

SB 139 /
SB 140
PUBLIC
TESTIMONY
(FILE 1)

<TARGET><BILL>SB 139</BILL><SUBJECT>SB 139-SB 140 PUBLIC
TESTIMONY (FILE 1)</SUBJECT><COMM>SFIN29</COMM></TARGET>



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of
Health and Social Services

ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING

P.O. Box 110693
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0693
Main: 907.465.3250
Fax: 907.465.1398

March 8, 2016

The Honorable Pete Kelly, Co-Chair
The Honorable Anna MacKinnon, Co-Chair
Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Rooms 518 & 516
Juneau, Alaska 99811-1182

**Subject: Support for Senior Benefits, Senior Community Based Grants, and Medicaid Adult Dental, SB 139
Department of Health and Social Services Operating Budget**

Dear Chair Kelly and Chair MacKinnon:

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) extends our sincere thanks and appreciation for the important work conducted by the Senate Finance Health and Social Services Budget Subcommittee on the FY17 operating budget for the Department of Health and Social Services. We **thank you** for considering a smaller 2.5% reduction for **Senior Community-Based Grants and the General Relief program** administered by Senior and Disabilities Services. We do understand and recognize the difficult decisions that you have been called upon to make. We want to take this opportunity to share with you how important programs such as Senior Benefits, Senior Community Based Grants, and Medicaid Adult Dental are for Alaska seniors in reducing the need for more expensive care. While targeted for funding reductions, these safety net services help seniors to maintain their health, independence, dignity, and ability to live at home and contribute to the well-being of their families and communities. We are concerned that reduced funding for these programs will have unintended consequences that may lead to increased utilization of more costly health and long-term care services thus straining the state's budget and, most importantly, compromising the health and welfare of Alaska's older people.

The **Alaska Senior Benefits Program**, administered by the Division of Public Assistance, provides a critical safety net for Alaskans age 65 and older who live on small fixed incomes. This program offers monthly cash benefits to more than 11,700 seniors statewide to help pay for life necessities including food, housing, heat, and prescribed medications. The average age is 76. The majority of recipients are women, many of whom may be widowed. The proposed budget reduction of **\$5,137,000** eliminates the third highest income category (175% federal poverty level) that provides the lowest amount of cash assistance and will impact 5,438 seniors. The loss of \$125 monthly for a person on a fixed income will make a significant difference in their purchase of nutritious food like fresh fruits and vegetables at the grocery store, being able to afford medications in the prescribed amounts, and keeping the thermostat at a comfortable level during the winter. Many low-income seniors lack cash reserves to pay for emergencies and the increased cost of living. Senior Benefits has proven to be an invaluable help for many older Alaskans who are most vulnerable to economic stresses.

Although a smaller funding reduction is being considered for the **Senior Community Based Grants Component**, these services are targeted for a funding decrement in the amount of **\$225,000**. Senior community-based grant programs provide services for seniors age 60 and older that include home-delivered meals, congregate meals, adult day services, respite for family caregivers, homemaker/chore services, transportation, services for people with traumatic brain injury, and the Aging and Disability Resource Centers. Senior Community Based Grant services serve the largest number of older people at the least cost so that seniors may remain in their homes and

communities, where they most desire to be, and provide support for their family caregivers. Senior Community Based Grant services target seniors with the greatest economic and social need. They also serve seniors with dementia and other vulnerable older people who do not meet the level of care for the Medicaid Alaskans Living Independently Waiver program. In SFY2015, 25,893 seniors (unduplicated count) received senior grant-funded services at an average annual cost of \$600 per person. These services, if provided at the right time, prevent the need for higher cost health and long-term care such as assisted living (\$68,430 annual cost per person) and nursing home care (\$281,415 annual cost per person) (Genworth Financial Cost of Care Survey 2015). In the long run, senior grant funded services save money for the State. We ask that you support the Governor's budget for these critical supports that help seniors to maintain their health and ability to live at home and out of higher cost care.

Adult Medicaid Dental Program, within the Division of Healthcare Services, is targeted for a General Fund reduction in the amount of \$3,161,700 and a consequential loss of \$2,882,700 of federal receipts. Medicaid Adult Dental is a Medicaid State Option service that was implemented in April 2007. This program assists many low-income seniors who live with a variety of painful, destructive dental problems who otherwise could not afford to pay for routine dental health care, such as dentures. Medicare does not cover the cost of most dental care for senior beneficiaries, including dentures. Dental pain and missing/decaying teeth often affect the dietary choices for seniors that may impact overall health. Studies have consistently shown the link between oral health and chronic disease. Older adults are at high risk for dental decay that has been associated with periodontal disease, diabetes, pneumonia, and cardiovascular disease including increased risk for stroke and vascular dementia. Those without dental coverage or a routine place for dental care and under distress may be forced to access care through hospital emergency departments at a significantly higher cost. In FY2015, 4,026 seniors age 60+ used Adult Medicaid Dental services.

Other budget reductions proposed include:

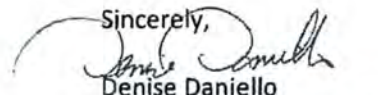
- **Personal Care Assistance (PCA)** (\$9 million, \$4.5 million GF and \$4.5 million federal receipts) that provide support for low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities who need assistance with activities of daily living (such as eating, bathing, dressing, toileting) and instrumental activities of daily living (shopping, cooking, light housework) to live in their own homes and communities. PCA served more than 4,000 vulnerable Alaskans in FY15 and this reduction could affect services for 447 individuals.
- **Alaska Pioneer Homes** (\$741,000) that will result in the elimination of 11 staff positions and reduce the number of residents who can be served, adding to the waitlist. The Pioneer Homes provide high quality residential care for 535 older Alaskans with an average age of 86 years. Fifty-eight percent of the Pioneer Home residents are diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

The Commission thanks the Senate Finance Committee for your generous support of senior programs over the years. Seniors are our parents, grandparents caring for grandchildren while their parents are making a living, and pioneers who developed the State many years ago. We appreciate your thoughtful re-examination of the consequences of these particular reductions and the impact on Alaska seniors. Please feel free to contact Denise Daniello, ACoA's Executive Director by phone (465-4879) or email (denise.daniello@alaska.gov) for further information. Thank you for your service to Alaska!

Sincerely,


Mary E. Shields
Chair, Alaska Commission on Aging

Sincerely,


Denise Daniello
ACoA Executive Director

Cc: Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Mike Dunleavy
Senator Donald Olson

Senator Click Bishop
Senator Lyman Hoffman

Doniece Gott

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 7:27 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Alaska's Budget

Dear Senators, as a lifelong Alaskan I wanted to convey my opinion of Alaska's current budget situation. The current oil slump has greatly affected Alaska's yearly income, and as such is starting to slump the economy. What we as the population yearn for more than anything else is economic stability. Being that Alaska has extremely limited private industry (healthcare and then grocery stores make up the first 4 of the top private employers in Alaska), the oil companies are also downsizing, which leaves the remaining spending to the government, which has also begun downsizing. I can attest that at the Dept. of Law we have already begun shuttering remote offices, cutting employees and freezing spending and hiring. Just as importantly, small businesses which service state government agencies are having a proportional impact. Just this week, I've worked with a local cleaning company and AC repair company to service our Anchorage datacenter, I spoke to both of them regarding their revenue base and they admitted they will likely start layoffs when the state tightens it budget further, since departments are starting to forgo all but extremely necessary costs. The boom/bust cycle is very dysfunctional to operate under both with government as a service and living day to day as a state resident.

I would like you to seriously consider Gov. Walker's plan to close the budget gap. Frankly it's hard to see those around me, including some family members lose their jobs with few if any job alternatives in state due to its limited industries, forcing them to move and maybe come back when the bust cycle ends. Creating a more stable and consistent government budget is in the best interest of all Alaskans, and the permanent fund among other things is an obvious choice to achieve this. Polling last and this year show it to be well supported. Please consider this email during future hearings regarding the state budget.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Comments to the Senate Finance Committee
RE: SB 139

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the formulation of the State's budget. These are most challenging times, and I appreciate the time and effort taken in considering all the complexities this daunting task entails.

As a member of Alaska Municipal League's Sustainability Committee, the most important message to impart is that we understand as Alaskans that we are in this together, and expect the legislature will adopt the same spirit as you move forward. Pet projects, special bonuses, favored locations and desired perks have to go by the wayside. Americans have persevered through rationed food and rationed gasoline before. We know how to live with tough choices, banking on a brighter future. Let's not be afraid to consider the very hard decisions now, and be willing to make conscious trade-offs for desired short-term outcomes that strengthen our long-range outlook.

Many communities around the state will ask what you can do for them without also providing an understanding of the efforts they have taken to brace for a leaner future. As Vice-Mayor for my community, I have been a part of municipal efforts to channel funding into deferred maintenance, seeking to self-fund as much of our operations as possible. We have held the line on hiring new positions, promoting from within. We have cut hours of operation for some functions. We have utilized our own funding to address facility condition issues in recognition that capital improvement funding is not likely to be forthcoming. This includes funding for a desperately needed police station remodel to keep the building from falling in on itself, and to meet federal and state requirements, improve utility efficiency, and make necessary technology upgrades to keep our phones and computers functioning and to better serve the public.

We have done our best to piggy back municipal projects onto state projects to save mobilization costs. We have sought Federal funding, where possible, to improve harbor conditions and maintain facilities for the fishing sector that is the largest part of our local economy. Despite increasing school enrollment, we have not increased positions within the school and have even replaced our retired Superintendent from within.

Our community, which enjoys a fair amount of amenities for a small population, engages in aggressive fund-raising, volunteer labor and local taxation in the form of a sales tax and transient room taxes to support these amenities, including a non-profit museum, a non-profit children's center, public radio, Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center, domestic violence response organization, non-profit mental health organization, medical center foundation, community foundation, meal program for seniors, Friends of the Library group, multiple sports organizations for youth and adults and more. We have, and continue to look at ways of combining organization efforts for efficiencies and cost-savings.

Today I am asking that you consider some of these suggestions for the development of the State budget, in that same spirit of efficiency and cooperation. I will start with suggestions for items to be cut from the budget:

Alaska LNG Project - the difficulties with this project have been evident for some time. While a laudable long-term goal in theory, for the present, this project should be put on hold. The success of this project seems highly speculative, is very expensive, and comes with some

environmental challenges that require a singular focus to achieve. The timing simply isn't right. Putting this project on hold should not jeopardize reviving it in the future.

New Anchorage LIO - This just does not pass the "red face" test with the public, and we cannot afford it. The Department of Revenue financial analysis does not support the continued use of this facility over use of the Atwood Building.

Performance Bonuses - I am certain many state employees will more than earn their pay and deserve bonuses over the next few budget cycles. However, this is not the time to be issuing bonuses while others are losing jobs due to lack of funding. There are \$6 million in bonuses spelled out in this budget that need to be eliminated for the present budget cycle. In addition, all performance bonuses should be suspended in the short-term, whether or not identified by line item. This doesn't mean the people of Alaska don't value the work and commitment of state employees, only that bonuses are a luxury we cannot currently afford.

ADOT & PF Projects - There are a number of high-visibility, high controversy projects proposed around the State of questionable benefit, and are incurring a drain on staff time and funding by continuing to attempt to promote them. These projects include the Knik Arm Bridge, the Juneau Access Road and the Kake-Petersburg Road among others.

In the case of the Juneau Access Road, it does not even provide direct access to the community, and will be reliant on declining road maintenance funding and a ferry system that has been challenging to use at best. If built, Juneau is woefully unprepared financially and otherwise to deal with increased traffic, parking needs, water and sanitation demands, impacts to law enforcement and emergency response at a time when anticipated state job losses are going to challenge Juneau's fiscal ability to deal with such demands. Any further funds spent on this project are money down the drain with no appreciable benefit.

Similarly, the Kake-Petersburg Road is a project in search of a purpose. The project was finally determined by ADOT's hired consultants to not to meet the purpose and need for the project after years of analysis, extensive resident input and significant expenditures. . .and even after employing McDowell telephone surveys that were not much more than push polls (as an elected official I have received a number of complaints regarding this). It is not only controversial and unwanted, but the construction is unfunded, as well. Yet, instead of putting this \$40 million project to bed, ADOT is trying to re-invent it. It will provide no benefit. We cannot afford it. Though the original intent was to bring some economic opportunity to our area, these are funds that could be used to higher purpose elsewhere. As the popular song advises, "Let it go. . ."

The Knik Arm Bridge is not a necessary investment and does not pass any reasonable cost-benefit analysis. There is credible information to show the costs of the project have been significantly underestimated. At this critical time we need to focus on existing infrastructure and health and safety over new, divisive and questionable projects that don't have a clear, identified future payoff. Getting to work faster is not enough of a reason to build a project of this magnitude.

The Alaska Marine Highway system has proven benefit to communities throughout the coastal areas, and has been shown to have an economic reach even in Anchorage despite it not being a

ferry destination. Shift some of the proposed wasteful mega-project funds into finally maintaining and improving service and infrastructure for an existing and critical transportation system that serves thousands of miles of coastal Alaska and the numerous communities, commerce, and the residents located there.

State transportation funding needs to be more predictable, and support ALL modes of transportation, not just roads. Future likelihood of state funding for maintenance also needs to play a bigger part in determining whether or not a project moves forward. Shifting costs to local governments is not the solution to transportation funding challenges, especially as we anticipate both significant cuts in State contributions and additional burdens being passed along by the State.

Areas of funding that need to be strengthened:

Alaska Marine Highway System - the State has mismanaged this system and missed revenue opportunities for years. No, it will not be a self-funded system, but neither are our roads. A number of analyses have shown the ferry system to have benefit to Alaskans beyond the coastal communities. Can we stop debating the value of a necessary and unique transportation link and finally start managing it according to the State's mandate to provide transportation services across Alaska? As the State looks at divestiture of airports around Alaska, barge costs spike and Essential Air Service funding faces threats, small communities have grave concerns about our ability to move residents, visitors, construction equipment and supplies, business operations and students between communities and opportunities. This is an economic and quality of life issue that needs your serious attention.

Municipal Revenue Sharing - While the State promotes maximum self-governance at the local level, communities are necessarily dependent on municipal revenue sharing to provide citizens with basic services. As I mentioned at the outset, our community works to spend our funding responsibly. We have continued to strive to keep budgets reasonably lean without creating unacceptable impacts to service delivery. Our auditors have commented that Petersburg is better positioned than many Alaskan communities, and has obviously looked to the future in designing and implementing fiscal policy. Some reliability in revenue sharing helps us weather the tough times, and is necessary to keep and attract residents to our communities.

PERS/TRS Unfunded Liability - Problems with the State's accounting and inaccurate information provided to municipalities has helped create this liability. Though we recognize that we will have a hand in solving the problem, the State needs to be prudent in not shifting an unreasonable amount of the burden to local government, especially in view of the other impacts of cost shifting and program reduction or elimination.

Public Broadcasting - I was encouraged today to listen to the House Finance Committee discuss HB 256, on Gavel to Gavel as it so happens. Despite Rail Belt cynicism that this public service is unnecessary, I have lived in communities both large and small in Alaska, from Anchorage to Yakutat. Public broadcasting is an important component of life in all those locations. I was encouraged that today the House committee passed Amendment 11 to HB 256 reinstating funding for public broadcasting. Even so, this doesn't represent extravagance. Our local station KFSK notes that on average, the funding for public broadcasting has remained

essentially flat since 1999. Our local station has ramped up their fundraising in the past couple years in response to budget challenges, which has been somewhat controversial among other local non-profits. We recognize we have a small pool to dip into, and support for non-profits is not bottomless. Nevertheless, KFSK enjoys a good reputation and utilizes extensive volunteer help to stretch dollars, provides local, regional and statewide connections, local and marine weather for mariners and others, and serves as our emergency broadcast system for everything from terror threats to tsunamis. It broadcasts school board and assembly meetings, as well.

Health and Social Services - Though a large portion of the budget, do be aware that there are already some unintended impacts to budget reductions. I recently ran into an itinerant youth parole officer, whose position requires visiting the small communities of southern Southeast Alaska to engage in youth intervention and program management. I was surprised to learn her position was in HSS rather than the Dept. of Corrections. When HSS eliminated travel, they essentially and unintentionally eliminated her ability to do her job. Thankfully it got sorted out but is an example of unintended effects.

I believe that a combination of new taxes, exclusive of a state sales tax, and caps to the Permanent Fund Dividend will be among the necessary steps to balance the State's budget. As you work through the options available to you, I ask that you be creative, honest, non-partisan, cautious and realistic in crafting solutions. I am particularly concerned that choices made now will drive Alaska toward a recession. Please keep in mind the cumulative and unintended consequences to municipalities of any decisions that you make.

Thank you for your commitment to Alaska and the dedication to her service at this most challenging time.

