classroom. I also work with the Rabbit Creek PTA. I'm sure that our teachers appreciate parents' help, but we can't do it all. If we can't keep our state BSA funding abreast of inflation, our teachers will be crippled. They can't possibly teach our children properly if they are managing huge class sizes.

With layoffs as proposed for next year, our children and young people are really going to suffer. Please, help us put our resources into educating our young people! Their knowledge and excitement and passion, if channeled and encouraged by great teachers, and supported by counselors, can make a huge difference to the future of Alaska. A well-educated cohort of graduating seniors is going to be ready to take on jobs in our workforce. If they decide to go Outside to college, they are more likely to come back if our schools are top-notch. Why would they want to raise a family in a state that doesn't support its public schools?

Alaska is a wealthy state: please, let's put some of these financial resources back into our most important resource: our children. Please, let's make funding our public schools a top priority, and pass legislation to inflation-proof the Base Student Allocation. We will all benefit from a well-educated community.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Alison Arians

12900 Badger Lane

Anchorage, AK 99516

907.677.3712 (h) 907.748.3712 (c)

alison@riseandshinebread.com

SJR 9
SUPPORT LETTERS

Doniece Gott

From: Carol Mobley <carol@akcw.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:47 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee

Please consider passing SJR9. We need to be able to decide where our children go to school. The teacher's union shouldn't decide how we raise our children.

Carol Mobley Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Gena Columbus <genac@gci.net>
nt: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 5:23 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support SJR9

Dear Finance Comm. Members:

My name is Geneva Columbus. I am a long-time Alaskan voter who cares about all Alaskans, both young & old. I live in the 16th District. Many states in the Lower 48 have adopted School Choice resulting from their residents opportunity to VOTE. From all reports, this seems to be working out for them. I see no reason why Alaskan voters should be denied the opportunity to VOTE on this. Why is there this reluctance to let the people VOTE? Maybe it will or will not pass, but at least the people can let their preference be known.

Please let the people VOTE.

Thank you.
Sincerely,
Geneva Columbus

Doniece Gott

From: david.luntz <david.luntz@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 5:24 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Vote yes on SJR9

Vote yes on SJR9

David Luntz
Delta junction, ak 99737

Sent from Samsung Mobile

Doniece Gott

From: R K <rachkitson@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 5:26 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: I support SJR9

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a single parent of 5 children and I support SJR9. I currently have 2 children who attend a private school, and my older 3 daughters have already graduated from a private school. It was my choice to put my children in a private school so they could receive the attention and support needed to learn and become contributing members of our society.

While this did put a large strain on the families finances and made it difficult at time to make ends meet, it was worth the sacrifice. Having a choice as to where my tax money is spent on education would have made it easier.

Thank you,
Rachel Kitson

A television may insult your intelligence but nothing rubs it in like a computer.

Doniece Gott

From: Maria Rensel <shapeitup2013@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 5:31 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Vote Yes on SJR -9

Dear Members of Senate Finance:

Please vote yes on SJR - 9 and pass this bill out of the Senate. Please don't be the one who prevents the people from having the discussion about whether it's time to repeal the Blaine Amendment. The Alaska Constitution belongs to the people of the state and they should be able to make changes to it when changes would be beneficial.

Who could fault you for letting the people of Alaska decide what's best for their own children and how they would like to spend their piece of the pie going forward?

*Maria Rensel
Fairbanks, Alaska*

907-455-7008
907-590-4164

*The Statewide Teleconference
First Saturday Coffee Clatch*

Doniece Gott

From: Doctor Gary <teach777@bellsouth.net>
ent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 6:10 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Alaska education needs

Please say YES to SJR9,
thanks.

Gary in Big Delta.

Doniece Gott

From: Annie Dougherty <adougherty@chugachschoools.com>
nt: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 6:43 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Please give the Alaskan people a chance to let their voices and wishes be heard by allowing SJR9 to be brought before the people for a vote.

By allowing citizens to choose educational options, each educational establishment will need to ensure it does a good job and benefits its students.

We will all benefit from this with a brighter future.

Please give Alaskan students a chance.

Sincerely,
Annie Dougherty

Doniece Gott

From: Mike Widney <mcwidney@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:51 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Yes to SJR9

Let the people vote. Pass SJR9.

Michael Widney, Dist. 8

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Richard Giessel <rich@giessel.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:53 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Yes on SJR 9

Statement In Favor of School Choice – SJR 9

February 4, 2014

The Big Lie

The National Education Association (NEA) promulgates one of the great lies of our time, the Myth of Neutrality. In fact the NEA is anti-Christian, religiously and philosophically rooted in atheism. The father of modern public education, John Dewey, with the leader of the teacher's union, Charles Francis Potter, and 32 others formulated their religious views in the Humanist Manifesto, first published in 1933. This document of fifteen tenants clearly outlines the religious belief system that now totally dominates public schools: "First: Religious Humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created. Second: Humanism believes that man is part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process." In other words, there is no God and man was not created in the image of God but evolved from the primordial soup. Try reconciling this quote from a Harvard education professor with religious neutrality, "The battle for humankind's future must be waged and won in the public school classroom by teachers who correctly perceive their role as the proselytizers of a new faith... The classroom must and will become an arena of conflict between the old and the new-the rotting corpse of Christianity... and the new faith of Humanism."

The Big Problem

(for Alaska Citizens who reject time and chance as their creator and instead believe in God and in the Bible as God's inerrant Word.)

First Amendment to US Constitution states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Federal Department of Education, State of Alaska, and Anchorage School Board have all violated the First Amendment by establishing Secular Humanism as the official atheistic religion of the State and eliminating Biblical Christianity from public schools.

It is wrong for the State to confiscate a citizen's property by force (through property and business taxes) and use that money to indoctrinate his children in a religious worldview contrary to what he believes. Yet this is done throughout our state and nation.

The Partial Solution

Please let us vote to remove the Blaine Amendment from the Alaska Constitution.