Cindi Lagoudakis
Petersburg, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Bob Shavelson <bob@inletkeeper.org>
t: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 9:41 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: State Operating Budget Comments

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee -

Cook Inletkeeper is a public interest organization dedicated to protecting wild salmon and water quality throughout the Cook Inlet watershed. Please accept these brief comments on behalf of Inletkeeper and its 1200 members and supporters throughout southcentral Alaska on the State Operating Budget.

Alaska's failure to diversify its economy is now playing out in the fiscal crisis before us, and it's clear we must look at all possible options to raise revenues and cut expenses. We all must sacrifice if we hope to maintain the basic services Alaskan's deserve while protecting the corpus of the Permanent Fund.

One of the largest expenditures to the state is oil and gas tax credits. In Cook Inlet, with low or no production taxes, corporate taxes and royalties do not come close to erasing the massive tax credits the industry enjoys. In this time of fiscal crisis, it only makes sense to reduce these subsidies and to allow the free market to operate freely.

At the same time, mining taxes have not been changed for decades, and the mining industry too should pay its fair share.

I know the sentiments expressed above are an active part of the discussions in Juneau, but as you consider further cuts to the agencies that protect our invaluable fish and game resources, I hope you will hear the many voices calling for a level playing field with our corporate partners.

Thank you,

Bob Shavelson

Cook Inletkeeper
P.O. Box 3269
3734 Ben Walters Lane
Homer, AK 99603
p. 907.235.4068 x22
f. 907.235.4069
c.907.299.3277
skype: inletkeeper
bob@inletkeeper.org

Love Cook Inlet? Make an extra gift to [Cook Inletkeeper](#) when you [PICK.CLICK.GIVE](#). Or [donate online](#). Together we can protect Alaska's Cook Inlet watershed.

Doniece Gott

From: Beverly Mulcahy <bevalaska@yahoo.com>
From: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 9:43 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: State Budget Comments

I am a born and raised Alaskan and have lived here all my life - more than 60 years. I support using new revenue and the PFD to help with the fiscal challenges. I also support a sunset clause on an income tax and sales tax once the State maintains a sustainable budget. I support trimming the current budget through pay decreases to state employees earning more than \$100,000 per year. I also support decreases to the legislators, their staff, and especially their per diem and travel allotments.


Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Lynn Spence <lspence@jaybrant.com>
At: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 9:37 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget

Dear Senators,

It is my belief that we need an income tax. I am a working person and plan to work at least 7 years at my full time job. My husband who is 69 years old is also still working full time. We have lived in Alaska for 35 years and we have enjoyed the improved public services provided through the State and Federal government. Since we live in a small enough community to also see the hardship many families endure due to economic issues, lack of health care, and lack of supervision for their children while they work, we believe social services, basic health care and child care subsidized by gov't programs make our community better and safer for all of us. I don't think you can cut enough out of the current budget without seriously impacting the quality of life for all of us. Please do not balance the budget on the backs of the poor, mentally ill or disabled. Please take serious action like instituting an income tax. For those of us who have good jobs, the system is working and I believe an income tax is appropriate. This is not a new idea. You only have to look at the other states to see that income tax is one successful way to increase revenue for the State to provide for the greater good of the people.

 Thank you.

Lynn Spence

Homer, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Susan McHenry <simchenry@alaska.edu>
At: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 9:23 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Multi-faceted approach to budget crisis

Thank you for your service to the citizens of Alaska during this time of very difficult decision-making. As a 50 year resident and a UAF graduate and former employee, I urge you to turn away from the plan of severe, devastating cuts to the institution that builds our work force and informed citizenry and to other state agencies that provide essential services. We can NOT cut our way out of this extreme budget dilemma.

Please pursue the plan to institute an income tax and a school tax so non-residents can contribute to our revenue stream. I am in favor of capping the PFD and restructuring how the savings account is used to provide a long term plan to fund our operations. Adjustments to gas and oil tax credits are also appropriate.

Please do not cripple the state school system and our health and human services operations with additional severe cuts.

I remember reading JFK's Profiles in Courage during high school and I feel that source of inspiration could be helpful to all of you who have to make these wrenching decisions now. Thank you.

Sue McHenry
3200 Edby Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Doniece Gott

From: Beth Cherry <bcherry@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 9:13 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Operating Budget Thoughts

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate Finance Committee –

I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit my thoughts about the current budget. I appreciate your efforts at involving as many Alaskan as possible in the process. This is a huge challenge I acknowledge.

I am a resident of the Matanuska Susitna Borough and have been since 2003. I live in the 9th district and am represented in the House by Jim Clover and in the Senate by Mike Dunleavy. The priority for the state must be reducing the size and scope of government. We have grown a government the State of Alaska cannot afford nor do we need. By most accounts it's cost is close to \$6,000 for every man, woman, and child in the state. It is simply not sustainable. At this moment I am not convinced that the legislature or the governor have seriously addressed right-sizing the state government to meet the basic obligations of government. The recent news story about the "found money" does nothing to bolster my confidence in the legislature or the governor's office that either have the will, skills or the ability to manage the finances of the state.

From my seat in the house, the proposed budget "cuts" are a start, not an end point. The rush to new revenue sources and "restructure" the permanent fund needs to be considered ONLY after every other avenue has been exhausted. If I sound cynical when I observe the call for new revenues and tapping into the Permanent Fund is a careful and well-orchestrated plan by wealthy and well-heeled interests, I am! The prize has always been finding a conduit into the permanent fund. The Governor's suggestion that that the state enter into an arbitrage arrangement as a revenue source makes me shudder. The plan to publically finance a gas pipeline is another example. As cynical as it may sound, I have little confidence in the governor's office and, my confidence in the representatives of the people is fast diminishing, that the Alaska can get its financial house in order and the permanent fund protected. I understand the pressure from lobbyists is strong and that cuts to the budget will be painful, but I encourage you and your colleagues to stand strong. Make the cuts and be honest. Be straight with Alaskans. It is going to hurt. There is no doubt about that. There is an adage that says "Bad news doesn't get any better with age" and the time for whistling past the graveyard has come and gone.

Alaska survived the oil price crash in the 80's through sheer determination and it can survive again if, and only if, there is a confidence AND a sense of shared sacrifice. Several plans have been offered, the one I most favor is the ISER plan. In order to make it work, there needs to be cuts to the operating budget and capital budget. Take those steps first. Then we can talk about the "new revenue" sources.

Bring the budget down to at least \$4.5B –effectively to 2006 level- then look to the Earning Reserve to fill immediate budget gaps BEFORE engaging the feeding frenzy of "tax and loot". fund. I note that the Permanent

Fund is NOT state money but funds owned by the CITIZENS of the State of Alaska and held in TRUST by the state.


Respectively,

Bryan Cherry

Fishhook



Alaska Center for
Resource Families
790-4246
www.acrf.org

Assoc. for the Education
of Young Children
789-1235
www.aeyc-sea.org

AWARE
586-6623
www.awareak.org

Bartlett Beginnings
796-8424
www.bartletthospital.org

Coast Guard Work-Life
463-2125

Communities in Schools
364-3801
www.cisjuneau.org

**Juneau Family Health &
Birth Center**
586-1203
www.juneaubirthcenter.org

**Juneau Public Health
Center**
465-3353

Juneau Public Libraries
586-5249
www.juneau.org/library

Juneau School District
463-1700
www.juneauschools.org

Juneau Youth Services
789-7610, 789-4733
www.jys.org

**SERRC
Learning Connection**
586-5718
www.serrc.org

Office of Children's Services
465-1650
dhss.alaska.gov/ocs

REACH
586-8228
www.reachak.org

SEARHC
463-4040
www.searhc.org

Tlingit & Haida Head Start
586-1432
www.ccthita.org/services/
family/headstart

United Way Southeast
463-5530
www.unitedwayseak.org

March, 2016

Dear Honorable Policymakers,

I am writing in behalf of the Partnerships for Families and Children (PFC), a group of 20 non-profit and state agencies who work together to promote a seamless web of support for young children and their families in Juneau. We are committed to assuring that all families have access to resources to support their children. We recognize that we must all work together the support families with young children in our community. We are writing in support of House Concurrent resolution No. 21 introduced by Representative Tarr urging Governor Bill Walker to join with the Alaska State Legislative to respond to public and behavioral healthy epidemic of adverse childhood experiences (ACES) by establishing a statewide policy and providing programs to address this epidemic. We are also writing in support of Governor Walker's budget to provide funding of early learning programs including Best Beginnings, Infant Learning Programs, Imagination Library, Parents as Teachers, and the Pre K programs that help support young children and their families to mitigate some of the adverse childhood experiences.

There has been much national attention on ACES and awareness that Alaska leads the nation with individuals having 4 or more aces and 30 % of all Alaska Natives having experienced 4 or more ACES. We know this can lead to toxic stress and alarming poor health outcomes. We must continue the work in Alaska to address this public health crisis now. We must all work together to build a statewide network that connects state and local leaders and organizations to inform policy change at all levels. This includes but not limited education of all health care professionals, screening all children, improving access to healthcare including mental and behavioral health for all families, and providing the necessary resources to those children and families identified. The State of Washington has developed a state wide toolkit to address ACES at many levels.

We must invest in our most valuable resource- the children of Alaska. This includes supporting the Resolution No. 21 and the Governor's budget supporting early childhood programs including Best Beginnings, Imagination Library, Infant Learning Programs, Parents as Teachers, and the Pre K programs.

We urge you to adopt this resolution and invest in the future of Alaska by supporting the budget for early learning programs. The research is clear that this is the best public investment with lifelong returns.

Sincerely,

Beverly Ingram
Chair of the Medical and Behavioral Health Committee
Partnerships for Families and Children

Mission Statement: Partnerships for Families & Children works collaboratively to promote shared broad-based communication and support for young children and their families.

3100 Channel Drive, Suite 215 ♦ Juneau, Alaska 99801 ♦ www.juneaufamilies.org ♦ 907.789.1235 ♦ 888.785.1235

Doniece Gott

From: Liz Downing <eadowning@gmail.com>
Time: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 9:02 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Rep. Paul Seaton; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: FY 17 Operating Budget

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to ask you to include full funding of the Governor's proposed education budget including a \$50 increase to the Base Student Allocation. The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District has made significant cuts to staffing at all levels as well as other operational funds over the last few years. The only place to cut now is in the classroom further reducing the options available to our students.

I remember education budget cuts 10-15 years ago and the impact they had. My son's kindergarten had 28 students (19 boys) and I saw family after family move Outside to Ohio, Vermont, and New York to improve opportunities for their children. Our current financial situation will already be creating flight from Alaska. Let's not add to it by chasing away our families who would otherwise be able to help us weather this storm.

I know you are facing difficult decisions and I trust you will take the long view by supporting those efforts, like education, that grow Alaska's future.

Thank you,

 Downing

Doniece Gott

From: Karen <kshemet@sproutalaska.org>
t: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 8:58 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Early Childhood funding

Good Morning,

Please fund Early Childhood programs like Best Beginnings, Parents as Teachers, Imagination Library and Pre-K education and home visiting programs in general because the state of Alaska has major problems that can be addressed through providing a good start in life.

The return on this investment is huge and benefits the whole of society. University of Chicago economist James J. Heckman points to a 7-10 percent annual return on investment in high quality preschool.

Alaska needs more attention paid to one of our most vulnerable populations, young children, not less!!

Please do what you can to fund vital early childhood programs!!!!

Thanks for your attention and good work,

Karen Shemet

Sprout Family Visitor

3691 Ben Walters Lane #4

Homer, Alaska 99603

kshemet@sproutalaska.org

Ph: 907 235-6044

Fax: 907-235-2644



Lovalaska

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Doniece Gott

From: Gareth Chesley <gareth.chesley@gmail.com>
At: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 8:31 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Cut to University of Alaska Funding

Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I have been following the ongoing budget process and have become deeply concerned over the proposed \$25 million cut to the University of Alaska's state funding.

UA has played a large role in my life. As I high school student I took classes at my local community campus in order to graduate early and get a head start on college. I attended the University of Alaska Fairbanks and earned Bachelors and Masters Degrees from that institution in addition to working as a teaching assistant during my graduate years. Currently, I am employed by the same University of Alaska Anchorage community college campus where I took my first college classes as a high school student. My primary role as a staff member is student and staff technology support and I also teach as a member of the adjunct faculty. To say that UA has had a profound effect on this lifelong, second generation Alaskan is an understatement.

My motivation for writing, however, does not stem from my own personal investment with the University. As a staff member of a community campus I have seen, time and time again, the first hand effect that we can have to change people's lives for the better. Most of these individuals do not have the same privileges, such as being able to move to pursue a multi-year education, which I had. For many, the community college is their only option to start a path toward a better education, a better job, or a better life.

I wholeheartedly support fiscal responsibility and understand the need for budget cuts. I personally chose to live a life where I have no debt of any kind (I worked hard to pay for and earn my college education, house, etc.) and I abhor the thought of our state spending beyond its means. I believe that the University must do its part in reducing the state budget. That being said, I think that magnitude of the current cut is short sighted in light of the role that the University plays across the state.

At a community campus many of our departments are comprised of a single individual. The lion's share of our budget is devoted to human resources and if we cut a staff member we stand to have an incredibly significant loss, like having no heat or light, having no computer support, having no student advising, having no testing center, having no learning center. Loss of any one of these services compromises our ability to help our Alaskan community. Failure to provide education and opportunity to the next generation of the Alaskan workforce will have a long term, deleterious effect on the economy of Alaska. After all, without oil revenue how are we supposed to rebuild our state without the opportunity to reeducate ourselves?



Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Anna MacKinnon
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 8:26 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: budget

Kristen Pratt
Legislative Aide
Office of Senator Anna MacKinnon
Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol | Room 516
(907) 694-8944

From: Lance Roberts [mailto:roberts.lance@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 7:20 AM
Subject: budget

To Senate Finance:

I won't be able to make public testimony today, so I hope you'll consider these comments.

I'm happy about those sub-committee's that went further than the House in cutting the Governor's budget. I'm disappointed in those sub-committee's that raised the amount. We desperately need to make substantial cuts this session, or there will be too much pressure on taxes and PFD cuts (the worst kind of taxes). It's been shown how devastating cutting the private economy to prop up the government economy will be on Alaska. We need to keep out of the mindset that government is somehow more enlightened to spend our money than we are.

One thing all sides agree on is that we need more economic diversity. Propping up a government that we let balloon will not give us anymore diversity, just more of the same onerous regulations and overreach. Diversity comes through the private sector and the free market, and to make that happen, private individuals need capital to invest and spend.

Please lead my making substantial cuts. The ISER/Goldsmith model, the only plan that doesn't involve new taxes or PFD cuts, is currently around \$4.3 B for a sustainable budget. I think the goal of \$4.5 B is probably sufficient to get to for this year. Please make it happen.

thanks,

Lance Roberts
Fairbanks
(speaking for myself)

Doniece Gott

From: Rick Hinkey <rhinkey@accessalaska.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 8:21 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Doug Toelle
Subject: Proposed Cuts

Finance Committee,

Thank you so much for all the hard work you do to ensure that Alaska is a viable place to live for those who are some of the most vulnerable. We know that given the fiscal situation FY 17 cuts could easily go deeper.

My name is Rick Hinkey and I have worked in the Human Services field for over 20 years, many of those serving vulnerable adults and those experiencing disabilities and at times cuts were necessary, or at the time it seemed that they were.

When economies flounder, the well-being of many social service recipients also flounders due to the increased stress of dealing with the fallout. In other words, cuts to social service programs tend to happen when the need for those services is often at its greatest. I know, because I was a social service recipient for most of my formative years. Any cutback had huge impact on every family in the community.

Cutting personal care assistance (PCA) services by 10% (\$9 million) could very well threaten the safety of many elder or disabled Alaskans. PCA services provide support for seniors and individuals with disabilities who need assistance with activities of daily living (such as eating, bathing, dressing, transferring, and toileting) as well as instrumental activities of daily living (including shopping, cooking, laundry, and light housework) to live in their own homes and communities. Vulnerable Alaskans who receive these services are also low-income and do not have the capacity to pay for the services needed to be able to remain in their own home or community. PCA services are provided through two different models that include "agency-based PCA" and "consumer-directed PCA."

- PCA served more than 4,000 vulnerable Alaskans in FY15. The FY17 proposed reduction could reduce services for 447 individuals.
- PCA serves individuals in their home and community, where most people want to be, rather than a nursing home, which costs more.
- Federal Law requires that PCA services be provided for individuals whose needs meet a nursing home level of care.

Currently I serve this growing demographic through Access Alaska where our vision is to see every Alaskan have the opportunity to live as independently as possible in the community of their own choosing. Our senior population alone is growing faster than most places in the nation so any cut will be magnified by the growing need for PCA services.

Please support full funding for Personal Care Assistance in order to serve vulnerable Alaskans at home and in their communities.

Sincerely,

Rick Hinkey

MDiv, MNA

CDPCS Statewide Director



526 Gaffney Rd. Suite 100

Fairbanks, AK 99701

907.479.7940 Fax: 907.474.4052

Be part of the movement: Make change.

Please think of Access Alaska when you Pick. Click. Give.

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Doniece Gott

From: Richard Laura Inglima <inglimadl@gmail.com>
Int: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 8:21 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BUDGET HEARINGS

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Between the two us us, we include a lifetime Alaskan and a 42 year resident of Alaska. We were in Alaska before construction of the Alaska Pipeline and long before the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend. We've been here to witness profligate spending as if it would never end and the years of handing over most of the reigns and benefits of OUR OIL resources to the Oil Companies that conveniently forget that it is Alaskan's oil.

In an article concerning Louisiana, we find similarities to Alaska's assumptions regarding fossil fuels and a hope we can learn from Louisiana's mistakes.

"Declining oil prices have forced Alaska to cut \$1 billion in spending from its budget over the last two years. Now it faces a \$4 billion deficit.

Instead of just relying on a short-term, unreliable, and polluting industry, states such as Louisiana [and Alaska] need to diversify into industries that draw on human capital — whether it's computer programming or solar panel manufacturing — and can provide a more stable source of revenue. Microchip prices don't fluctuate wildly. And the high-tech sector doesn't just fall apart when demand slackens for current products; companies innovate new ones. Louisiana can't innovate its way out of its current problem by inventing a new fossil fuel that just happens to be under its feet.

Perhaps, instead of cutting taxes and education spending, [Louisiana] should have invested in a more educated workforce." - Ben Adler, Grist

While the ideas of computer programming or solar panel manufacturing may not be realistic industries for Alaska, we are certain there are other industries and renewable resources that can be tapped for Alaska's benefit.

We believe the primary answers to addressing Alaska's budget shortfall are instituting an income tax and capping the Permanent Fund Dividend. We do not want to take these steps, any more than anyone else does. But we see the two ideas working in tandem for residents: retaining the Permanent Fund Dividend at a level that should provide most families the ability to cover the amount of income tax, allowing Alaskans to remain unscathed by the tax. However, this would provide income to Alaska by non-resident workers who benefit by working in the state and have so far, given nothing in return for this privilege. We also would like to see the reintroduction of an Education Tax. Back in the day, we Alaskans paid a very modest \$20 tax per person to benefit education funding (serving to invest in "a more educated workforce"). We suggest that, considering inflation, a currently modest amount of \$50 per person Education Tax be re-instituted.

Respectfully,

Richard & Laura Inglima
60210 Bear Creek Dr
Eggen, AK 99603

Doniece Gott

From: Josiah Holbrook <josiah.holbrook@gmail.com>
nt: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 8:11 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Josiah Holbrook budget testimony

Hello,

My name is Josiah Holbrook. I'm a hard working Alaskan and my wife and I live in Delta Junction with our two children. Regarding the state budget problem, the proposal to ad tax and cut and cap the PFD would be a huge burden on my family. I work hard to provide for my family and make a living. I know I speak for countless Alaskan's like myself when I say this: The programs and projects that must be cut in order to maintain the state budget, are going to be a much smaller sacrifice than the burden of a state tax and (or) capping the PFD. I and countless other Alaskans urge the Senate and House to be aggressive in cutting spending so that the state budget can be met without burdening us hard working Alaskans. We love this great state but it can be a challenge to make a living. Don't make it harder with a state tax or changes to the PFD.

Thank you

Josiah Holbrook
josiah.holbrook@gmail.com
(907)803-9424

Doniece Gott

From: Tully LaBelle-Hamer <blabellehamer@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 8:05 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: AK State Operating Budget

To the members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am a voter from Anchorage, and I understand the tough position that you are currently in as we face the budget deficit. I urge you to seek a comprehensive, long term plan that rises above party politics and creates solutions for Alaska's future.

I believe this plan includes new taxes, restructuring of the dividend, and surgical cuts to current programs.

While crafting the budget, please keep in mind that the lowest income citizens of our state may likely be hit hardest by potential solutions.

Please protect education and the future of our state. This includes the UA system and K-12 education in urban as well as rural areas. Alaska educators face a host of problems unique to the state, and to ensure a great future for ALL Alaskans they need your support.

Please do not get caught up in hard line party politics instead reach out and work together with other members of the senate. We are all Alaskans. We pride ourselves on being rugged, independent minded and solution driven. We need leaders who set a good example of creating workable solutions during tough economic times. We elected you to lead us and help us direct our great state. Please come through for us and lead Alaska toward a great future for this great state.

Sincerely,

Brendan Tully LaBelle-Hamer
Anchorage, AK

Doniece Gott

From: neil waggoner <akneil@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 8:03 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: State Budget

Dear Alaska Senate Finance Committee,

As you know Alaska is at a crossroads and faces a dire fiscal situation. As a 35 year old lifelong Alaskan who intends to stay here for the rest of my life, this is very concerning to me.

The time is now to set our state up for success in the future. Further cuts to education funding will lead to a less educated population, which will put us behind in the new technology driven world. Your decisions will directly impact the future lifestyle of my generation and the future generations.

According to documents from Representative Neumann, after budget cuts last session we are back to state spending levels of 1977 when adjusted for inflation. We cannot cut further without putting our state into a deep recession. Per a recent ISER report, each \$100 Million cut from the operating budget will result in the loss of 1,600 jobs. Some in the Legislature are calling for further cuts of \$500-\$700 Million, which could result in over 10,000 job losses.

- Please work to develop a sustainable budget for the sake of Alaska's children THIS session.
- I support plans for obtaining new sources of revenue, including income taxes, reducing the PFD, and a variety of other taxes.
- I support a broad-based approach to make sure that costs of state government are shared by all, including tourists and workers coming to Alaska from out of state.

I AM WILLING TO PAY FOR THE STATE SERVICES I RECEIVE.

Education Funding

School districts across Alaska have had to make significant cuts in staff and teachers since 2011, and the governor's proposed education budget represents a \$116 Million reduction vs 2015.

- Please prioritize education funding.
- Please make sure education funding keeps up with inflation, starting with the increases in the Base Student Allocation established in HB 278 two years ago.
- This year's increase in the BSA will be \$50, which will help keep teachers in the classroom as costs rise.

Pre-K Education

- Please restore Pre-K education funding, which was cut in the Governor's proposed budget.
- Study after study has shown that Pre-K public education is a huge cost savings to society.
- Pre-K education allows children to enter school ready to learn, and they are much more likely to begin to read at grade level.
- They are also more likely to graduate from high school, get jobs, and become contributing members of society

Thanks for your work for Alaska, please do not cut services so much that job losses send us further into a recession, lead to people struggling, and end up with a less well prepared and educated next generation.

Sincerely,
Neil Waggoner, PE

Doniece Gott

From: LIO Mat-Su
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 7:59 AM
Subject: FW: budget suggestions

From: Shonti Elder [mailto:elderfrey@gci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 10:23 PM
To: LIO Mat-Su <LIO.Mat-Su@akleg.gov>
Subject: budget suggestions

As a Valley resident for the past few decades, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to seriously evaluate a way to balance our budget.

Right now, I'm afraid that your cuts are too deep. We need to restore pre K education, and continue to prioritize education, health and social services. We also need to consider quality of life issues such as supporting public broadcasting, which is the most important emergency and news source for many of Alaska's villages.

I'm willing to pay state income taxes to continue our quality of life here. I'm willing to have a smaller dividend, in order to balance our budget, but the dividend shouldn't be cut too drastically all at once because poor Alaskans depend on it.

I advocate reducing the oil tax credits. The world doesn't need us to pay the oil companies to explore for more oil. We need that money to support other worthy causes.

I'm against sales taxes because they are a regressive tax that hurts the poor too much. It's time to add a progressive state income tax, that would also capture money from the many out-of-state oil workers who use our infrastructure without paying anything at all for it.

Please consider a healthy balance of cuts and additional taxes. Thank you for your consideration.

(What email address can I use to reach all of the Alaskan legislators?)

Doniece Gott

From: C Marunde <c_marunde@yahoo.com>
nt: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 7:55 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 139

Senate Finance Committee,

I am opposed to the proposed closure of the Northway DOT Maintenance Station. I feel safety should be a high priority for the State of Alaska. The delayed road maintenance will be unsafe for all travelers entering or leaving Alaska on the Alaska Highway. Tok Dot Station is 90 miles from the Alaska/Canada Border. There is no cell service or businesses in a 40 mile stretch of this Highway. If we have another 7.2 earthquake that destroyed the Northway Airport and Northway Road, and have a one hour or more delayed response time could result in deaths. We have also had flooding that destroyed the road and rain in the winter months. Cutting a DOT station in a vastly remote location is not a safe decision.

Thank you for your time,
Cherie Marunde
Northway Resident

Doniece Gott

From: Heather Hebdon <heather.hebdon@gmail.com>
Content: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 7:51 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Bert Stedman;
bill.walker@alaska.gov
Subject: Alaska Public Offices Commission

Dear Senators,

I am writing today to provide public comment and respectfully express my disappointment in the recommended budget cuts for the Alaska Public Offices Commission. As you may, or may not be aware, last year's significant cut reduced this agency's personnel from fourteen staff members to eight. Two positions were lost from Juneau, leaving one lone employee there. The other four positions were lost from the Anchorage office, which left seven here. Of the remaining eight positions, one is the agency's Analyst/Programmer who oversees our electronic filing system, and is not involved with the agency's substantive work.

The recommended reduction of another \$200,000 will devastate this agency. According to the House's recommendation, \$100,000 will be taken from contractual services. This means that one office will have to be closed. To exacerbate the negative impact of such a cut, Juneau's delegation has continued to insist the Juneau office be kept open, which will require the Anchorage office be closed. The additional loss of \$100,000 in personnel will, in all likelihood, require the layoff of two more staff members, leaving the agency with six employees in all, one of which is only involved in programming work for the electronic filing system. However, when faced with relocating to Juneau, it is probable that the remaining Anchorage employees will also be lost. All historical experience and any institutional knowledge of the agency will be completely wiped out.

I understand the State is in the midst of a dire fiscal crisis, and there is an absolute need to make cuts towards a sustainable budget. However, it is also be the perfect climate to quietly decimate the only agency that oversees campaign finance regulation, lobbying activity, and public official financial disclosure, and at a time when it is so very crucial. A reduction of this size, when paired with the mandate that the Juneau office remain open, cannot be defended as "right sizing" government. Instead it has the appearance of a strategic effort to abolish election transparency leading into what will most likely be a very contentious election cycle for many incumbents. I am beyond disappointed with this recommendation and the bodies that will ultimately approve the destruction of this agency. I am further disheartened by the elected officials who I truly believed were committed to integrity, as well as APOC's mission to provide public disclosure and transparency in the political process.

I implore you to reconsider these recommended cuts to this agency's already inadequate budget.

Sincerely,

Heather R. Hebdon
12901 Atherton Road
Anchorage, AK 99516

Doniece Gott

From: susan crew <crewsue@hotmail.com>
nt: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 9:59 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: budget

Hello,

I believe that in years of plenty we as a state have created a top heavy government which needs to be reduced now that the resources have dwindled. I do not support the current budget.

I believe that like the rest of us the state needs to live within it's means, and if that means tightening their belt so to speak then that's what needs to be done.

A budget that can't be supported by the current income is not a responsible budget. (ask any financial planner)

I wish to go on record as not in support of the current budget. Planners need to go back to the drawing board.

Thank you,
Sue Crew

I hope you have a reason to smile today!

Doniece Gott

From: Heather Mildon <northernheather@yahoo.com>
nt: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 7:15 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget Feedback

Dear Senators,

I understand Anchorage voters may testify regarding the state budget today.

I am an Anchorage voter and urge you to apply a multi-pronged approach to budget planning, and act swiftly in doing so.

We must make needed changes to how we pay for state government and stop relying exclusively on oil. We must increase revenue and cut dividends, while making only modest cuts to services such as education and health and social services that have already been cut heavily in recent years.

We must:

Add new revenues and options include:

1. Institute an income tax at a similar level to other states 2. Institute a sales tax of 3% 3. Institute a modest School Tax as we had in the 1970's of \$100 per taxpayer annually 4. Start a lottery 5. Close oil tax loopholes such as those for new oil that allow full recoupment of losses

is simple! When one is short on funding, they raise money by getting another job -- at the state level, if you are short, raise money.

Adjust current Permanent Fund usage:

1. Cap dividends and use the remaining earnings toward our debt and state services

I do not recommend reducing the amount of the Permanent Fund that we save, as we all know from household budgets, savings means paying yourself first and should be prioritized.

Budget Cuts:

1. Make modest cuts to spending while ensuring state services remain intact at quality levels.

A budget cannot be balanced based on the "don't spend" philosophy alone, which is what seems to be the mantra coming from our elected representatives too often. Unreasonable.

We must not rely on the Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund, or that savings will run dry in two years, and that is NOT a wise long-term plan.

Do your duty, please, in planning for the long-term security of Alaska and Alaskans and plan the revenue generating mechanisms we desperately need. Be bold. Break old patterns that have gotten us into this ugly financial situation. We are relying on you.

Thank you,

Heather Mildon

907-720-8935



Heather Mildon
Sent from my iPhone



Doniece Gott

From: Patrick Dalton <daltonlogshells@gmail.com>
Content: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 7:11 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please read

Finance Committee,

Thank you in advance for reading and considering my testimony. I have been testifying on the budget but I am unable to come in the daytime. I am appalled at many of the testimonies I heard from across the state. I am appalled at the selfish behavior of the Alaska residents that are whining to keep their special project. They are only thinking of themselves and not the long term effects on Alaska.

When any of us has a budget crisis for whatever reason we have to make some tough choices and cut our spending, change our habits and make responsible, mature choices. We have to live within our means unless we expect the government to bail us out. That is irresponsible, immature, and part of the reason we are in the budget crisis we are in.

I look over the bills that are in the committees and am shocked at the intrusive bills that will cost this state even more money. When there is a crisis a triage should occur and all the bills that are going to cost even more money and intrusion should be trashed before they even go to the next committee. The legislature is over half finished and very little has been accomplished. Please set your priorities.

A plan has been given to all the legislators that would balance the budget without a tax. It is the uflalaska.com plan. Have you read it? It is 96 pages of sound plans that would balance the budget. There is no excuse not to balance the budget when you have a plan that could be implemented, a solution to the crisis.

Governor Walker has inherited a budget crisis and is handling the crisis in an irresponsible way. You cannot introduce legislation that will cost even more money, cuts have to be made. Vetoes need to be made if it is not a cut in the budget.

Most of us enjoy our freedoms and lives in Alaska. That is why we are here putting up with the long winters. The legislature has a responsibility to preserve this state and stop modeling us after the other states. The 2016 legislature needs to leave a legacy of the one that cut the budget, stopped the taxes, did not raid the reserve fund, and held strong against the irresponsible whining of all the special interest groups. Take your position seriously and responsibly. Set an example to the residents of Alaska and do what it takes to stop the freight train of this budget crisis. At the end of the day and the end of your life you will be accountable for your decisions to Alaska residents and to God. What kind of legacy will you leave?

Thank you for your service and attention.



Sharon Dalton

Delta Junction



Doniece Gott

From: G Piehl <akgomer@gmail.com>
nt: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 6:38 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget Comments

Thank you for your service to our great state and providing an opportunity for residents to let you know our thoughts and desires!!

- I believe the sustainable operating budget to be around \$4.3 to \$4.5 billion. Get it there.
- AFTER cutting the budget, first source of revenue should be the CBR and PF Earnings Reserve, that's what they are there for! Use them.
- I do not consider my PFD to be a sacred cow, reduce that next if necessary, even to zero if absolutely necessary to balance the budget.
- I do not believe an income or sales tax provide enough revenue to justify considering either of these options and certainly do not implement either if we are still receiving money from the state in the form of a PFD!
- Alcohol/tobacco taxes are a sham. Political correctness gone awry. And again, they would not contribute a significant amount to budget balance and just increase the cost of living for residents/tourists alike.
- Gas/road taxes: In favor of these...as long as the monies are fenced to ONLY go to road maintenance/repair.

Thank you again for the opportunity and your service!

Garrett Piehl
mer, AK

JENNIFER SHOCKLEY

907-359-1711
enigma@arctic.net

PO Box 921246
Dutch Harbor, AK
99692

9March2016

Alaska Senate Finance Committee
29th Legislature 2015-2016
Juneau, AK

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I am reaching out to you again this year to strongly urge you to restore funding to public media in Alaska. I am a 25-year resident of Unalaska and a 40-year supporter of Public Radio and Television in both Alaska and Texas. I grew up listening to and watching public media and it is, quite simply, an integral part of the way I participate in and learn about what is happening around the State.