Removal of Blaine would allow Alaskans to restore some freedom of religion in our education system by allowing funds to follow children to a school where a religion, other than humanism, will be respected and affirmed rather than mocked and denigrated.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard S. Giessel, P.E.

12701 Ridgewood Road

Anchorage, AK 99516

Doniece Gott

From: Dick Stoffel <dckstoffel@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 12:01 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Yes SJR9

Please vote yes on SJr9 and let the people decide if they want school choice.
Why isn't NEA for it? We know it will greatly improve the education system.

Doniece Gott

From: Tony Lewkowski <tlewkowski@gci.net>
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 5:34 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support SJR9

I urge you to support SJR9.

The subsequent debate is long overdue, and the people need a voice in this matter.

The Lewkowski Family

Doniece Gott

From: Pamela Lynn <aksunshine123@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 9:18 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Yes on SJR9

Dear Senators,

Thank you for your service and commitment to our state.

I am writing to ask for a yes vote for SJR9. Please let the parents vote.

Sincerely,

Pamela Samash

322-2201

Doniece Gott

From: Carrie Currey <akcurrey@mtaonline.net>
nt: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:39 PM
to: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: school choice

Senator Kelly,

Please stand up to the NEA unionize pressure on school choice. I find it ironic that we hear how parents are not involved enough in the education choices of their kids. Then we you see us get involved we have a back lash of over Union representation.

The bottom line is parents and students deserve to have a choice in where they go to school. The money should follow the child and the empowerment of the child in their education choice.

Do not let the NEA strike this down. Let's take it to the ballet if needed.

Please.....we need a choice and a voice.

Sincerely,

Carrie Keil

_____ Information from ESET NOD32 Antivirus, version of virus signature database 9382 (20140204)

The message was checked by ESET NOD32 Antivirus.

<http://www.eset.com>

Doniece Gott

From: Monika Adcock <monika@chenahills.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 5:47 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Cc: ranger_keith@hotmail.com; Joseph Kurber
Subject: In support of SJR 9

Hi Pete,

I'm contacting you to state my support of resolution SJR 9. In January of this year I started a Facebook page called **Alaskans for School Choice** and it already has 138 members. These members all support school choice in one form or another, and they certainly support constitutional education amendments being put to a statewide vote. I've encouraged the group and those I know to contact our local and state legislators to advocate for SJR 9.

Please let me know your thoughts on this resolution and whether there's anything else I can do to support SJR 9 being passed.

Thanks much,
Monika

--

Monika Adcock
CFO & Managing Partner
Chena Hills LLC

18 Mountain View Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99712
P 907.978.1522
F 866.416.6757

Doniece Gott

From: Gail Grafton <chezgrafton@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 6:15 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: THANK YOU FOR COSPONSORING SJR 9!

Alaskan families not only need the freedom to choose the most appropriate educational institutions for their children, they also need it to be more affordable! It is time school choice became a real option for the middle class - those who find it difficult to fit into their budget but don't qualify for financial aid.

Thank you for cosponsoring this legislation!

Sincerely,
Gail Grafton
Anchorage

RE:
BILL: SJR 9 **SHORT TITLE:** CONST. AM: EDUCATION FUNDING
BILL VERSION:
CURRENT STATUS: (S) FIN **STATUS DATE:** 03/28/13
SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) DUNLEAVY, Dyson, Kelly, Coghill, Giessel, McGuire, Huggins, Fairclough
HEARING: (S) FIN Feb 04 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532 Heard & Held TELECONFERENCE
TITLE: Proposing amendments to the Constitution of the State of Alaska relating to state aid for education.

Doniece Gott

From: Christine's design <designone@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 5:42 PM
To: Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Fwd: SJR9 SUPPORT FROM NON NEA MEMBER OF PUBLIC

> **From:** Christine's design [<mailto:designone@gci.net>]
> **Sent:** Monday, February 03, 2014 10:13 PM
> **To:** sen.peter.kelly@akleg.gov; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough
> **Cc:** sen.mike.dunleavy@skleg.gov; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Donny Olson
> **Subject:** SJR9 SUPPORT FROM NON NEA MEMBER OF PUBLIC

>
> **SENATORS:** I agree wholeheartedly with the gentleman from Fairbanks who offered that the issue before the committee is whether this resolution should be presented to the public for their vote and I would assume the financial considerations of that addition to the ballot, The issue of whether choice is a good idea and what the benefits are, if any, is a discussion for another day after the public has had a chance to express their opinion in that vote.

>
> I know some historical details on how this phraseology about funds to alternative education came to be in the State Constitution; and it is time to change that wording. These days the interests of the public are becoming more and more critical to good government. There are no certainties of how the voters will decide when presented with the option of having a choice in education for their children. After the legislature has passed this resolution and committed to bringing it to the public will be the time for a serious and loud debate driven by the media and the NEA; and hopefully voters interested in choice for parents.

> Please PASS this resolution and offer this discussion to the parents of children to be in those classrooms. Thank you for your time to consider PASSING this resolution on for addition to the November ballot.

>
> Christine

>
> Christine Hutchison
> 281 Juliussen Street
> Kenai, AK 99611

Doniece Gott

From: Pamela Lynn <aksunshine123@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 9:18 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Yes on SJR9

Dear Senators,
Thank you for your service and commitment to our state.
I am writing to ask for a yes vote for SJR9. Please let the parents vote.
Sincerely,
Pamela Samash
322-2201

Doniece Gott

From: John and Kathleen Tappel <jktappel@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:48 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR 9

Dear Senators,

As a retired educator of children for 19 years and a concerned parent and grandparent I urge you to support SJR9, to allow for more choices, more freedoms to Alaska's parents and guardians of children. I support SJR9 going on the ballot so that Alaskans can have a healthy vigorous discussion about what's best for our kids this year and vote on it in November.

Competition naturally makes for better products and services. The same has proven true in education.