I recognize the difficult financial situation that the State finds itself in, and understand that spending cuts must be made to some programs. However, I would like to consider the following points, some of which may be unique to KUCB in Unalaska and others of which are likely true for small communities across the State.

A 100% cut to local funding would end local newscasts on KUCB Radio. We do not have the benefit of high-speed internet as do many other communities, and cannot simply turn to our laptops for up-to-date news. KUCB is our community's only source of daily local news. Unalaska is the largest fishing port in the country and an international shipping hub, and KUCB is the sole news organization with the capability to report on the status of the fisheries industry here. KUCB contributes near-daily reports to Alaska Nightly News on APRN, making this news accessible to Alaskans across the State - including legislators in Juneau. Without funding for KUCB staff and equipment, this vital source of information will effectively disappear.

KUCB is a crucial part of emergency messaging in Unalaska and works closely with the Unalaska Dept. of Public Safety to ensure that tsunami and other emergency warnings are broadcast to the widest possible audience. KUCB staff is responsible for this emergency content and they are able to be on the air with tsunami warnings and road and school closures because they can financially support a fully-staffed office and on-call employees.

Local listeners value local content over syndicated programming. KUCB staff organizes special programming like broadcasts of City Council meetings and other local events as well as Unalaska Raider sports. In a town that's off the road system, where webcasts cannot be streamed and where plane tickets can cost upwards of \$1,000, this is an important service to members of the community.

Another deep funding cut such as is proposed, and especially full elimination of state funding, puts these essential local services at risk in a community that has few viable alternatives for news, entertainment and emergency messaging.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.L. Shockley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jennifer Shockley

Doniece Gott

From: sue.sherif@alaska.net
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 5:43 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 139 - Restore Online With Libraries Funding

Dear Senators:

I will not be able to go to the Fairbanks LIO this afternoon to testify on SB 139, so I am writing to urge restoration of \$761,800 for Online With Libraries (OWL) and the Alaska State Library to the Governor's proposed levels.

The OWL bandwidth subsidy now combines with local funding and federal E-rate funding to pay the staggeringly high cost of a modest amount of broadband bandwidth to rural and remote and rural libraries. The federal E-Rate funding pays 60-90% of this very high-cost bandwidth for over 40 communities, where the public library may be the only location in the community where broadband is available to the general public. **Without the OWL funds to combine with the community's contribution, Alaska public libraries will not be able to leverage nearly \$2 million dollars of E-Rate funding, and the bandwidth in these libraries will drop back to dial-up speeds.** In a world where business, government, and health care service require one to function online, the speeds that these communities can afford on their own will put Alaskans off the road system at a particular disadvantage.

Without the state library subsidies to libraries, the rural and remote Alaskan citizens who now can participate in online video and webinar classes of all kinds will once again find themselves without enough bandwidth. People who have been able to apply for jobs and their permanent fund dividends, take certification and class exams, or file their tax forms online thanks to the OWL subsidy will no longer be able to do so. People in these communities without banks will no longer be able to access online banking. **State agencies, nonprofits, and Alaska citizens will not be able to realize cost savings in travel through use of the OWL videoconferencing network to about 100 communities.**

The Senate has chosen to maintain the State Library's e-rate subsidies to public schools. The same rationale should apply to the State Library's e-rate subsidies to public libraries. Neither the schools nor public libraries should be allowed to charge the public for use of E-rate funded Internet access. Many of the smaller public libraries operate on budgets of \$50,000 or less per year and labor contributed by community volunteers. In some cases the cost for the OWL-subsidized 1.5 Mbps would gobble up half or more of their annual budgets.

Alaska is the state with the highest cost for broadband in the nation. Why would Alaska, even in this time of fiscal crisis want to turn its back on the opportunity to benefit from the E-rate program? Why, especially in this time of fiscal crisis, would we want to leave the federal dollars on the table for others states with far fewer geographic challenges to benefit when Alaskans will not?

Alaskans are contributing to the E-Rate coffers as they pay their Universal Service Funds on their phone bills. We should be able to reap full benefit. Most of the current combined local, state (OWL), and federal E-rate funding goes to Alaska-based concerns such as GCI, Alaska Communications, and local utilities like Copper Valley Electric Cooperative, and ASTAC, so funds stay in the state.

Please restore OWL funding in the 2017 operating budget.

Sue Sherif

PO Box 82668 Fairbank, AK 99708

-488-2070

Doniece Gott

From: Chris Coffman <chriscoff2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 1:16 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please Reverse the House's Cuts to the University of Alaska

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my great concern about the cuts to the University of Alaska's budget that the Alaska House recently proposed. I urge your committee to reverse their cuts. Their proposed reductions would seriously undermine the university's ability to function as an institution whose tripartite mission encompasses teaching, research, and service. They also reflect a misunderstanding of the complex ways in which university-level education works.

The proposed budget assumes that the primary work of the university is instruction. While teaching is a significant part of UA's mission, it is important to understand that research and service are also essential to the work that faculty do with students. University professors are qualified to lead students in the classroom because we actively produce current knowledge in our fields. Research keeps us up to date in our subjects and prepares us to give our students the highest quality experience; this is why published research is a significant factor in decisions concerning tenure and promotion. At the graduate level, it is especially important that professors model successful research for their students and mentor them in this area as they begin their own careers. Faculty whose research takes the form of creative activity in art, music, drama, or writing similarly need a record of success that will help them show their students how to thrive in their chosen artistic practice.

Service to the university, the profession, and the local community also enhances the university's ability to provide students with a high-quality education. As a faculty member, my job has sometimes entailed leadership in curricular initiatives, hiring and reviewing colleagues, and facilitating public forums. I have also organized seminars and panels for professional organizations that have brought outside recognition to UAF and have kept my knowledge of my field up to date in ways that have fed back into my work with my students. Some of my colleagues have done outreach to Fairbanks K-12 teachers and students as well. All of this work falls under the rubric of "service," and—like research—ultimately enhances UA's ability to give our students the best possible education.

Thank you for your service to the State of Alaska during these challenging times. I encourage you and your committee to reverse the House's cuts to the university's budget and to provide full funding for the university's tripartite mission.

Sincerely,
Chris Coffman, Ph.D.
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Doniece Gott

From: Bob Sylvester <hikeak@yahoo.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 11:58 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: The State Budget

Dear Legislator,

Since this is the most important topic we have faced in forever I wanted to communicate with each of you. I rarely communicate on this scale but feel it is too important a time not to.

I am a longtime Alaskan resident. I experienced the oil price downturn in the 1980's. It was very hard and very disruptive to my family and to many bright and ambitious people who left Alaska for good during that time. I think we lost a lot of good Alaskans and I hope we can avoid as much of that as possible this time around. People are what makes Alaska what it is.

I would like to briefly let you know my thoughts and my approach to our State's Budget.

I have read and listened to many presentations on the situation and have discussed the problem with many other interested citizens.

I would like to see budget cuts this year that reflect the Governors proposal. I understand the attractiveness of cutting spending but the result of deeper cuts would be an unnecessarily serious blow to the economy of the State.

The economy of Alaska is not as simple as many seem to think. Alaska (and all Alaskans) depend on State spending more than other states. We depend more on state spending because of higher costs of necessary government services caused by the geography, climate, weather, scattered population, and resulting difficulties, (such as transport and storage of goods, movement of people for work and leisure, delivery of services, and low economies of scale for examples.)

In addition, oil revenue goes to the State and state spending feeds this revenue out to the people of Alaska. This flow of "oil dollars" gives Alaskans a share of the resource. It is time to ask for more revenue from all other sectors of our economy and to reevaluate our share of the proceeds from what is, in reality, our oil.

Wholesale reduction of State spending beyond the Governors suggested budget will result in a serious and unnecessary depression in Alaska. Good Alaskans who love the State and wish to remain here will be forced to migrate south in search of work. I am not speaking only of state employees. The reduction of State spending as envisioned by the Majority Caucuses of our Legislature will have consequences far beyond State employees. As in good times the multiplier effect works during downturns. Cutting a dollar in State spending will cause a reduction of multiple dollars in Alaska's economy. That is why caution must be used when reducing State spending. That said I would support the Governors proposal for a serious level of spending cuts this year.

On the revenue development side I support an income tax that is not complicated. If we base the tax on a percentage of what an Alaskan pays the Federal Government in taxes. By keeping it simple we could institute an income tax at a reasonable cost to the State.

ear a sales tax is regressive and would harm those who could least afford to pay. Additionally many municipalities have a sales tax and a state sales tax would impact these municipalities negatively.

The earnings from the Alaska Permanent fund should not be off limits. Not using some portion of the Funds earnings to help sustain a reasonable State budget would make little fiscal sense. I would like to see a somewhat reduced Permanent Fund Dividend. Since the PFD is very necessary for many Alaskans, especially those who live in rural areas. A healthy dividend should be maintained. A dividend at or above \$1,000 seems to me like a reasonable target.

I also feel very strongly that our first priority in these difficult times should be the education of our children. Funding for schools and teachers should be number one. Pre-Kindergarten programs are vital to our youngest children.

I think of education as the 'food' of our Alaskan society, just as people must eat during lean times we cannot stop educating our children to wait for better times. We must fund the education of our future leaders.

While this budget crisis is extremely serious we should move forward using all tools at our disposal to make fair and balanced cuts and to identify and create revenue sources to give Alaska's economy and Alaska's people the time to develop a new economy less dependent on oil and more dependent on Alaskans work ethic and ingenuity.

Thank you for considering my view,

Robert Sylvester
PO Box 22487
Juneau, AK 99802

907 500-7950

Doniece Gott

From: Felicia Riedel <f_riedel@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 10:34 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget Ideas

Sustainable Budgeting

I appreciate the budget cuts that the Legislature made last year. After those cuts, we are back to state spending levels of 1977 when adjusted for inflation. We cannot cut further without putting our state into a deep recession. Per a recent ISER report, each \$100 Million cut from the operating budget will result in the loss of 1,600 jobs.

- * Please work to develop a sustainable budget for the sake of Alaska's children THIS session.
- * I support plans for obtaining new sources of revenue, including income taxes, reducing the PFD, and a variety of other taxes.
- * I support a broad-based approach to make sure that costs of state government are shared by all, including tourists and workers coming to Alaska from out of state.
- * I AM WILLING TO PAY FOR THE STATE SERVICES I RECEIVE.

Education Funding

School districts across Alaska have had to make significant cuts in staff and teachers since 2011, and the governor's proposed education budget represents a \$116 Million reduction vs 2015.

- * Please prioritize education funding.
- * Please make sure education funding keeps up with inflation, starting with the increases in the Base Student Allocation established in HB 278 two years ago.
- * This year's increase in the BSA will be \$50, which will help keep teachers in the classroom as costs rise.
- * Please restore Pre-K education funding, which was cut in the Governor's proposed budget. Study after study has shown that Pre-K public education is a huge cost savings to society. Pre-K education allows children to enter school ready to learn, and they are much more likely to begin to read at grade level. They are also more likely to graduate from high school, get jobs, and become contributing members of society.
- * Please support sufficient funding for the University of Alaska system. One idea I've heard is to do some combining, and though I don't have the background to know if this is the right route, I do have experience in taking classes at various campuses and not having the credits transfer from Anchorage to Fairbanks. It would have been better for me as a student if UA were one university, and maybe doing that would save money.

Food Sources

The problem of Alaska's lack of food sufficiency has been in the news lately, and it is scary to think how bad it would be if the flow of food from Outside were interrupted.

*Because of that, it doesn't seem right to close the soil test office.

Leadership

The best way to get people on board is to lead by example.

*Close the new LIO in Anchorage and find a reasonable office. Cut your own expenses.

Doniece Gott

From: Pamela Rowell <pamy@ak.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 10:25 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: AK State Budget Crisis

Dear Legislators,

As a concerned citizen and resident of Alaska, I would like to make comment on this year state budget challenge.

First, I am disappointed that our state has not prepared to avoid this fiscal situation. While there are some economic scenarios not predictable, such as the population growth, the price of oil and decrease in oil demand world wide, I do believe our legislators could have prepared for the limits of oil production and the situation of our current deficit and past spending. That said, I would like to encourage your committee to be fiscally responsible and economically serious to solve this problem now.

I am in support of a **balanced approach** to address the current fiscal situation, including the following:

1. No cuts to the current projected budget, it has been shaved very closely to FY 2005 cost per person spending.
2. A tax system put in place for state revenues: sales tax and income tax. Our broad based taxes are lower than any other state.

While benefitting from the PFD for 25 years, I am in support of a state sales tax to earn funds. Our population has grown and we cannot continue to payout to people. I vote for a quality of life and it is not free. I also think residents in all places must have a buy in or make contributions to creating and maintaining great education, health services, transportation, and state services. People cannot expect free and unlimited services, it is not realist. Taxes created should be fair and reasonable.

3. Pay some of the deficit from state savings. A reasonable amount but not draining it low. AND creating a plan to put money back into it for investments and revenue.
4. Solve the problem now, don't wait. We should demonstrate to investors we can address the problem, not affect our credit and the reality is we do not have the money.
5. Use some portion of the permanent fund earnings, while still growing dividends. Though, the reality may be the days of PFD may be done or perhaps capping the dividend. How can we rationalize paying a PFD, but not funding education or health care? Worse yet, to continue increasing the deficit and spend all our savings. A spoiled child would do that. It's backward and irresponsible.

The above are not popular ideas, but we must fill the funding gap in some range or another. We no longer have the security of oil production and we must be responsible to our young people and our economic development.

Further, If we continue to ask oil companies to pay more taxes, we will discourage their investment in the state. current royalties are significant.

We cannot wait to address this situation any longer and Legislators must do the unpopular choice, as there are no other choices. Waiting for a gas line, increasing oil tax or pressuring oil companies will not help us as it has in the past.

I encourage you to get to work on a fair tax system, a cap on PFD or something related and using some of the permanent fund earnings to pay the current deficit and get spending under control. While not easy, a balanced set of solutions will put us back on track to having a sustainable economy and reset a budget under current oil demands and production. We must look at a more diverse economy and face this immediate challenge responsibly.

I also encourage you to fairly inform the public at large about this reality. People in general do not understand how the permanent fund works.

Thank you for your time, consideration and hard work. We must all buck up and face this together. Everybody will need to pitch in to solve the problem in my opinion.

Most sincerely,
Pam Rowell
13265 Badger Lane
Anchorage, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Baxter, Kathleen <kbaxter@city.kodiak.ak.us>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 9:05 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Restore OWL funding

Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

While in Juneau last year I had the opportunity to speak in person with many of you and thank you for the care and time you gave to that period of extraordinary decision making. You gave me much food for thought as I considered the practical budget decisions regarding library operations at the Kodiak Public Library. This year, I thank you again for your careful consideration as we Alaskans navigate a course of astonishing actions. Leveraging the best and most cost effective resources for our state is paramount.

Please restore the Governor's amount of \$761,800 for the State Library OWL program to the budget. Eliminating OWL deteriorates a cost effective budget strategy to sustain public library internet connectivity for all Alaskans. Without OWL, as a public library director I cannot maximize the local municipal funding, and I certainly will lose the 4-1 match of federal e-rate dollars.

I recall a few members of the Senate Finance Committee last year thinking that by FY2017 the public could pay an internet fee for using the public library internet connection. This is not possible for those 95% of Alaskan libraries accepting federal e-rate dollars. Federal law stipulates that if e-rate dollars for internet connectivity are used in libraries, then the library cannot charge the public for internet connectivity. Currently the State uses 1.5 million e-rate dollars.

If I do the math after losing OWL, and, consequently, losing federal e-rate dollars, the public library will be charging children, cannery workers, parents, childcare providers, anywhere from \$2.00 to \$3.75 per 15-minute internet session. At a critical time of severe, deep cuts at 4% to 19% across the State budget, these very individuals of rural communities who need to participate in 21st century global endeavors as vibrant Alaskans will be counting on the modest, cost effective, OWL and e-rate funded public library internet connectivity. Please restore OWL funding.

I am at your service and urge you to contact me for any clarification or additional information.

Many thanks for all you do,

Katie Baxter

Kodiak resident



Katie Baxter | Library Director | Kodiak Public Library

612 Egan Way Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Office: 907-486-8688 | *Mobile:* 907-654-7377 | kbaxter@city.kodiak.ak.us

Kodiak Public Library Hours: M-Fri: 10am-9pm Sat: 10am-5pm Sun: 1pm-5pm



Doniece Gott

From: Jessica Wuttke <jessica.wuttke@gmail.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 8:48 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: School funding

Alaska's greatness is in the hands of our students. By depriving them a good education, we are working against our future. Please fund preK-12 education!

Sincerely,
Jessica Wuttke
6831 Cheryl St
Anchorage, AK 99518

Doniece Gott

From: Lisa Paesani <lpaesani@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 8:29 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget

Dear Senate Finance committee. It's going to take a combination of measures to keep Alaska fiscally healthy. Please preserve our schools. Even though it is a large portion of the budget, we need to keep the schools strong in order to keep young professional families here. I am in favor of using the PFD, so that Alaskans get a set amount each year, next either a sales tax and/or a state income tax. You are not going to be able to cut your way out of this. Please use the PFD and initiate taxes so that our state can remain strong without relying on the oil. Thank you.

Lisa Paesani
AnchorageAK

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Michelle Niland <michelleniland@yahoo.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 7:12 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Written testimony on the budget

Please include this as written testimony on the budget. I will try to call in tomorrow, but am not sure that I will be able to get off work without more notice.

It concerns me that you are considering an income tax. Frankly, I don't think the legislator has done enough cutting yet to discuss further taxing Alaskans.

I work in a field that has not seen a pay increase in over 10 years. Income tax would equate to a pay reduction after so many years with no pay increase. I feel this puts the carrot on the wrong end of the stick, and encourages my family to drop down to a single income family that could qualify for your expanded medicaid rather than our continuing to work hard. Income tax is a disincentive to work.

Government has grown too big. You should be peeling back programs and laws that aren't necessary functions of government . Alaska's government has moved out of their intended realm and created an enormous footprint. We should not be asking Alaskans to work harder and longer to subsidize others in order to keep them living here. Too many able bodied people simply choose to live where they won't be asked to work, or live in cities and know how to navigate the system in order to get cash assistance for an unbelievable 5 years. Time allowed lingering on TANF should be reduced from 5 years to 2 years, moving in the direction other states have of getting people off assistance and back to work. Likewise, if someone has not planned adequately for their retirement yet retired anyway, I do not see why my husband and I should work longer and harder to pay to subsidize their retirement.

If you won't reduce the enormous footprint of government, then reduce the PFD to \$950 rather than \$1000 and save the expense of hiring the 52 more government employees required to implement an income tax (which discourages strong work ethic). According to Walker's tax advocates, this would bring in as much if not more than an income tax would.

Thank you,
Michelle

Doniece Gott

From: Timothy Johnson <johnsontimothy47@yahoo.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 7:10 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: comments on state spending

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

My family and I, super voters and life-long Alaskans, share these comments about cutting state spending:

Experts and many citizens agree: Cutting spending is not a solution. I'll drop a few names: esteemed economist Gunnar Knapp, GCI CEO Ron Duncan, the current Governor, and many others in positions of expertise and authority say that the current legislature has created the present "crisis" by failure to act sooner. Every dollar cut in state spending hurts the economy. Period. State spending has been cut enough, perhaps too much, to prevent long-term economic depression that you must bear responsibility for. The Republican party has said that "everyone must feel the pain." Yes, because of your inexcusable lack of basic economic knowledge, every Alaskan must feel the pain you created.

The pain isn't necessary. We do not have a financial crisis, we have a leadership crisis in the current legislature. Properly managed, the permanent fund can keep current spending levels for decades to come without excessive taxes.

Governor Walker's budget proposal is a good starting place. Diversity of income makes sense. But additional spending cuts will only bring calamity, not long-term economic stability.

I wish I could end this note by saying that I have confidence in the Senate Finance Committee to solve the government-created budget crisis, but I have no confidence whatsoever. Your record proves that you do not have what it takes to lead Alaska to prosperity.

Prove me wrong.

Thank you for listening.
Timothy and Carina Johnson

Doniece Gott

From: Greg Demers <gdemers@horizonsatellite.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 6:07 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Rep. Paul Seaton; Sen. Gary Stevens
Subject: state operating budget

I am unable to testify at my local legislative information office tomorrow, so I am writing to share my thoughts and recommendations on how to achieve a sustainable budget :

Cut spending in every state department, but especially in administration, as opposed to programs ; also, cut the fat out of your own legislative budget.

Stop funding the mega-projects NOW.

Stop funding for all unnecessary programs, like Predator Control, and hatcheries for sportfish (and I hunt and fish, but I know these aren't necessary).

DO institute a state sales tax, and a state income tax. The days of the free ride are over.

DO increase taxes on industries: fishing, mining, forestry, tourism. Look for additional revenue sources

DO cap permanent fund dividends (\$1000 tops), and use some fund earnings.

DO quit wasting time on your social agenda bills, like guns, abortion, etc., and focus on the budget crisis.

My wife and I have lived continuously in Alaska since pre-pipeline days. Alaskans are facing a critical time in our history. It is NOW time for every stakeholder to make sacrifices to insure our FUTURE well being. Finally, we are not affiliated with any political party, but we ALWAYS vote, and we are not leaving.

Sincerely,
Greg and Carole Demers
Anchor Point

Doniece Gott

From: Dave Atcheson <daveatcheson@hotmail.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 6:06 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

I am unable to testify at the hearing on Wednesday March 9, on the state operating budget, so would like to submit this :

The reason I am writing is twofold, one is to implore you to find a way to fund the University of Alaska to the Governor's original proposal, which would mean restoring about \$10 million to the UA system.

The second reason is to ask you to please consider raising revenue along with cuts. That means not only using the Permanent Fund, but a graduated income tax, with a tax break to citizens of Alaska (anyone receiving the permanent fund say) so that out-of-state workers pay more into the system than those of us living in the state. To spread it around, a sales tax, gasoline tax, as well as taxes on mining and fishing, should also be on the table. I would also recommend restructuring the tax system currently in place for oil companies and at the very least easing the amount we subsidize their business, especially at low oil prices. I am a realist and know we cannot possibly cut our way out of the deficit and continue to have even basic services, let alone quality schools and a university system to be proud of. These are services worth paying for and having.

As for the University, in my 30 plus years in Alaska I have been witness to a system that has steadily improved to the point where its graduates are in high demand and its reputation has blossomed, today highly regarded in many disciplines around the world.

To see cuts continue to the point where our currently well respected university is rendered a mere shell of its once great self, and where our children automatically venture out of state for a decent education, would be a disgrace. Please do not let that happen. We have had a bright future, that has grown ever brighter due to your support. It is so important to our society, to our state, and to our children, to have a first class university system. To see that unravel, and to one day have to try and rebuild the institution that is University of Alaska back to where it is now, would be a shame, and in the long term wasteful. The progress the university has made, what University of Alaska is today, would be toppled in a matter of a few short months, and would take years, as well as an untold amount of resources and money, to build back again.

Thank you,

Dave Atcheson
Box 145
Sterling, AK 99672
907-398-4216

Doniece Gott

From: Roger DuBrock <roger.dubrock@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 6:04 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public Radio KCHU

Dear Finance Committee members,

I reside for a good portion the year on the McCarthy Road. I wanted to be counted as a constituent who supports public radio, critical to rural Alaska and I also want to be counted as a constituent who is willing to pay a personal income tax, accept a much lower PFD and support a reduction in the subsidies that we give to well capitalized oil companies to pay for the quality of life in Alaska that we want.

Please show some leadership and do what is needed.

Roger DuBrock

Doniece Gott

From: Robin Nyce <robinnyce@gmail.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 5:40 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget

Dear Committee Members,

I think we should reinstate the income tax, initiate a sales tax, and place a cap on the permanent fund. I think we should be cautious with cutting state services. The oil tax structure needs to be revisited.

Sincerely,
Roberta Nyce
Kenai

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Anna MacKinnon
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 10:35 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Public Testimony

Kristen Pratt

Legislative Aide
Office of Senator Anna MacKinnon
Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol | Room 516
(907) 694-8944

From: Charlene Arneson [mailto:charlene.arneson@att.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 10:14 AM
To: Sen. Anna MacKinnon <Sen.Anna.MacKinnon@akleg.gov>
Subject: Public Testimony

Dear Honorable Senator Anna MacKinnon,

Thank you for your efforts. I appreciate where Alaska is at with the budget. I saw today oil was up to \$38. Plus a prediction that it will continue to go up. Seniors cuts will effect us very much. Yet we have the learned the skills to survive. Young people are just beginning to learn and don't have all the necessary skills. I have worked years to help make sure as many students as possible have a good start. Education in Alaska is changing new innovative programs are finding their way into our districts. Once programs are deleted reinstating them will cost far more in the future. I

know that as adults we are charged to do our best while doing no irreversible harm. We have only one chance at educating our youth. Please help educators achieve

Please try to help education funding to stay on track include the 50.00 increase I think that an income tax is one viable responsible way to help pay for Alaska needs.

Charlene Arneson
Citizen of Whittier

Doniece Gott

From: david hollis <haulaska2001@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 5:39 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: David Hollis
Subject: Please Support Alaska Public Radio

to: Alaska Senate Finance Committee

from: Dave Hollis - McCarthy, Alaska

Hi - I have lived 60 miles off the grid in McCarthy for over 20 years. Here we recieve KCHU Public Radio station broadcasting from Valdez.

Public Radio is very important to our remote community. Please financially support this essential service.

Thank You!

Dave Hollis - McCarthy, Alaska

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

Doniece Gott

From: Julia Phelan <juliahphelan@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 4:30 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support for Early Childhood Education/Best Beginnings in FY17 budget

I am writing from Delta Junction, Alaska, to request that you consider reinstating funding for Best Beginnings with the budget for the coming year. As you probably know, Best Beginnings is tasked with carrying out the recommendations of the 27-member Alaska Ready to Read, Ready to Learn task force which met in 2005-2006 to address the low graduation rates in our state. Since that time, the organization has worked tirelessly to establish and support programs which promote early literacy for the coming generation of Alaskans.

One such program which directly affects our community is the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. I serve as co-chair for our local branch which mails a free book each month to any local child under the age of five, regardless of income. From our inception, Best Beginnings has been a critical sponsor; cutting their funding would affect us drastically.

Our local group has over 250 children currently registered to receive a book each month, and another 150 children who have already grown through and benefitted from the program, for a total of 1800 books hard at work in the homes of our small community of Delta Junction/Fort Greely. So often at our local Post Office, I have watched the joy on children's faces when they discover their next book waiting in their mailbox just for them! And as the years have gone by, more and more mothers are coming back to me to say how these books are their children's favorites, how much more they read together since their children are growing in their enthusiasm for literacy. With three youngsters of my own, I understand the demands that mothers face, and I also appreciate the help that Imagination Library provides to facilitate reading with my own children, this simple activity that is proven to be the one thing that contributes most to their success in school and later in life.

There is so much current research highlighting the value of investing in early literacy (and the Imagination Library program in particular) but if I may, I'd like to include this statement from the December 2014 White House report entitled The Economics of Early Childhood Investments:

"By both helping kids develop early foundational skills and by allowing more parents to actively pursue careers, investments in early childhood development provide benefits not just for children and their parents, but for society as a whole. Children who enter school at higher levels of readiness have higher earnings throughout their adult lives. They are also healthier and less likely to become involved with the criminal justice system. These positive spillovers suggest a role for government to support investments in early childhood development."
(p.5)

The executive summary of the report states that expanding early learning programs will bring a Return on Investment of approximately \$8.60 in benefit to society for every \$1 spent on early literacy. In these uncertain economic times, an ROI of this magnitude shows the question not to be whether Alaska can afford to fund early literacy, but if we can afford not to. Cutting funding for Best Beginnings would be devastating to multiple early literacy initiatives, initiatives that were designed specifically for Alaskans.

On behalf communities like ours across Alaska who depend on support from Best Beginnings, our own local Delta Imagination Library and the 400 local children we serve, I ask that you invest in our children, invest in their success, invest in the future of Alaska. Please reinstate the funding requested by Best Beginnings in your upcoming budget package.

Thank you for your time and your service for our state.

Respectfully,

Julia Phelan

References:

https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/early_childhood_report1.pdf.

Julia Phelan

Delta Imagination Library

P.O. Box 770

Delta Junction, Alaska 99737

(907) 460-9365

<https://www.facebook.com/deltaimaginationlibrary>

*Giving the gift of reading, one month at a time,
to the children of the greater Delta/Greely areas*





Kodiak Public Library Association

PO Box 1824

Kodiak, AK 99615

kpla.alaska@gmail.com

kodiakpubliclibraryassociation.org

Senator Pete Kelly, Chairman

Senate Finance Committee

State Capitol Room 518

Juneau, AK 99801

Senator.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov

Dear Senator Kelly:

The Kodiak Public Library Association (KPLA) urges you to restore funding to the Alaska State Library and funding for the OWL (Online with Libraries) program.

The Alaska State Library provides library services to state agencies; delivers continuing education and online services to all libraries in the state, and collects, preserves and shares historical documents about Alaska. Thank you very much for previous support for *Live Homework Help* and the *Databases for Alaskans*, providing robust research resources. These services are crucial for public libraries throughout the state and impact many rural users. In times of economic hardship, it is the library's public Internet connection that is an anchor for individuals who lack online access.

KPLA believes the loss of the OWL program and reductions to the State Library will be detrimental to Kodiak and all state users. OWL offers online connectivity public library patrons to apply for jobs, access online services and benefits, complete re-training, take distance classes and connect with people statewide via videoconference. In Kodiak, the laptop computers available for checkout were made possible by the OWL program. The state Library and OWL have benefited people in our town and region tremendously.

In Kodiak, cutting funding for internet connectivity will have a profound impact. Losing this funding would be very detrimental to public libraries' connectivity and ability to serve their patrons. In many villages, libraries have the only high-speed internet connection, and connectivity is crucial in today's information-rich environment.

Finally, OWL Internet funding also leverages federal dollars: for every \$1 spent by the state on Internet services, the federal match is \$4. We urge you to restore the governor's funding of \$761,800 to the OWL program, and reduce the 19% (nearly \$500,000) cut to the State Library to the governor's original 4% reduction. These programs are vital to our rural communities. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The Kodiak Pubic Library Association Board of Directors

Athenia Large

Laurie Madsen

Jan Chatto

Gretchen Wing

Jennifer Melin

Taten Sheridan

Jordana Long

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 4:51 PM
To: Doniece Gott
Subject: FW: Restore OWL funding in the Governor's budget

From: Beth Skow [mailto:bskow@palmerak.org]
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 10:26 AM
To: Beth Skow <bskow@palmerak.org>
Subject: Restore OWL funding in the Governor's budget

OWL, an important program that funds broadband internet used by 43 public libraries for their patrons and numerous agencies, was included in the Governor's budget, but cut from the House Finance Committee's budget and the Senate Finance Committee. I know you understand the importance of this program to many people statewide, particularly rural Alaskans, but did you know this program brings in a 4-1 match of federal e-rate funding dollars? If OWL is left unfunded, those federal dollars are left on the table.

OWL funding is small but immense in its range and scope. Please support this portion of the Governor's request to keep OWL available to those 43 public libraries. If cut, these libraries will not be able to absorb the high cost of broadband internet access. Libraries will be in the difficult position of having to raise funds to cover this cost, virtually impossible for all of these libraries. If libraries begin to charge for internet access, those already underserved members of our communities, many of whom are using library resources, will not be able to afford this cost, either. It's hard to believe but there are many folks across Alaska who have no means for this cost, thus rendering them unable to participate in the 21st century except through their public library. No way to apply for jobs, beef up skills, apply for government assistance, etc.

Please restore OWL funding. It'll make an immense difference to many people statewide.

Thank you,

Beth Skow
Library Director

City of Palmer
Palmer Public Library

<http://pplak.org>

907 761-1371

907 746-3570 (Fax)

655 S. Valley Way

Palmer, Alaska 99645

CITY OF TENAKEE SPRINGS

John Wisenbaugh
MAYOR
citytke@gmail.com

P.O. Box 52
Tenakee Springs, Alaska 99841
Phone 907-736-2207
Fax 907-736-2249

March 8, 2016

Sen.PeteKelly@akleg.gov, Sen.Anna Mackinnon@akleg.gov

Greetings from the City of Tenakee Springs-

For our small Southeast community, the continuation of Community Revenue Sharing (CRS) is vital to our existence as an incorporated municipality within the State of Alaska.

Our FY16 City Government Revenues of \$152,000.00 included CRS funding of \$97,685.00.

Our CRS funding for FY17 is a preliminary State estimate of \$65,555.00 pending financial legislative action. Just this reduction will result in not funding our Public Works and Public Safety Departments for FY17, and a severe restriction on all other expenditures.

We are well aware of the monumental task you face regarding State finances. We just ask that you remember us little guys.

Thank you for your service,

Don Pegues
Vice-Mayor

Doniece Gott

From: Sybil Peters <sybilp2@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 10:49 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Alaska - The Last Frontier

It is obvious that oil is not going to cover the finances needed for our state ANYMORE. When I look at the number of people in the state versus the amount spent, I think it is totally outrageous. We were living on the backs of the oil companies which are no longer going to carry the load of nonproductive financial requirements set up by the state of Alaska. We are now required to undo the system that was set up because of high oil prices.