I urge you to support SJR9! The Polls show that Alaskans do support it and want the chance to vote on it in November.

Thank you,

Kathleen R Tappel

Doniece Gott

From: Carol Mobley <carol@akcw.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:47 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee

Please consider passing SJR9. We need to be able to decide where our children go to school. The teacher's union shouldn't decide how we raise our children.

Carol Mobley Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Linda Hill <lindafellhill@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 9:24 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: School choice Bill

We are asking you to support the School Choice Bill and give us the opportunity to vote on this important issue.

Thank you!

Dwight & Linda Hill

Sent from my iPad

Doniece Gott

From: Patricia Hayes <irishrz1951@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:00 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR 9

Let the public vote on this matter

Doniece Gott

From: Tom Cobaugh <tcobaugh@acsedu.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:33 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9

I encourage you to allow this bill to go forward and allow the people to have a say in this important topic. Our whole system of government and economics is based on competition and the premise that competition makes us better. I don't know why this isn't applied to the area of education. It certainly is applied and works for post-secondary education, why don't we try it on primary education like has been done in so many other states?

If the people don't want it then fine but let us have a vote.

Tom Cobaugh

Anchorage

Doniece Gott

From: Marie & Sean Mayton <mayton32@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:24 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Fw: SJR 9

Dear Senators,

As a mother of 6, I urge you to support SJR 9, to allow for more choices, more freedoms to Alaska's parents and guardians of children. I support SJR 9 going on the ballot so that Alaskans can have a healthy vigorous discussion about what's best for our kids this year and vote on it in November.

Competition naturally makes for better products and services. The same has proven true in education.

I urge you to support SJR 9! The Polls show that Alaskans do support it and want the chance to vote on it in November.

Thank you,

Marie Mayton

Doniece Gott

From: The Baumeisters <jwbaum@alaska.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:33 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9 - Support

Hi my name is Wendy Baumeister and I live in Anchorage and I am in favor of passing SJR9.

A fundamental problem in America is the belief that the government is responsible for the education of the children. Really it is the parents that are responsible to educate their children by sending them to school. If a child isn't schooled to a certain grade, the parent can be prosecuted - not the teachers, not the city/state/government. The parent is responsible for the education of the child.

Since parents bear that responsibility, they should be given every opportunity to effectively educate their children.

I am the mother of a 4 year old and a 7 year old. I have choices to make about their education. We are fortunate to be able to have that choice financially. I know many who are not. I know many that are happy with their public schools and will stay there. But shouldn't that be the parent's choice since they are ultimately responsible?

I believe you are well intentioned and that you desire good for the people of Alaska. But when my child graduates from high school, you will know neither their name or what they want to be now that they are grown up. That is my responsibility to nurture, love and guide my child through adolescence. This includes their education. Please give us the opportunity to vote on one of the most important tasks that have been given to all parents... their child's education. Please pass SJR9 and send it to the ballot so that the people can vote.

Respectfully,

Wendy Baumeister

Doniece Gott

From: Marie & Sean Mayton <mayton32@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 10:23 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Fw: SJR 9

Dear Senators,

As a mother of 6, I urge you to support SJR 9, to allow for more choices, more freedoms to Alaska's parents and guardians of children. I support SJR 9 going on the ballot so that Alaskans can have a healthy vigorous discussion about what's best for our kids this year and vote on it in November.

Competition naturally makes for better products and services. The same has proven true in education.

I urge you to support SJR 9! The Polls show that Alaskans do support it and want the chance to vote on it in November.

Thank you,

Marie Mayton

February 3, 2014

Public Comment on SJR9

Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Pamela Goode, Delta Junction area, and elected board member on the Deltana Community Corporation.

Click Bishop is my District Senator.

Let me first begin by saying I am NOT a member of the NEA, NOT an educator, and I do NOT have children of school age. Education is about the future of lives and the future of this country. What we are doing, have been doing, and continue to do is not working!

YES to SJR9.

Let the Rural Alaskans have a say in their Constitution.

In 1956, it is said, the Alaska Constitution was ratified by the People of Alaska. I challenge that statement. There were many Alaskans that had no input into this document and some of those in control cared little about what many in this state held so dear and still do today, their liberty and their freedom. I am specifically speaking of rural Alaskan. Now that over 50 years has passed the abuses still continue under the protection of this document or the interpretation there of.

Currently, Article 7 Section 1 is full of limitations, not freedom of choice. It limits the legislature, the parents, the children, the teachers, the people of Alaska and all the unforeseen options and opportunities only the free market can bring. If you do not pass this bill 'NO', you will continue to restrict Alaskans of choice. If you pass this bill 'YES', you will allow the people of Alaska to choose to open this door or not.

Let the people vote!

Pamela Goode
Delta Junction Area

Doniece Gott

From: Hester Sanders <hsanders@acsedu.org>
ent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 11:31 AM
o: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9

I wanted to make sure that you aware that my husband and I support SJR9. I urge the committee and allow this to be placed on the ballot. Thank you

Dave and Hester Sanders

6967 Caravelle Dr

Anchorage, AK 99502

Doniece Gott

From: Charles & Carole Hart <prolife@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 2:02 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support SJR 9

As a concerned Alaska parent and constituent, I urge you to support this bill and bring this bill to the voters.

Thank you,
Carole Hart
Anchorage

Sent from my iPhone



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the _____Senate Finance_____ Committee

on SJR9 dated 020314.

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing in support for school vouchers. I find it morally unacceptable to have my tax money going to only public schools. Everyone says they want fairness. How fair is it that while my wife and I wanted what we think is a better education for our children and decided put them in a private school, we had to watch our tax dollars go to the failing public school system? It cost around \$15,000.00 a year to have a child in the public school here on the Kenai Peninsula. We paid around \$4500.00 a year out of pocket to educate our kids. Again, how fair is that? As long as the children are learning to read, write and do math what should it matter what other curriculum they are taught? Whether it be aviation, construction or even religious. The parents should have the right to make the decision on where their children go to school and receive the same benefits for funding as any other.