I know for a fact that you have received budgets that show where to cut, furnished by people that took a lot of time and effort to show the best places to cut. I encourage you to follow the lowest budget. Alaska is facing a recession and the Senate Finance Committee should face reality about our ability to cover the empires built during the high oil peak.

Capital projects and state operations need to be cut to the bone. I feel "The Last Frontier" can do without a whole bunch of state operations. We are being smothered with do-good projects and abundant school spending that changes our state into a nanny. Whatever happened to being FREE. Free from waste and stupid unneeded spending that puts us in a debt society that we will never recover from as long as this state decides to take from its people and not turn in the direction of frugal spending.

You have a chance to accept reality and require strict adherence to a budget that stays within the bounds of keeping our state free from burdening the people. Please go down that path and not listen to the takers. Do not tax the people to pay for programs and institutions set up by rich oil. They shouldn't have been set up in first place. We have less than a million people and have squandered billions of dollars.

As a nation we are headed to an unleashing of financial disasters brought on by crooks, cronies, and banksters. The Feds are going to tax the people and we don't need to add to that burden.

Sincerely,
Sybil Peters
Delta Junction, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Arlene Jasky <agjasky@gmail.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:46 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Cuts to Senior and Disability Grants

First, let me thank you for restoring 2.5% of the House cuts to Senior and Disability Services Grants programs.

Second, please support funding for Personal Care Assistance in order to support individuals to remain in their homes and the communities of their choice.

I, personally, have worked with disabled and elderly persons within the Personal Care Assistance (PCA) and Senior & disability Grant programs for 15+ years. First, as a provider of services and then as a facilitator of the program. I have seen firsthand how PCA services have enabled individuals to be safe, to return to a better state of mind and health, and occasionally to gaining independence to the level of being fully independent again and no longer needing the PCA program.

The PCA program has helped families by providing a means to an income while still caring for their loved ones at home. The alternative being; having family members placed in assisted living or nursing homes (which would be more costly to the State in the long run) so that they can work and provide for their families.

Thank you for all you do to help support all these individuals and their families.

Arlene Jasky

Doniece Gott

From: Kristi Wood <bikemoredriveless@hotmail.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 3:54 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please use Permanent Fund to balance the budget

Hello Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing in support of using a portion of the Permanent Fund to balance the budget. I fully support the Governor's plan and admire him for coming forward with solutions to this fiscal crisis. I hope that if you do not support the Governor's plan, you will at least be able to come forward with solutions of your own.

Respectfully,
Kristi Wood
Anchorage Resident

Doniece Gott

From: Bruce Vadla <bvadla@alaska.net>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:41 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Peter Micciche
Subject: operating budget testimony

Please keep your budget cuts to a responsible level. Spending for all state programs will help ease the downturn in the state economy. Reasonable cuts to all programs is expected by all of us here in AK, and it is certainly your responsibility to look very carefully at the huge expense column in the budget. But quickly cutting the flow of state budget money into the local economy coupled with the drastic downturn in oil related cash flow will cause a more severe crash.

New revenue must be part of the plan. Permanent fund money is the obvious pile we have to scoop funds from. However, depleting the "Permanent Fund" in a couple years is not a solution. Spending from the Permanent Fund can only be a short term source of budget funding. We need to spread out the cost of keeping the state running among various revenue sources for a longer term solution

The Permanent Fund is the only source of revenue that effects only Alaskans. **Don't take any more money than necessary from the Permanent Fund!!!**

Sales tax is paid by tourists and visitors, but, unless you tax on-line sales, a sales tax will drive money away from local/ state businesses. Also, sales taxes are regressive unless you exempt basics such as food and fuel.

State income taxes effect all people who earn money in this state. People who pay state income tax can reduce federal taxes because of that expense. State income taxes based on federal tax liability will make it an easy tax to determine, and it will keep the expense of collecting the tax down. If we tax all income earners we will get some funding from people who earn money here but do not live here. Keeping the PFD as high as possible will "reimburse" Alaskans for the new income tax to some degree.

Any budget solution should include revenue enhancement. New revenue streams need to be implemented with the best long term effect on Alaskans as the primary goal. I support a state income tax to help bring in money we need and to be a stabilizing part of the long term state budget plan.

Bruce Vadla
399 W Riverview Ave
Soldotna, AK 99669



The Honorable Governor Bill Walker
Alaska State Capitol
Third Floor
Juneau, Alaska 99801

March 4, 2016

Dear Governor Walker:

On behalf of Tanana Chiefs Conference, the Inter-Tribal Consortia of 42 member tribes across Alaska's Interior; we respectfully request that you reconsider full removal of \$6.3 million in State operating funds for Alternative Energy & Efficiency programs at the Alaska Energy Authority, included in your FY2017 Amended Budget released on February 16, 2016. The programs impacted by these amendments provide critical support to residents, tribes, utilities, and community organizations in Alaska's most remote communities.

The amendment: eliminates \$5 million in capital funding for the Renewable Energy Fund; eliminates the funding component that supports staff for renewable energy initiatives, emerging energy technology and energy efficiency programs; and it eradicates the funding component used for rural power house and bulk fuel training, community assistance, and the circuit rider maintenance support program. Finally, this amendment limits the Alaska Energy Authority from accepting federal funding, including a recently secured award of \$250,000, from the U.S. Department of Energy to support the Emerging Energy Technology Fund.

It is very difficult for Alaskan residents on the rail belt to understand the degree to which rural communities are dependent on assistance from the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA). AEA acts equal parts as a technical assistance provider for existing diesel generation and information clearinghouse for energy generation technology and energy efficiency. Removing funding from AEA will significantly weaken rural Alaska's energy infrastructure and the proposed cuts risk eliminating many of the advances that have been made over the last decade toward rural Alaskan energy sustainability.

Although we are well aware of the current fiscal condition of the State of Alaska, and the fact that spending cuts will be necessary to help balance the budget, we believe full eradication of a suite of programs at the State's energy office is **neither sensible nor reasonable**. This move will cripple the State's ability to provide crucial support to address the high cost of energy in our most rural communities – those very communities you have acknowledged are still paying an overwhelming percentage of income to cover energy-costs.



Tanana
Chiefs
Conference

122 1st Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99701
907-452-8251
www.tananachiefs.org

We believe a conservative investment back into AEA's Energy & Efficiency programs will augment the work of non-profits like ours, who are aggressively working to support and improve the small utilities that are spread across our region.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration. We appreciate all you do on behalf of rural, and all of, Alaska

Sincerely,

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

President / Chairman

CC: Senator Lyman Hoffman

Representative Bob Herron
House Finance Committee
DCCED Budget Sub-Committee
Pat Pitney, Director of the Office of Management & Budget
Commissioner Chris Hladick, Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic
Development
Sara Fisher-Goad, Director of the Alaska Energy Authority

NELSON FARMS LLC

Delta Junction, Alaska

PO Box 70888, Fairbanks, Alaska 99707
Ron Nelson
907-322-6877
rnelson@alaska.net



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March 4, 2016

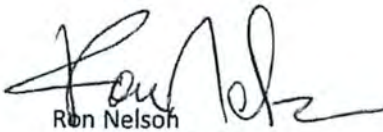
To: Members of our Alaska State Legislature; Governor Bill Walker & Members of Governor Walker's Administration.

The following will not balance our budget but would be a small step in that direction.

Even considering that potatoes are our main crop...We support eliminating funding for the potato program at the PMC...there are private sources available for seed or other services being provided now by the PMC. This program can be eliminated.

Further, consideration should be given to privatizing the PMC, similarly, as you are considering privatizing Mt McKinley Meat & Sausage. Research or related activities being conducted at the PMC could be combined with the University of Alaska, Alaska's Land Grant University to minimize duplication and associated administrative costs.

In closing, it is important that funding continue to DNR for Seed Certification. Seed certification is the regulatory process...world wide... that verifies that seed being planted, sold or exported meets State, Federal and International Standards. DNR is responsible for seed certification in Alaska.


Ron Nelson
Nelson Farms LLC

CC:

Dr. Jim Johnsen, President of the University of Alaska
Bryce Wrigley, President of the Alaska Farm Bureau

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Anna MacKinnon
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:22 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Budget Testimony Ketchikan

Kristen Pratt
Legislative Aide
Office of Senator Anna MacKinnon
Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol | Room 516
(907) 694-8944

From: Rita Menzies [mailto:rmenzies95@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2016 11:35 PM
To: Sen. Anna MacKinnon <Sen.Anna.MacKinnon@akleg.gov>
Subject: Budget Testimony Ketchikan

March 6, 2016

Dear Senator MacKinnon:

Write to you today as the parent of a young adult with disabilities (seizure disorder, autism, nonverbal with significant global delays in gross motor and fine motor skills) with concern of the impending budget cuts for such a vulnerable population within Alaska – those with developmental disabilities, mental health issues, as well as the seniors.

I have lived and worked as a nurse within the Ketchikan community for the last 24 years not to mention a number of my personal friends and acquaintances have family members with disabilities or are aging. I have had interactions with many residents who have in the past or are currently receiving the services listed to be cut. The programs I refer to are as follows:

The proposed reduction for the Adult Medicaid Dental program is 50%. This provides limited dental care for low income seniors and those individuals with disabilities. Dental care is essential for maintaining good health. This population of vulnerable Alaskans needs to be able to access dental care for prevention as well as dental infections. Lack of coverage over time results in costly Emergency Department visits not to mention the effects of dental pain and decaying teeth on overall health, putting people at risk for developing dental infections associated with periodontal disease, diabetes, pneumonia, and chronic vascular diseases. Please maintain the Adult Medicaid Dental Program.

The Community Developmental Disability (DD) Grants are essential for those with disabilities. Services can include supported employment, respite care, day habilitation, case management, and specialized equipment. These grants are used to serve those individuals on the DD Registry waiting for Medicaid home and community based services. My son was on the "waitlist" for 8 years. He was able to use a grant for a year or two prior to receiving the waiver which was such a help at the time as he requires 1 on 1 assistance at all times for his personal safety. In FY15, there were 4, 057 individuals who received services at an average cost of \$3,556. A 5% cut to the program means approximately 203 individuals will not receive services. The research shows that the longer individuals wait for services, the more intense the needs

become. Thank you for considering a smaller reduction to the Senior Community Based Grants. Please support the Governor's budget for Community DD Grants to help people with disabilities living stable, safe and productive lives in the community.

The Personal Care Assistance Program is for those with disabilities and seniors who need help with activities of daily living such as eating, bathing, dressing, shopping, and light house work. Many get minimal hours but those hours are essential for them to maintain the independence of staying in their own home and community. The Federal Law required PCA services must be provided for individuals whose needs meet a nursing home level of care, thus, if they are unable to have the PCA, those individuals may need to move into a facility which will cost much more (not to mention lack of facilities available within the state). Please support funding for the Personal Care Assistance in order for vulnerable Alaskans to remain in their homes and communities.

The proposed Senior Benefits Program reduction will affect 5,348 seniors who make \$25,000 annually or less. This is 175% of the federal poverty level. The Benefits program assists senior to pay their heating bill, food, and other living expenses. Please support funding for Senior Benefits for people with low to moderate income.

Senior Community Based Grants provide services for disabled and elderly Alaskans with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. This program may provide nutritional transportation support, Adult Day support, family caregiver supports and many more supports for this population of vulnerable Alaskans. Caregivers depend on grant funded services for respite and support. An average annual per senior grant is approximately \$600 compared to \$20,100 for PCA, \$31,300 for the waiver, and \$270,845 for nursing home care. There are approximately 25,893 persons served through this service. Thank you for considering a smaller reduction to this grant. Please support the Governor's budget for these critical supports so seniors can stay in their homes and out of the higher cost assisted living and health care.

The Pioneer Homes is proposed for a \$741,000 cut which would mean 11 positions as well as a reduction in supplies and cable TV to be removed. The Pioneer Home serves those individuals that most need the services and to decrease their staffing may cause a decrease in those clients served. Please support funding the Pioneer Homes.

The General Relief Assistance (GRA) is a service for those in an emergent need with no other resources and not eligible for other programs. This program is significant for over 550 individuals. Please consider a smaller reduction.

Please reconsider the staffing cuts recommended for the State Troopers. We need to keep Alaska safe! Alaska State Troopers are critical to the health and safety of all Alaskans, especially adults and children due to disability and/or age.

As a conscientious citizen, I recognize the fiscal situation the state faces given the dramatic drop in oil prices and really appreciate the work the Senate Finance Subcommittee has done trying to control the costs of state government. The decisions made during this budget time must be difficult. I would like to THANK YOU for keeping the Governor's recommendation related to the Behavioral Health Grants, for providing flexibility to the Division of Juvenile Justice to determine facility closures rather than closing the Nome Youth Facility.

Those seniors and those with disabilities need the services listed above to be able to live in the least restrictive environment – their home in their community – a right all Alaskans want to maintain.

Thank you for your consideration and your time.

Sincerely,

Rita Menzies

419 Knudson Cove Road

Chickikof, Alaska 99901

Rmenzies95@hotmail.com

Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile. – Albert Einstein

Doniece Gott

From: matt irinaga <m_iguana@hotmail.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:12 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Be responsible

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing in response to the state budget crisis. I support utilizing some of the PFD earnings to pay for vital gov't services. I support the idea of a state sales tax. If there is a lot of push back maybe this could be a seasonal sales tax from May 1 to October 1 to take advantage of the influx of visitors to the state. The sales tax should exclude food/groceries/medications. I support the concept of a state run lottery. I don't support a state income tax. Alcohol, tobacco, and gasoline/fuel (excluding home heating oil) should be taxed. Somebody needs to figure out the state marijuana tax structure and streamline the process of creating new business in the state. Done right, I think it can generate a modest income to the state.

I support public education including preschool programs and charter schools. I believe in supporting higher education and the University of Alaska system.

Our legislators need to take the long view on decisions made today will have huge implications on our kids tomorrow. **Keep education funding as intact as possible.**

That said, I know the state is faced with having to reduce spending and cutting budgets. Right now there is very little confidence and trust with our legislators. The public perception is that you've gotten us into this mess now fix it. Honestly, based on a lot of recent examples of wanton waste of public money you should not be surprised. Taking stances on issues based on party lines is not acceptable. Dragging your work into special sessions and not getting anything done is pathetic. You need to work together for the benefit of the state and your constituents. Poll most Alaskans and I think you'll find that we don't care if you're democrat or republican, just get your job done and work together for what is right. Hearing about non-essential travel by our legislators is sickening. You need to lead by example. Be responsible. Anybody can recognize a boondoggle. You should call each other out on those who take those trips and bring "associates" or aides along or who are being catered to by interest groups. **You're public servants, we pay your salaries.** Do your work or get fired.

If my tone is anger I don't believe I am alone. And I won't apologize for it. We are in a crisis. You should be feeling a lot of pressure to get this right.

Thanks,

Matt Irinaga
Fairbanks



WILDFLOWER C O U R T

2000 SALMON CREEK LANE • JUNE AU, AK 99801
(907) 463-8700 • FAX 463-8743

Dedicated to Excellence

March 8, 2016
Senator Pete Kelly
State Capitol Room 518
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am writing to express concern about the intent language included in the Senate Finance budget on Medicaid inflation adjustments to provider rates.

Wildflower Court is a non-profit, certified long-term care facility located in Juneau. We are one of only four standalone nursing homes in Alaska. Wildflower Court provides a safe and secure place for chronically disabled individuals. Our model of care creates the conditions of a home rather than an institution. The most important thing to us is the physical well-being of the people who are within our care.

Medicaid represents 90% of our revenue, so any changes in the Medicaid rates have a direct impact on our ability to care for the individuals in our facility. Without an inflationary adjustment in FY17 we will be unable to meet rising variable costs and have significant challenges in meeting our debt service obligation.

In the State of Alaska nursing home Medicaid rates are reset every four years based on operating costs reported in our annual Medicare/Medicaid cost report. In between "base years" the State calculates annual inflation based increases.

We face a number of challenges with the "cost based" system:

- Rate calculation does not include all costs of operating the business. Some overhead, even janitorial services not directly related to patient care, are not included.
- Nursing homes have a fixed number of beds and capitated rates which gives us very little control over the revenue side of our business other than keeping beds full.
- Medicaid represents 90% of our revenue. Medicare is the second largest payer with reimbursement rates significantly less than Medicaid.

The rate freeze will have negative effect in the following ways:

- Without inflation adjustments we are unable to meet rising variable costs like wages & employee health insurance.
- Wildflower Court restructured debt in 2012 based on predictable rate methodology used by the State of Alaska. Interest expense is included in the cost calculation and our refinance will save the State of Alaska \$5M over the remaining life our loan. The tricky part was structuring the debt repayment to account for the reduced Medicaid rate resulting from this savings. Our debt

payments increase every year for the next four years then fall off significantly as interest and depreciation expense diminish; without inflation adjustments we will be challenged to meet our debt service obligation.

- Unpredictable rate methodology make conventional financing for this industry very hard to come by. We need more beds not less. In order to accommodate growth we need predictability.

Please consider the unique needs of long term care facilities and maintain Medicaid inflationary increases for nursing homes in the FY17 budget. We need a predictable rate methodology in order to stay in business.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruth Johnson', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Ruth Johnson

Doniece Gott

From: Hirschfeld, Matthew <MHirschfeld@SouthcentralFoundation.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 4:10 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Senate Finance Testimony

To: Senate Finance Committee

Re: Public Testimony Comment

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Matt Hirschfeld, MD/PhD, and I'm a pediatrician practicing in Alaska. Today, I'm representing the All Alaska Pediatric Partnership as the President. The All Alaska Pediatric Partnership is an organization of Alaska-specific entities that are dedicated to making Alaska children healthier and happier by focusing on early childhood development, elimination of child abuse and neglect, and decreasing Alaska Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). I would like to comment on the current FY2017 budget, and to express my hope that early childhood programs will not be cut from the budget.

As you know, investing in early childhood pays huge dividends to the future population health of Alaska. By focusing on making young children as healthy as possible, and allowing them to enter school ready to learn and prosper, Alaska will support its future generations to become healthier, both in mental health and physical health. Supporting these future generations now will ensure that Alaska continues to be a great state, and a place to raise families for decades to come.

In addition, supporting children now significantly decreases the costs associated with poor mental and physical health when they are adults, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars that will be realized by the State annually. These savings have been shown in numerous studies, most powerfully in the studies related to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and how bad things happening in childhood can permanently affect the health of the individual all the way into adulthood.

Thus, for the senate to support continued funding of programs like Best Beginnings, Parents as Teachers, and Pre-K, future generations of Alaskans will have the best chance possible to become healthier and happier than all of the generations before them.

Thank you for your time and the ability to provide testimony to the Committee. Please don't hesitate to call me anytime with questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Matt Hirschfeld, MD/PhD
President
All Alaska Pediatric Partnership
Anchorage, Alaska



North Star Council on Aging
Meals on Wheels
1424 Moore Street, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone: 907-452-1735 / Fax: 451-9974
nscoa.manager@alaska.net

Dear Senator Anna MacKinnon,


I am here to speak on behalf of the seniors in our community, who at times are unable to communicate to the legislators when decisions are being made that will directly affect their well-being. At a time when the senior population is expediently growing, especially the 85 plus cohort which has a current growth rate of 112%, it is our job as a state, neighbor, leader and politician to make sure their basic needs are met. The aging population crisis is real and any funds deviated from the Senior programs and Services only set the seniors and our community up for failure.

I administer the **Meals on Wheels program** here in the interior and being at the front line, I hear stories of food insecurities and lack of services to assist them in living in their homes. **Currently, there are 15,000 seniors in the Fairbanks North Star Borough with only 250 beds available** for the daily care that will become a necessity in the aging process. The Fairbanks Pioneer Home is a key facility in providing the care needed with age. The FNSB senior population will hit 20,000 in 4 years and is expected to reach near 25,000 by 2030 with approximately 5,000 of the 25,000 being part of the 85 plus cohort.

Statewide there is a projected 64% increase in the senior population by 2034, as the expected "Silver Tsunami Wave" impacts Alaska. Cutting any senior program at this time will chip away at the foundation needed to be prepared on all fronts for the 180,000 seniors in Alaska by 2034. It is our moral responsibility to assure we do not neglect those seniors who need our care the most in their elder years. No seniors should live in filth, poverty, be malnourished, have fear of not being able to find the services needed for safe living and/or provide a roof over their heads.

Alaska was built by those who are now entering their senior years and the lack of services for seniors will lead to the exiting of these seniors from Alaska, where as a whole, **contribute at least \$2.4 billion annually to Alaska's economy**. Keeping the seniors in our communities instead of them having to leave Alaska due to lack of services, beds and vital support will create a decrease in cash flow from a important factor in Alaska's economy and history.

Respectfully,


Darlene Supplee
Executive Director

Doniece Gott

From: Jamie Marunde <jamiem907@gmail.com>
Content: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 4:14 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: DOT Cuts - Keep Northway Open

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

I am submitting a comment in regards to the proposed Operating budget in which Northway DOT's maintenance station was proposed for closure.

The Northway DOT is an integral station situated at the border of the State of Alaska on the only highway entering and exiting Alaska. They maintain 140+ lane miles of Alaska Highway, 20 miles of bus routes, the border station & port of entry, and a port of entry Airport. The Upper Tanana region believes that in both the short and long term, the costs of closing Northway DOT will quickly overcome any suggested savings. Not only is it a financial loss in failing infrastructure, to tourism, and to businesses utilizing this highway, but it is a loss of most of the permanent jobs here which support the local economy. The next closest camp will not be able to efficiently maintain Northway's Alaska highway, border station, and airport port of entry.

As the State faces financial hardship and many difficult financial decisions, please ensure that basic infrastructure is maintained. The Northway DOT is extremely important to reducing long term maintenance costs, keeping the border station operable, and allowing business to flow through out Alaska. We Alaskans need this more than ever.

Thank you,



Jamie Marunde
Board Chair, Northway Natives Incorporated
PO Box 516
Northway AK 99764
907-322-4476

Doniece Gott

From: Brittany Pope <Brittany.Pope@comconnections.org>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 4:04 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Senate Finance Committee Public Testimony Requested on FY2017 Operating Budget
Attachments: SFY17 Senior Budget Reductions Senate.pdf

Cuts to the Senior grants could be detrimental to our senior population which is only increasing in Alaska. In rural areas such as Ketchikan, we struggle providing services to seniors due to limited resources. The SDS department is cutting back on the amount of hours and eligibility is becoming more hard to attain, creating hardships. Families are going without services to help them with their loved ones. I believe that we are doing a disservice to our senior population. We are all going to be in that boat one day and I would hope there are services available for us. I believe that if there are other funding sources we can allocate those resources to serve more seniors.

Thank you so much,

Britt Pope

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 4:08 PM
To: Doniece Gott
Subject: FW: Personal Care Assistant Services

From: Rebecca Traylor [mailto:wbusters@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 3:56 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly <Sen.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov>
Subject: Personal Care Assistant Services

Hello,

My name is Rebecca Traylor.

I live in Salcha, Alaska.

I am proud to be a member of the local Fairbanks Disability Advocacy Group, WallBusters; as well as the Borough's Public Transportation Advisory Commission, and the Governor's State-wide Independent Living Council.

I am writing to you as a Disabled Person who receives Personal Care Assistance (PCA) services.

These services allow me to remain in my own Community; and the household of my choosing.

The two things I would most like you to know:

1. In my introduction I mentioned some of the groups I am involved with.

I am able to be a productive, *involved* member of society; which contributes to my own health and well-being.

This is due in large part to my PCA being in my home, providing the daily tasks I need assistance with.

Also; a lot of what I do is volunteer work,I *give back* on a daily basis.

2. The cost issues.

Having PCA services costs the State (Medicaid) approx. 25K a year. This is opposed to Institutional Care; which runs

(again, Medicaid) 65,000K-280,000K (the latter being Denali Center).

I am no Math whiz; but it appears that there is a HUGE cost savings to PCA services. I am only ONE person In Interior Alaska receiving these services. If there are even a few more (and there are!) the tens of thousands of dollars in savings adds up fast.

I thank you for your support for Independent Living!

Please continue to hear our message,

Rebecca Traylor

(907)490-2898

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 11:19 AM
To: Doniece Gott
Subject: FW: Revenue Sharing Testimony

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

From: Hamar, Stephanie (City of Kasaan) [mailto:cityofkasaan1@aptalaska.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 10:30 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly <Sen.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov>
Subject: Revenue Sharing Testimony

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am the City Administrator for the City of Kasaan, and am writing to share some personal thoughts on how Community Revenue Sharing affects my community of approximately 60 residents.

I have been hired to work 15 hours each week to carry out the day-to-day functions of operating a municipal office. Prior to my hire, the Mayor provided this service on a volunteer basis. With annual turnover in the Mayoral position, this caused difficulty in providing consistent, fair service to our residents. There is very little wasted time to be found in such a short, demanding schedule. I work tirelessly to keep us in compliance with state and local regulations, and to make forward progress during the rare ebbs in activity we see a few times each year.

In our municipality's combined work hours, we employ less than two full time staff. These other members of staff both work short, diligent hours. Our city is the sole provider of clean water, refuse removal, and sewer in the area (which is multiple hours from the nearest town). Besides these more obvious vital services, we also operate the post office, hold important historical information, provide a dry indoor place for residents to gather, and serve as the emergency center for the village.

This city may not be viable without the Community Revenue Sharing funds. Our budget has been cut further each year, and we aim to reduce expenses to the bare minimum. Raising costs for residents does bring in revenue, but in a village of only 60 people, you can only remove so much before the pockets are empty. Community Revenue Sharing has been a big contributor in our ability to provide access to clean water and other necessities to our residents. After trimming operating costs significantly, removal of services may be the inevitable reality for our residents.

In a remote village without water, sewer, or a way to remove refuse, do the people remain? Does one of two remaining Alaskan Haida villages dwindle into nonexistence as its residents relocate? Our people may have once quenched their thirst from the rivers, produced no more than midden as refuse, and taken care of personal business behind a tree, but the reality of being Alaskan Native has changed. I can't possibly read the future, but I can call on past experience to see possible outcomes, and this one is very concerning.

I ask that whomever has some responsibility in this decision deeply consider how it will impact small communities in Alaska that rely on Community Revenue Sharing funds.

Thank you,
Stephanie Hamar

State of Alaska

March 8, 2016

Rich Thorne, councilmember
City of Bettles
Box 26023
Bettles Field, AK 99726

re: State Community Revenue Sharing Program

Dear Honorable Members of both houses of Congress and Governor Walker,

Please restore full funding to the State CRS program. The importance of this program to the City of Bettles and to the State economy cannot be overstated. Ninety-eight percent of the entire budget of the City of Bettles consists of CRS funding, and the cuts we face even next fiscal year are unacceptable. Without CRS, the City of Bettles simply goes away. We have no private land and very little base for other taxes. Would the disappearance of the City of Bettles be a problem? What is the State getting for its CRS funds spent in Bettles?

Bettles is an important cog in the Alaska aviation system – we are the transportation hub into Gates of the Arctic National Park and the only alternate landing field that sells aviation fuels between Deadhorse and Fairbanks, Kotzebue and Fort Yukon – a very large piece of real estate. “A place we count on,” my pilot friends tell me. CRS funds our local road maintenance, our fire department, and our ice road connection to the Dalton Highway.

The Bettles Ice Road consumes 50% of our budget currently. With no prospects of the State building an all-weather road to Bettles, our ice road is critical: the \$50,000 we spend each year on the ice road saves the communities of Bettles and Evansville (combined) \$600,000 in transportation costs (ice road compared to air transport). That's \$600K our community can't afford – the increase in costs of living and doing business would drive many of us out of the community. Lower transportation costs help keep us competitive in the worldwide tourist business – our tourist industry is worth more than \$12 million to the economy of Fairbanks, as all of our clients must travel through Fairbanks to get here. If Bettles wasn't here, would those clients go elsewhere in Alaska? Perhaps – but 2/3 of them are making Bettles their sole choice destination because of our superior weather for aurora viewing and because of the access our air taxis provide to hunting and hiking areas and river float trips. Those 2/3 of our clients wouldn't come to Alaska at all if Bettles wasn't available. Killing Bettles will have a major impact on Fairbanks. The Community Revenue Sharing program for the City of Bettles is a great investment in the State economy. Please restore full funding at FY2016 level to the State CRS program.

Thank you for considering us,

Rich Thorne

Doniece Gott

From: Levitation 49 <levitation49@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 1:54 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Do NOT cut funding for Public Radio

Dear Sen. Dunleavy and Finance Committee,

Please do NOT eliminate state funding for public radio. KCHU is the lifeblood of the community here in Valdez and the Copper River Basin. They cover important stories and disseminate information about news, people as well as local and statewide initiatives that matter to our community in ways we cannot otherwise get such information.

Our other media outlets do not go into the depth and provide context like KCHU. If they went away it would be a serious blow to engaging and critical debate and information sharing in our area and even across the state since AK Public Media sometimes rebroadcasts the fine stories KCHU produces.

Please do NOT cut funding to public radio. We all need the best informed electorate and citizenry to help us all chart a new course through the current fiscal challenges and create a path forward to a brighter future for Alaska.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Lee Hart

Executive Director

Levitation 49

P.O. Box 1783

Valdez, AK 99686

Doniece Gott

From: Mary Corcoran <marycorc@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:12 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Avoid cuts to public media

I urge this committee to avoid devastating cuts to public media. Non profit public stations and commercial for profit stations have different missions that cannot be blended or substituted and still benefit the public. Public media has taken cuts for the past several years and has already adjusted its programming and personnel.

I am a contributing member of 2 public stations—KUAC (Fairbanks) and KCHU (Valdez). There are many places on PWS where internet coverage is not available, cell signal is spotty or non-existent. People in smaller, remote communities depend on regional and local coverage of weather, road conditions, marine forecast and conditions which are important to safety. and play a vital role in decisions re. travel, etc. These stations link business between these communities. Local news coverage may be only once a week in print. Public radio broadcasts local news several times daily.

In addition, programming is set within budget to fit viewer/listener needs. The rich variety offered by public stations is not going to occur on for profit media. All this information is vital to an informed citizen.

Commercial media stations based in high population areas have neither the coverage area nor the need to notify outlying communities. Their first mission is to make a profit. This issue is very important to me. I hope that my situation is very important to you.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Mary Corcoran

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Anna MacKinnon
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:15 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Public radio funding

Kristen Pratt
Legislative Aide
Office of Senator Anna MacKinnon
Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol | Room 516
(907) 694-8944

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

From: Kristeen [mailto:awildfish@hughes.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 1:46 PM
To: Sen. Anna MacKinnon <Sen.Anna.MacKinnon@akleg.gov>
Subject: Public radio funding

I am writing you in support of public radio funding.

My husband and I have lived in Yakutat for 45 years and it can be challenging to function in the 21st century from this very remote location.

Our community is economically depressed and struggling already. Many have left to find employment elsewhere. Though our public radio station covers a wide area and its support is strong, there is no deep well of local financial support that can replace what the state and federal government provide. It is a reliable source of local, state and national news, and more importantly---essential emergency information. It's the first place we turn during times of earthquake or tsunami alerts. There is no commercial radio station that can step in and fill the void.

Eliminating all state funding affects the ability of the station to receive matching federal help. The current budget proposal could very likely end the ability of our station to function at all.

Thank you for your efforts to find a budget that will work for the state in the dire circumstances it is in. I appreciate the difficult position the legislature is in, but please, don't eliminate all funding for public broadcasting in Alaska. It is much too important to rural Alaska.

Kris Widdows
Yakutat, AK. 99689

Doniece Gott

From: Dan P Bilderback <danbilderback@gmail.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:15 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public Radio funding

Hi, I'm Dan Bilderback a resident of Anchorage, AK and I would urge you to keep funding for Public Radio in Alaska. Besides being a good deal as the Federal Government matches the State funds, It provides quality news coverage and entertainment. Thank You Respectibly, Dan Bilderback, 4623 Campus Circle, Anchorage, AK 99507 Ph# (907)632-0079

Doniece Gott

From: William Updegrove <williamupdegrove@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:28 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Testimony on Public Broadcasting Budget

Senate Finance Committee Testimony – March 8, 2016

William Updegrove

PO Box 1872

Bethel, Alaska 99559

Last month I was the only “public” attendee at the APTI board meeting in Anchorage. I learned that the Anchorage stations will experience painful cutbacks under the current budget proposals. The scenario presented by the APTI CFO, however, outlined the even more extensive domino effect of lost revenue - the loss of both federal and underwriter funding and the closing of most rural stations. The impact of cuts will be both disproportionate and devastating for rural Alaskans. KSKA can probably continue to fund “Alaska News Nightly” but there will be no rural news feed to the program and no one able to hear the program outside of the railbelt. It will no longer be statewide news nor will it reach a statewide audience. Without bush access to statewide programming, *Gavel to Gavel* will become a memory of a former time when the Alaska legislature chose to inform and include all the citizens of the state in legislative affairs.

As members of the Senate Finance Committee you have heard the “talking points” from multiple individuals regarding the proposed cuts to public broadcasting in the FY17 budget. I’ll add my own list of public broadcasting resources important to me: APRN and NPR reporting, PBS programming - both entertainment and news/information, local news and community interaction.