Thank you,
Harry Saunders
51815 Lindsey Lane
Kasilof, Alaska 99610

907-953-2438

Doniece Gott

From: Rich Ames <rames@acsedu.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 12:16 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9

To whom it may concern:

Please note I am very much in favor of SJR9. This will help to provide relief to those hard working families who choose to put their children in private school, along with helping to ease the burden on our public school system.

The choice of education should be left up to the parent, not dictated by parents paying so much in taxes, (Which mostly go to the public school system), that parents can't afford to pick an alternative to public school.

Richard Ames

2824 Ambergate Dr

Anchorage AK

Doniece Gott

From: Rebecca Logan <RLogan@alaskaalliance.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 8:49 AM
To: Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Click Bishop; senator.kevin.mery@akleg.gov; Sen. Anna Fairclough
Subject: SJR 9

I write to you as a parent of children who have spent their entire educational lives in the Anchorage School District. I have been, for the most part, happy with the result.

I also write to you as an Alaskan, who spent hours over the weekend reviewing the ASD budget and looking for opportunities to reduce the budget without cutting teachers or resources to the classroom. I was able to find 11 different departments with budgets totaling \$89,232,635 who were spending money on things that don't enhance education in the district, and quite frankly are very questionable expenditures.

School districts will not, on their own, strive to be more efficient in their delivery of education. The only thing that will force them to be more efficient and more effective is competition. I support full-funding of educational institutions who provide an excellent education and are responsible with the money they are given.

In August, Alaskans will vote on the only meaningful revenue source for the state with the referendum to repeal SB 21; I certainly hope that in November Alaskans are given the opportunity to vote on what will quickly become the largest expense for the state.

Please pass SJR 9 out of the finance committee.

Rebecca Logan

Parent of Students in the Anchorage School District

**Academy of Higher Learning
Ministries of the Living Stones, Inc.
32930 Fair Game Ave. Sterling, Alaska 99672**

**Email: mlsacd@alaska.net
Ph/Fax: 907.260.7741**

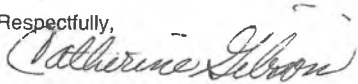
Monday, February 03, 2014

Dear Senator Dunleavy,

i am faxing to you various testimonies of parents regarding the Education their children have received at our private school. We have received no funding.

I apologize for lack of composition and organization. Time has not permitted for me to compile this information for you aesthetically.

Respectfully,



Catherine Gibson, Principal

Vision:

It is our vision to be a Christian school for an overcoming generation; a generation of young people who will have the strength of character to go forward into the world leading mature lives, spiritually and academically.

Mission:

Academy of Higher Learning's mission is to work to enable Christian families to work together with our Christian teachers to effectively prepare students for life.



HISTORY OF ACADEMY HIGHER LEARNING:

My teen-age daughter wanted to be a hooker and a drug-dealer. The last resort was sending her to a personal friend and founder of MLS. Ministry of the Living Stones saved my daughter's life. They loved her with an unconditional love that she had never experienced before, even in the churches she had grown-up in. I came to Alaska to say "thank you". When I visited Alaska, I saw a tremendous need. Many other young people needed help too, just as my daughter had needed help. We parents so badly want to help our own kids, and can't. But we can help other parents with their kids; and that's what we're doing.

We won't mention any names or ages because the children deserve the dignity and privacy of their own lives. With my teaching career and desire to give back to these people who had saved my daughter's life, I came to Sterling, Alaska to help save these troubled teens. I believe, with God's help we are making a difference.

Our goals for Academy of Higher Learning, MLS, Inc. are:

- Better Education – 100% Graduation rate
- Higher Standards – 95% of graduates attend college, all are prepared for college academics
- Greater Morality – zero incidents of violence; a drug-free environment; zero teen-pregnancy rate; Life skills learned along with academics.
- Unification of the Family
- International Travel for Students for a healthy, happy, productive life.

The Academy of Higher Learning, MLS, Inc. uses accredited curriculum K-12. Evolving from a single trailer, the Academy of Higher Learning has grown into a state-recognized

K through 12 school. The Principal/Teacher won the 1998 Christa McAuliffe Award for the State of Alaska.

Testimonies from parents:

I am thankful for many reasons for the Academy of Higher Learning; The first and foremost in my mind is the Christian morals that my son is learning. I am grateful for the protection the school provides. A year or two ago, some students were standing on the grounds of their school (in Anchorage, Alaska) when a stranger approached them and cut their throats. This one act opened my eyes to the security that the Academy provides for my son. I am very thankful for all the people who volunteer to help and teach my son. He was a very fearful child, shy and withdrawn. I have seen him grow into a child that will participate, laugh and play unlike I had seen him do prior to his attending the Academy of Higher Learning. . . Tina Wegener

I feel that this choice of sending our children to this Christian school has been the best decision that my husband and I have ever made. They learn Godly values and principles, and get academic teaching in a smaller classroom setting. When a situation comes up and they need extra attention in an area, they get it. . . Laura Ludvick

I am at peace, knowing that my children will not be pressured into drugs, overlooked because of a large class size, or the victim of random acts of violence. At the Academy of Higher Learning my children receive an excellent education where the teachers and parents work together to help each child succeed. My children love their school and feel safe. . . . Nicole Butler

Testimonies from students:

This school has extremely changed my life., for the better. In the fifth grade in public school, I started hanging around the wrong crowd. We would go and steal, smoke, and watch porno's, Playboy, Hustler, etc. I got busted after stealing some hood ornaments . . . When it was time to go to Junior High, I didn't want to go. So, when the opportunity came up for me to go to this private school, I took it. . . I never stole again. I learned my lesson. Each year in the Academy, kept getting easier. This year I am graduating. I have plans and goals to fulfill and with God's help, I will. . . . Charles . . . [This young man went on to graduate from the Univ. of Alaska, Anchorage, in their Mentor Mechanics School affiliated with General Motors].

This school stopped me from being " Bulimic" and destroying my body. This school watches you and allows you to grow into the adult you should be, not the one you "wanna" be. "Cause if it weren't for this school, I'd be a dropout, an alcoholic, and probably dead, by now. . . Natalie [This young woman is now attending Univ. of Alaska, Anchorage, pursuing Veterinary Medicine.]

I know that this school has (with God's help) changed my life. I came from a place where I could do and say what I wanted. In public school I was very rebellious. I flunked out of

almost all my classes; I skipped school; and most of my teachers just ruled me out as a discipline case, most likely to be killed in a shoot-out. There is so much pressure on kids at public schools. I didn't fit in. I was depressed and hated myself and my parents. I even tried to commit suicide. I planned to runaway. I thought Mom would be happy if I disappeared; we fought constantly. I decided that I was ugly and fat. I became anorexic and almost Bulimic.. At the Academy of Higher Learning my eyes were opened to see where my life was really going. God changed my heart and gave me hope and gave me a new family that loved me for just me. Now, I'm a straight 'A' student, I travel the world for God, and I have new goals and desires. . . .Kim

"In the years spent at the Academy, my grades elevated from a 'D' average to a straight 'A' average. In the years past, I was considered to be one who was slipping through 'the cracks,' yet that did not deter my teachers at the Academy. With intense hours of work and consistency, I learned to respect myself, while overcoming a variety of personal and family issues. The leadership worked with me, at times, with all the grace they possessed. They knew I could accomplish more than I was willing to admit. Not only did they push me, but they also gave me encouragement--two of the fundamentals in developing self-respect. They gave even the most 'problematic child' the opportunity to progress. I am a product of their hard work and can say these things freely because I was the 'problematic child'." . . .Maggie

My son has been attending this school since third grade; my daughter since kindergarten. My son is now a sophomore in high school; my daughter is now in 5th grade. I feel that this choice for sending our children to this Christian school has been the best decision that my husband and I have ever made. They learn Godly values and principals. They get the academic teachings in a smaller classroom setting. When a situation comes up and they need extra attention in an area, they get it. My children have bonded very closely with the other students. This is very helpful, because they have learned to lean on them and support one another. Thank you for such a great school.

Jennifer Scheller 2009

Scanned
2/26/13

December 7, 2001

I have three children attending the Academy of Higher Learning. We have been apart of this school for 8 years. One of my children attended the public school for a while because she has a learning disability. They had told me she would never read. After 5 years of hearing this I brought her to the Academy. She is now reading and doing math. She has progressed well under the care of the teachers. A smaller setting has enabled her to have "one on one" attention where the opportunity to learn was available. My other children are doing well and advancing in their education. The teachers are willing to give extra help where it maybe needed. I am thankful for this school.

Sincerely,
Holly Brazington

Scanned 2/20/03

Why I am thankful for the Academy of Higher Learning, MLS, Inc.

I am thankful for many reasons. The first and foremost in my mind is the Christian morals that my son is learning. I am grateful for the protection the school provides. A year or two ago, some students were standing on the grounds of their school when a stranger approached them and cut their throats. This one act opened my eyes to the security that the Academy provides for my son.

The school has taught and is always teaching Godly morals, respect to others and oneself and of course the ABC's. I am very thankful for all the people who volunteer to help and teach my son. He was a very fearful child, shy and withdrawn. I have seen him grow into a child that will participate, laugh and play unlike I had seen him do prior to his attending the Academy of Higher Learning.

*Keenan's mom
Tina Wegener*

*Scanned
2/20/13*

December 7, 2001

I am very grateful that my two children have been attending the Academy of Higher Learning since kindergarten. I am at peace knowing that my children will not be pressured into drugs, overlooked because of a large class size, or the victim of random acts of violence. At the Academy of Higher Learning my children receive an excellent education where the teachers and parents work together to help each child succeed. My children love their school and feel safe.

Sincerely,
Nicole Butler

Nicole Butler

September, 97

Information statement

Re: Academy of Higher Learning, MLS, Inc

Academy of Higher Learning began as a vision, a vision for a drug-free, knife-free, gang-free, safe environment with high academic standards in which our children could learn, a vision for a school where children could grow spiritually, mentally and physically. Parents built the Academy of Higher Learning.

The Alaska State Board of Education adopted Alaska Student Performance Standards in August 1994. In that document there is a statement that reads, "Responsibilities of the Public - Assume primary responsibility for your own children's education; . . . Require your school board to develop curriculum for each grade so that all students work toward these standards, not just the top 25%."

The Academy of Higher Learning is a private school registered with the State of Alaska. The staff includes an accredited teacher, parateachers, a psychologist, two nurses, parents and several pastors.

The curriculum is strong in Bible, phonics, grammar and composition, math, history, science and mastering the knowledge and skills needed to go forward in life, succeed in college, technical school or the work world.

Standardized academic testing is performed every year, rather than just in the fourth, eighth, and tenth grades as is required by the State of Alaska Department of Education.

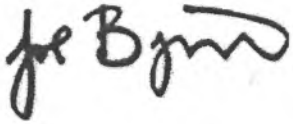
High School credits earned by our students include four years of math, four years of science, four years of history, four years of English, four years of Bible, in addition to International Studies, Home Economics, Vocational training, Computers, Drama, Music, and Pentathlon sports. This curriculum goes beyond the basic credits required by the State of Alaska in order to graduate from high school.

The School Board of Directors, the staff and the parents of the Academy of Higher Learning believe in "training up a child in the way he should go," (Proverbs 22:6) training him up in his God-given gifting, training a child in Christian character and learning Christian morality, to help all mankind be healthy and whole physically, mentally, and spiritually.

any... Scanned 2/2/13

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 10:03 AM
To: Doniece Gott
Subject: FW: Education funding



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



From: Donald Anderson [<mailto:don.anderson@softwarenorth.com>]
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2014 09:36
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Education funding

Senator Pete Kelly

Dear Senator Kelly,

I hope you will support school choice for all Alaska students.

Following is a note to my senator pointing out the damage her stand against choice causes some students!

**Cheers,
Don**

Re: Education funding

Senator Berta Gardner

Hello Berta,

I realize that you strongly support the public schools. However, I would like you to consider broadening that support to cover all K-12 students in Alaska.

We have a number of families that currently sacrifice significant state support in their attempt to find a school that best meets the needs of their school-age children or to home-school them.

These options are beyond the means of low-income families who neither have the funds for private schools nor the time-off work to provide home-schooling. Low-income families can only afford government schools. For many families this is fine, but even a diversified school district like Anchorage cannot provide a good fit for every student. By providing state funds exclusively to students attending government and charter schools, students from low-income families see their choices limited. This may help perpetuate an elite financial class, but I doubt this is the effect you intend.

It is also not in the state's best interest to restrict the reach of its funding, when better options are available. Permitting students to attend the school of their choice insures better motivation and allows more to attain their full potential.

At present, the state is effectively penalizing children who are born into a low-income family.

Competition between schools has been shown to increase the quality of government, private, and religious schools. In fact, putting more schools on a level playing field is probably the finest thing you can do for education in Alaska.

I object to the notion that there are community wide goals that only the government schools transmit. This is an appeal to indoctrinate all students according to the political trends of the day and does not help generate the ability for critical thinking so necessary in a free country.

A few years ago, I prepared a much longer essay on education in Alaska that you may access on my reference page at <http://don.snalaska.net>. Click on the Education topic and download the essay "Let's fund some school for all children."

As a former teacher in public schools, I strongly support education, but do not suggest that more money be placed exclusively in the government venue. Without competition on a level financial playing field, we may be unknowingly wasting money. If I were convinced that all students stood to benefit from state aid, I would support increases as necessary. In the present situation, I vote against all school bond issues and encourage all my friends to do the same.

If you are not going to treat our students of all schools equally, I would prefer that the state remove itself entirely from the field of education!



Sincerely,

Don

Donald N. Anderson, PhD
don.anderson@softwarerorth.com
2230 E. 52nd Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99507
907-561-4412

Cc: Representative Andy Josephson & others

Doniece Gott

From: LeighSteele-Ross <lsteele1234@yahoo.com>
nt: Saturday, February 01, 2014 6:56 PM
: Sen. Hollis French
Subject: House and Senate Bill numbers HJR1 and SJR9

Below is an email sent to Governor Parnell. I would like to ask that you please support these bills as well in your respective offices.
Thank you.

Governor Parnell:

Thank you so much for supporting the SCHOOL CHOICE SCHOLARSHIPS.

My fervent hope is that you will continue your support for this bill which will put education of students back into the hands of parents, grandparents and guardians. It is very important that our children be given a choice to attend a public school, charter school, private school or parochial school.

Again, thank you for your stand in this matter.

Sincerely,
Leigh Johnson-Steele

Doniece Gott

From: GENE ZERKEL <kgz1926@gci.net>
nt: Thursday, January 30, 2014 4:06 PM
o: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Hollis French; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. Peter Micciche
Subject: SJR9

Senators, I urge your SUPPORT of SJR9. It is time parents had more say in their children's education. thank you Gene Zerkel

- SB 100 -

Doniece Gott

From: Sabrina Binkley <sabrina@sprucetreemontessori.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 12:19 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Spruce Tree Montessori School Supports School Choice
Attachments: PastedGraphic-2.pdf

1830 2nd Avenue | Fairbanks, Alaska | 907-479-TREE

January 30, 2014

Senator Kelly,

Thank you for your support of SJR9 and your attention regarding the benefits of school choice.

The *element of choice* is a key part of the Montessori philosophy and we appreciate that it has made its way into the Governor's education plan for our state. When individuals are respected, valued and given the opportunity to choose their own path – learning becomes an exciting process of discovery.

It is my hope that your fellow legislators, as well as the people of Alaska, will recognize that inspiration, not institution, is the right course for Alaskan families.

School choice – through public charters, lottery enrollment programs and private admissions processes – will add vitality to the educational community and will paint the broad strokes of success for the public system.

Per the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice article, "How does school choice affect public schools?", studies of school choice opportunities in Florida, Ohio, Milwaukee, Washington D.C., San Antonio, Vermont and Maine have found that vouchers improve public schools. No empirical study has ever found that vouchers harm public schools. These credible studies indicate school choice programs introduce more competition among all public and private schools, compelling them to work harder to attract and retain students. The article explains that one reason vouchers improve public schools is that they enable parents to find the right particular school for each child's unique educational needs.

Let's give parents the choice to do the best for their children.

We are all in this together.

Sincerely yours,

Sabrina Binkley

Sabrina Binkley
Director / Founder

Spruce Tree Montessori School
1830 2nd Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Doniece Gott

From: Bailey Ellert <bailey@afoc.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 11:37 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: School Choice Scholarships

Senator,

I would like to take a moment to encourage you to support Governor Sean Parnell and his endeavors to implement School Choice Scholarships. This would allow parents to choose if their children could go to a private school and public school. Please Refer to the House and Senate Bill numbers HJR1 and SJR9 for more information on this topic. Parents want their children to be taught the same values that they promote in their homes. Parents know what is better for their kids than teachers and educators that don't know them and haven't raised them. Please take this into consideration as many families are depending upon this.

Sincerely,

Bailey Ellert

Doniece Gott

From: Bucket <akbucket@alaska.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 10:38 AM
To: AK House; AK Senators
Subject: Just Say No To Public Education

All,

No more money for the public education gangsters.

The public education bureaucracy has redefined the definition of a "Black Hole" – truly giving it a bad name.

A black hole is a place in space where gravity sucks everything in – including light and **nothing** can get out.

The public education gangsters have taken the experience of a black hole a step farther on earth – destroying the lives of generations of our children.

And the spineless politicians seem to want to go along with these thieves to buy votes – their reelection being the most important issue in their respective lives.

It is time to remove the money from the public education gangsters and give it to those most concerned with the success of the children – the parents.

Thomas B. Wood
Eagle River, AK 99577
907.227.8844

Doniece Gott

From: Jennifer LeMay <jlemay@lemayengineering.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 9:45 AM
To: Jennifer LeMay
Subject: Please show your support of SJR9

Senator:

Please support SJR9. This bill will allow the voters (not special interest groups) to decide on what school is best for educating their children. As a concerned parent and Alaska super-voter, I am in full support of SJR9.

Sincerely,

Jennifer LeMay, PE, PMP

Doniece Gott

From: Peter Knox <peter.knox@suddenlink.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 7:18 AM
To: Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Fred Dyson; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Pete Kelly
Cc: Jim Minnery
Subject: Thank you for supporting SJR9

Senators -

I am a parent of 4 school age children who all attend a small private school in Anchorage. I am also a property owner who pays taxes. Therefore, I end up paying twice for the education of the younger generation. I am happy to do my part to contribute to a healthy education system in the state but perhaps this education system is better thought of as a "system of systems," which would include public, private, charter and vocational schools. Thought of in this way, the \$20000+ per year that I devote to my children's education IS my contribution to Alaska's educational "system of systems." But since I also pay taxes, which in part go to the public schools, I end up paying twice, which is frankly unfair. There appear to be two remedies: either reduce my taxes individually or provide me a school voucher. I would be content with either solution.

Thank you,
Peter Knox
Anchorage, AK

Sent from my iPad

Doniece Gott

From: Patrick LeMay <patrick.lemay@lemayengineering.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 12:42 PM
To: patrick.lemay@lemayengineering.com
Subject: Thank you for your support of SJR9

Senator:

Please support the constitutional amendment to expand educational opportunities and the school choice scholarship program. This bill will allow the voters (not special interest groups) to decide on what school is best for educating their children. As a concerned parent and Alaska super-voter, I am in full support of SJR9.

Sincerely,

Patrick M. LeMay, PE

President/CEO

LeMay Engineering & Consulting, Inc.

(907) 250-9038

Doniece Gott

From: Ronald Kruckenberg <namu@alaska.net>
nt: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 11:28 AM
S: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: School Choice

I just want to thank you for supporting so many of the citizens of Alaska. I am pleased to see you support SJR9 for School Choice. It is good to see representation for the people for a change. I expect this from you and that is why you were elected to work for us. We do not have a lobbyist and a lot of public school money talking for us. We Thank the Governor also for his State of the State speech. Please help get this accomplished.

My wife and I have three home schooled sons and we have been educating the kids since the beginning of their lives. We are the ones that have given all we can to our kids because it has been our responsibility as parents. It was our choice to have children. Now we need choice for our children. We need government to get out of the way and not hinder their education and give us a hand instead. All though we have two sons in UAA now and doing very well there seeking their careers, we have a twelve year old still here at home being schooled. We use A Beka Curriculum and it has a religious back ground and we are not funded for it because it uses God as a reference. It still does the job of teaching! It is not an easy curriculum to do. We as parents know that our kids learn because of us. And learn well they do! We as parents also want the best we can for our children, do you? Stand up and fight!

Doniece Gott

From: Lee Ann Kreig <leeann@kreig.com>
nt: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 4:35 PM
o: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Thank you for supporting SJR9!

Dear Senator Kelly,

Thank you for co-sponsoring SJR9. You are such a hero! I am so pleased with the governor's support and hope that it is enough to kick this bill through the goal posts!

Thank you!

Lee Ann Kreig

3818 Clay Products Dr.

Anchorage, AK 99517

Doniece Gott

From: Richard Carr <richcarr@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 12:05 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: thanks

Thank you so much for your co-sponsorship of S-jr9 school choice. Keep the good work up.

John Richard Carr-Wasilla

Doniece Gott

From: Tony Roof <firemanak@gmail.com>
nt: Monday, January 27, 2014 9:59 AM
Subject: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Anna.Fairclough@akleg.gov; Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov; Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov; Donny.Olson@akleg.gov; Click.Bishop@akleg.gov
please pass SJR9

Please think of our kids and the rights of the parent to have their kids taught right..

Thank you

Tony Roof
Fairbanks, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Lance Roberts <roberts.lance@gmail.com>
Content: Saturday, January 25, 2014 5:18 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Doug Isaacson; Rep. Eric Feige; Sen. John Coghil; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Rep. Pete Higgins; Sen. Pete Kelly; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Hopes for 2014 Session

Howdy All,

This is my list of stuff I hope you'll be able to do something about this session (only representing myself here). The big stuff was handled well last time, now we can get some other things done. There is no ordering here, except for the first one, which is the most important thing that can be done. I'll be down there the first week of February with the Chamber and hope to see you all then.

- In line with the Governor's education package, please let's get SJR9/HJR1 passed, so that the people can vote on whether to remove the prejudicial (was originally anti-catholic based) Blaine amendment from the state constitution. We already allow public funds through the performance scholarship to go to any school of the student's choice, so we should allow people to vote one whether we should line up our Constitution to the de-facto practice of the state.
- A huge need for the Borough to cut the upwards spiralling costs of Solid Waste (thanks to the Federal government regulations they have to work under) is to do large upgrades of the transfer sites and build some new ones. Way more important than turf fields.
- Please DO NOT support the bill to not allow texting at intersections and while waiting for trains to pass (which can easily be up to 10 minutes in Fairbanks). It's complete wrong for the government to be involved in that kind of regulation anyways, so we don't need to make it worse and just give the police more excuses to stop someone.
- Change the auto passing statute to allow exceeding the speed limit while passing. I can't think of something much more unsafe than trying to pass someone and keep under the speed limit, hanging you out in the left lane. This isn't just an imagined problem as I received a ticket for that exact cause this last year.
- DOT has taken the Dennis Road Bridge project off of their list because of lack of funding. This is an important infrastructure project for the interior, it needs \$11 million. The TIP# I have is 17545.
- Of course, I support moving the gasline and susitna projects forward.
- I do hope you'll at least get the general permitting part of HB77 through.
- PERS/TERS Termination Studies, please get rid of this whole concept, it's costing the municipalities too much
- Please re-implement the Regional Review Panels for Permanency Planning. There are too many horror stories of children being taken from their parents (without due process or reason) and then put in bad situations.

- Please at least release subdivisions of the state from Title 36, or at a bare minimum, Road Service projects. The costs of roads are just escalating.
- The statute suggested by the Borough, that would allow lots to get out of the Fire Service areas without an election, if they don't create a donut hole would really help. There are a lot of lots of here that have fire service taxes paid on them, but they don't get fire service and can't because they're either too far from the fire station or just empty land.
- It'd be nice to only allow property owners to vote in Road Service elections, currently all residents can vote even though they don't pay the taxes.
- Please get us out of the psuedo-Common Core standards that have been shown in other states to lower achievement and cost a ton of money.
- Please support the bill that would have the State fulfill its constitutionally mandated roll of funding education.
- Please allow vet care in the Bush without all of the stupid regulations that have stopped good men like Eric Jayne from doing animal care out there.

Thanks,

Lance Roberts

Doniece Gott

From: Maria Rensel <shapeitup2013@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2014 4:16 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Click Bishop
Subject: SJR -9

Dear Senate Finance

I'm writing in support of SJR 9; please schedule a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee; I am in favor of repealing the Blaine Amendment and would like your assistance in putting the question to the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Maria Rensel
Fairbanks, Alaska
907-455-7008
907-590-4164

Doniece Gott

From: mcanallycharles@yahoo.com
nt: Saturday, January 25, 2014 10:01 PM
: Sen. Pete Kelly

Dear Senator Kelly

I support SJR9 and request that you send the bill forward for a vote of the people.

Charley McAnally

Willow, Ak

Sent via the Samsung GALAXY S®4 Active™, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

Doniece Gott

From: Ray Kreig <ray@kreig.com>
nt: Saturday, January 25, 2014 9:46 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly
Subject: Yes to SJR9

Dear Senator Kelly

I support SJR9 and request that you send the bill forward for a vote of the people.
Ray Kreig

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Ray Kreig
RA Kreig & Associates
201 Barrow #1
Anchorage Alaska 99501-2429
(907) 276-2025 * fax: (907) 258-9614 * home: (907) 243-8951 * cell: (907) 360-7462
ray@kreig.com www.kreig.com
=====

Doniece Gott

From: Maria Rensel <shapeitup2013@gmail.com>
nt: Saturday, January 25, 2014 4:16 PM
to: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Click Bishop
Subject: SJR -9

Dear Senate Finance

I'm writing in support of SJR 9; please schedule a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee; I am in favor of repealing the Blaine Amendment and would like your assistance in putting the question to the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Maria Rensel

Fairbanks, Alaska

907-455-7008

907-590-4164

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Kevin Meyer
nt: Monday, February 03, 2014 8:16 AM
o: Doniece Gott
Subject: FW: SJR9 Testimony

He specifically requested his comments be added to the record for SJR9

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

From: Mike Coons [<mailto:mcoons@mtaonline.net>]
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2014 1:29 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Anna Fairclough; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Donny Olson
Subject: SJR9 Testimony

Please add the following into the Senate Finance Committee packet for SJR 9.

My name is Mike Coons I live on Lazy Mountain outside of Palmer and speaking as a Dual Retired Income No Kids citizen.

The following is from an part of an op ed by Joe Balyeat of which I will be quoting from or paraphrasing.

A flaw with the Blaine Amendments is the false narrative that such anti-religious prohibitions are somehow wise or prudent. Almost 70 years of American history prove repeatedly that religiously neutral student support is effective, efficient, and productive. The GI Bill aids veterans to attend the religious or secular school of their choice, I am a product of the same. Child care and development block grants provide government aid irrespective of the religious (or non-religious) affiliation of the child care institution, with similar positive results. Both federal and state child care tax credits subsidize parental choice of child care providers, regardless of the providers' religious affiliations. These are three examples of numerous government aid programs over 70 years that succeeded The \$64,000 question is this: If religiously neutral, competitive level playing fields are good for college programs, pre-school programs, after-school programs, and summertime programs, why isn't this also good for K-12 regular school programs? Here's why: None of these other programs have powerful government unions lobbying against them. That's the only difference. Our legislator's need to recognize that key fact and choose the best education potentials vs union interests and progressive ideology. Government union lobbyists need to step aside since their agenda has nothing to do with education, but rather teacher pay and benefits.

Mike Coons
Palmer AK
745-6779

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

Doniece Gott

From: Railroad Bob <railroad.bob@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2014 12:24 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SJR9

Hello,

I am contacting you to express support for the passage of SJR9, the School Choice bill that will allow the voters the choice on whether to amend the State Constitution to allow full school choice in Alaska. I strongly urge you to pass this bill to allow a vote by the people.

This is an important issue, very current in the possible effects, and very relative in allowing the people to express their choice at the voter's booth.

I will be unable to attend the hearing scheduled for Feb 3 at the LIO office in Fairbanks.

Please respond to confirm receipt.

Thank you,

Robert Davidson, Fairbanks

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Please read the note below. Thanks, Bob

Alaska - Land of the Individual and other Endangered Species

IMPORTANT: If you forward this e-mail, please select and delete the forwarding history, which includes my e-mail address.

It is a courtesy to me and others who do not wish to have their e-mail addresses sent all over the world.

If forwarding to more than one person, use the BCC: feature.

Deleting the history helps prevent Spammers from

"harvesting" addresses, and keeps viruses from being spread.

If you aren't sure how to do this, ask me.