“Zero” funding can no longer be considered a prudent fiscal reduction or belt tightening – especially on top of the deep cuts already in the current year’s budget – it means the outright end to public radio and television in the bush and to the entire state wide public broadcasting network. There are no commercial stations in the bush to fill the gap left by the loss of public broadcasting. Even in the leanest of state budgets in the past, the old RATNET was recognized as an important service to maintain.

Avalanches are an Alaskan reality. Even seasoned backcountry skiers are never 100% sure of the consequences of a winter ski trip. The proposed reduction in funding to public broadcasting is like skiing across the face of a steep slope – exhilarating but highly dangerous and most likely fatal. The committee may feel forced onto dangerous slopes to deal with our fiscal crisis – but I urge extreme caution because of the snowballing effect of cuts to the future of Alaska Public Broadcasting across the state.

The avalanche from “zero funding” is both predictable and avoidable. I challenge any on the committee whose budget knife is *intentionally* aimed at the jugular of public broadcasting not to posture behind fiscal responsibility but to have the honesty to tell the public that their intention is not just to defund, but to kill the public broadcast system that helps to bind urban and bush Alaska together as one state. Alaskans have repeatedly voiced their willingness to be taxed and/or receive reduced PFDs in order to maintain desired state services. Listen to them. Please restore the proposed budget cuts and maintain the integrity of Public Broadcasting.

Doniece Gott

From: Sue Bergstrom <suebergstrom@ymail.com>
nt: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:33 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public Broadcasting Budget
Attachments: CSG funding levels.pdf

Dear Committee Members;

I am writing about the Public Broadcasting portion of next year's proposed budget. It seems that some members of the committee are misinformed and are under the impression that a cut in State of Alaska Operating funds can be made up with Corporation for Public Broadcasting funds. It's important that committee members understand that zeroing out State Operating Funds for public radio stations is literally a death sentence for certain small stations. They can not make up for the loss with their federal operating grants. Corporation for Public Broadcasting funding requires local matching; NFFS or Non-federally funded share. I have attached the explanation from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting web site. CSG refers to Community Service Grant.

Public Radio is not a 'non-essential' service to many of Alaska's most vulnerable residents. Committee members should be aware that there are still places in this state where people not only do not have cell phones or internet access, they don't have electricity or mail delivery. Even if public radio is not the sole service in these areas, which it often is, commercial radio stations, especially the smaller ones, often broadcast all pre-packaged programming purchased from outside and do little or no local production; including news, weather and emergency broadcasts.

Hopefully understanding that the small, rural stations are likely to go away without State of Alaska Operating Funds because, unlike big city stations, they don't have the membership base or local business options to make up the money to keep their federal grants, and that these stations are not just one in many information options to many of their listeners, will help you see your way clear to re-thinking the proposed budget cut.

Sincerely,

Susan Stade Bergstrom
PO Box 3398
Valdez AK 99686

Doniece Gott

From: millimom@xyz.net
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 3:29 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Gary Stevens
Cc: bCicciarella@kpb.us; dave@kbbi.org
Subject: Budget

To add my voice to tomorrow's hearings:

1. Please restore funding to Public Radio and broadcasting. Public Radio is our first line of defense in an emergency. As a member of the Kachemak Bay Emergency Fire Service Area Board of Directors, I know how important public radio is to the Kenai Peninsula. Over the past years we suffered a severe earth quake and fires. Public radio was there. Please note, it is also dependent on Alaska Public Broadcasting, as many smaller stations are, for engineering support. And, without State funding, they will not be eligible for Federal Funding. Public Radio keeps us informed, allowing us to hear Assembly and Council meetings.
2. DOT: During the big snow storm that hit the Homer area last month, had we had a fire or emergency, KESA could not have gotten thier equipment where needed because the state roads had not been plowed. This is a area the legislature must look at seriously. We are talking safety, life and property.
3. Schools: our children are our future. You deny them a proper education, you will pay a price later. They are the ones to one day support thier elders. Please, maintain funding for our schools.

Thank you all for listening.

Sincerely,

Milli Martin
P>O> Box 2652
Homer, AK 99603
907-235-6652

Doniece Gott

From: Janis Johnson <jljohnso@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:45 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public Radio

Public radio provides a valuable and needed source of information to much of rural Alaska. Public radio is not a frill, it is vital communication to people in our large state. Public radio must have state funding in order to access federal funding. Zeroing out public media will result in the loss of all federal funding as well, and this vital communications network in our great state will fail. Please do not cut all funding for public radio in Alaska.

Janis Johnson
PO box 2168
Valdez Ak 99686
Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Pamela V <pbv@valdezak.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 3:02 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: KCHU Public Radio

I am writing to express my support for KCHU Public Radio in Valdez, Alaska.

I write to you both as a citizen of Valdez, and as the President of United Way Valdez.

I personally believe in the mission of KCHU and believe that it provides a vital service to our community. KCHU is known for being where to turn in an emergency and as a communications lifeline to the outlying communities. But, KCHU provides more than that. KCHU has links to local service organizations, promotes mental health and well being through a variety of informational, educational and entertaining programming options. I have personally been a member of KCHU and personally support KCHU during their fundraisers.

In addition, as a United Way Valdez Board Member (and now, President), I have been proud to financially support the missions of KCHU. United Way Valdez has helped them upgrade some of their equipment and a few years ago, we were able to provide emergency funding to replace a tower damaged by a storm.

United Way Valdez is proud to be able to support the organizations that are serving our community in the areas of meeting the basic needs of people in crisis, promoting wellness and self-sufficiency, helping children and youth succeed, and supporting the elderly and people with disabilities.

I support KCHU Public Radio, and I strongly encourage you to do the same.

Sincerely,
Pamela Verfaillie
PO Box 1996
Valdez, AK 99686

Doniece Gott

From: Ruth Althoff <alaskaruthandcharlie@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 3:06 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public radio funding

Hello folks, Senators, Representatives;

I live in Tanana Alaska up here in the interior, and thanks to the support from the State we have a repeater for radio station KIYU here in Tanana. In addition to the obvious benefits in knitting our community together with community public radio, is the sometimes unmentioned importance of an emergency capability of warning or preparing people for natural disasters, flood, fire, or other calamities--all of which we have had plenty of lately!. So, I would like you to frame this discussion in terms of life-health-safety, and urge you to continue funding it at the same level so we have a way of helping people get the word when emergencies strike.

Thanks for your help,
Charlie Campbell
Tanana City Council



March 8, 2016

Alaska State Legislatures

City of Chevak
Mayor Richard Tuluk
P.O. Box 136
Chevak, Alaska 99563
ph. (907)858-7128

Public Testimony

Chevak is located in the western part of Alaska, and has a population up to 1000 people. Chevak provides a local KCUK 88.1 FM radio station and is license to the Kashunamuit School District Board of Directors which is a big impact in the village and surrounding villages within the coverage area. KCUK radio station can also be aired online. Closer communities like Hooper Bay can listen to the radio station on daily basis.

KCUK radio station are essential to indigenous people in Chevak and the surrounding villages because they broadcast in Yup'ik/Cup'ik languages, often providing the only means of access to important information about health, public safety, education, weather and current events. They also provide live talk shows that focus on our way of life, live broadcast of high school basketball games, community meeting, workshops, and conference. KCUK radio station is not only broadcasted in English but is also in Yup'ik/Cup'ik languages. Provides daily Yup'ik/Cup'ik languages and cultural stories from our Elders and Youth. Provides radio services to undeserved communities and families that are in fish camp. It connects communities together through the programs that are aired daily.

On behalf of our community of Chevak and surrounding villages we are very thankful for your hard work for your constituents and for our communities you represent. We are asking the state legislatures to continue funding for Alaska Public Broadcasting.

Quyana!
Sincerely,

Richard Tuluk
Mayor

cc: Files

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 11:18 AM
To: Doniece Gott
Subject: FW: OWL funding - please restore!

From: Colleen Coadic [mailto:colleencoadic@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 10:41 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly <Sen.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov>; Sen. Anna MacKinnon <Sen.Anna.MacKinnon@akleg.gov>; Sen. Peter Micciche <Sen.Peter.Micciche@akleg.gov>; Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Dunleavy <Sen.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>
Subject: OWL funding - please restore!

Dear Senators,
I am writing asking that you please restore OWL funding.

As you may know, OWL, is an important program that funds broadband internet, used by 43 public libraries for their patrons and numerous agencies.

It was included in the Governor's budget, but cut from the House Finance Committee's budget and the Senate Finance Committee.

Please support this portion of the Governor's request and keep OWL available to those 43 public libraries.

I know you understand the importance of this program to many people statewide, particularly rural Alaskans, but did you know this program also brings in a 4-1 match of federal e-rate funding dollars?

Left unfunded, those federal dollars are left on the table.

OWL funding is small

,
but immense in it's range and scope.

If cut, these libraries will not be able to absorb the high cost of broadband internet access. Libraries will be in the difficult position of having to raise funds to cover this cost, virtually impossible for all of these libraries.

I
f libraries begin to charge for internet access, already underserved members of our communities, many of whom are using library resources, will not be able to afford this expense

any folks across Alaska who have no means for this cost, thus rendering them unable to participate in the 21st century

,
except through their public library

:

way

to apply for jobs, beef up skills, apply for government assistance, etc.

, lost.

Please restore OWL funding. It'll make an immense difference to many people statewide

!

Thank you for your time and help with this matter.

--

Colleen T. Coadic

LMT: NCBTMB, AMTA, Usui R-tM

AK AMTA Board of Directors, Secretary

Recording Artist, Professional Musician

This email and contents is intended for the addressee, and is thus protected by HIPAA, Internet Privacy Laws, and mutual moral sensibilities. If received by imperfect strangers; I disavow all content. This message will self destruct in 5 seconds. Just kidding. A girl can dream.

Doniece Gott

From: Erin Hollingsworth <erin.hollingsworth@tuzzy.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 4:12 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: public testimony on SB 139

Dear Senate Committee Finance Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the proposed operating budget. I appreciate your time and consideration. The state is being faced with difficult times and I understand that there are many requests for a limited fund.

I would like to highlight again my concern for the continued funding for the OWL broadband program, the early literacy programs and public broadcasting. All of these services are vital to the daily life on the North Slope. Below are a few examples:

Recently, Tuzzy Consortium Library was able to host Iñisaġvik College's 30 hour OSHA Maritime Standards course via the OWL network. Eight students received advanced education that will better prepare them for employment because of this service. The economic and education benefits of funding OWL go beyond the obvious as well; matching federal e-rate funds for this grant also contribute to providing access opportunities to many rural Alaskans. The funding of this connectivity allows for online access for many of Alaska's most remote and rural communities.

Early literacy funding is also vital to all Alaskans. Best Beginnings, Parents as Teachers and the Pre K grants all work to ensure that our children achieve kindergarten readiness by age five. The first months of a baby's life are crucial for brain development. The cognitive growth that takes place during this time is key to a child's future academic success. These children will be tomorrow's leaders and it is best to equip them with any advantage possible. The North Slope Imagination Library, which is operated with help and support from Best Beginnings, has an 85% enrollment. This means that 85% of the eligible children will enter kindergarten with 60 books in their homes. These families are being equipped with tools to help the children be prepared to learn when they enter school.

Public broadcasting is a major concern in Barrow and on the North Slope. KBRW, the public radio station, is the means for dissemination of vital information regarding weather, community health notices, public safety and local government. The school and borough closures are broadcast through this medium. The radio is used to notify the community when the drinking water needs to be boiled and when the villages are under rabies quarantine. Public radio is also how average citizens can participate in assembly meetings, school board meetings, and other forms of local government. It is also a vital source of information for the hunters and

whalers who depend upon the local weather forecasts. There is no other service on the North Slope that can replace what KBRW does for the community.

Thank you again for your time.

Respectfully,

Erin Hollingsworth, MLIS, M.Ed

Public Services Librarian

Tuzzy Consortium Library

Iḷisagvik College

P.O. Box 2130

Barrow, AK 99723

erin.hollingsworth@tuzzy.org

Ph: 907.852.4050

Fax: 907.852.4059

Doniece Gott

From: Mary Jo Joiner <ojeram3@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 1:48 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: OWL Funding

My name is Mary Jo Joiner and I am a member of the Board of the Alaska Library Association.

I realize that this year there is a substantial strain on financial resources, but the OWL program which was in the governor's budget and has been cut should be restored.

Recently, I received a phone call from an angry community member. He railed about the fact that there were no IRS forms at the post office and very few available at the library. He was irate. I tried to explain that we are at the mercy of the IRS and they have drastically cut costs by not printing many forms and that those forms are available online. He did not have the ability to access and print forms at home.

If you expect Alaskans to apply for their PFDs online, to access any of your webpages or like you on Facebook, to send you email or even to apply for jobs, they must have internet access that allows them to do this. As more forms and government information are only available electronically we see people coming to the library for access and assistance.

The OWL program supports internet costs for the smallest rural Alaskan public libraries. Without internet access in our public libraries many Alaskans simply don't have access to and/or cannot afford broadband at a speed that allows them to do these things. The internet subsidy in the OWL budget of \$262,000 leverages more than \$1 million dollars in E-rate funds.

Without sufficient broadband speeds the OWL network cannot provide the videoconferencing capability that is in place today. For many communities this equipment will no longer be able to fulfill the function that it was intended for.

Where previously people would travel for training, continuing education or conferences, OWL provides an alternative to that travel. With OWL we can share cultural programming, lectures and courses. It allows desktop videoconferencing from home/office or business. In 2015, there were 532 interactive videoconferences using the network.

Please continue to support these programs for all Alaskans.

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Anna MacKinnon
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:14 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Please fund OWL!

Kristen Pratt

Legislative Aide
Office of Senator Anna MacKinnon
Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol | Room 516
(907) 694-8944


From: Toby Widdicombe [mailto:twiddicombe@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 12:57 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly <Sen.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov>; Sen. Anna MacKinnon <Sen.Anna.MacKinnon@akleg.gov>; Sen. Peter Micciche <Sen.Peter.Micciche@akleg.gov>; Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Dunleavy <Sen.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please fund OWL!

Please restore funding for OWL.

OWL is a vital program that funds broadband internet used by 43 public libraries for their patrons and numerous agencies. It was included in the Governor's budget, but cut from the House Finance Committee's budget and the Senate Finance Committee. I know you understand the importance of this program to many people statewide, particularly rural Alaskans. You may, however, not know that this program brings in a 4-1 match of federal e-rate funding dollars. If OWL is left unfunded, those federal dollars are left on the table. To leave them there is fiscally unsound.

OWL funding is small but immense in its range and scope. If the funding is cut, these libraries will not be able to absorb the high cost of broadband internet access. Libraries will be in the difficult position of having to raise funds to cover this cost. Doing so is nearly impossible for them. If libraries begin to charge for internet access, those already underserved members of our communities, many of whom are using library resources, will not be able to afford this cost. It's hard to believe but there are many folks across Alaska who have no means to pay for internet access. Without help, they will be unable to participate in the 21st century except through their public library. No way to apply for jobs, beef up skills, apply for government assistance. No way to be good citizens.

Please restore OWL funding. It'll make an immense difference to many people statewide. Thank you.

oby Widdicombe



Doniece Gott

From: emily harshman <eehars@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 3:29 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: early childhood education

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

I urge you to reconsider cutting funds for early childhood education in Alaska. While I understand that Alaska is facing a very difficult budget shortfall and that funds must be cut, I would like you consider the future of our state and country before cutting early childhood education. Our children are our future and are also among our most vulnerable citizens in Alaska. After all, they are not old enough to have any say in issues that affect their future. Children under the age of 5 make up 7.5% of Alaska's population, and yet we only spend 0.5% of the budget on them.

While we face financial hardships today, we must also be looking towards building a better future. Our children are that future and it is vitally important that they receive a great education. After all, they will be the ones deciding important things about our own future as we age! Numerous studies have shown that the first three years of our lives are crucial for brain development. The major difference between brain development in a child versus learning an adult is a matter of degree: the brain is far more impressionable (neuroscientists use the term plastic) in early life than in maturity. This plasticity has both a positive and a negative side. On the positive side, it means that young children's brains are more open to learning and enriching influences. On the negative side, it also means that young children's brains are more vulnerable to developmental problems should their environment prove especially impoverished or un-nurturing.

Early education programs like Parent As Teachers (PAT) are extremely important in helping families to understand the importance of nurturing and teaching our children. They also help spot problems early, thus getting children the help that they need to become successful adults. My daughter was enrolled in Parents as Teachers, but we unfortunately lost our spot due to funding cuts last year. We really miss having the support that this program gave us. As a first time mom, this program was invaluable to my family during the time we were enrolled. We have learned so many valuable skills from this program including better ways to interact with our daughter in order to encourage her curiosity and learning. This is a fantastic community resource that will improve the lives of children provided that they receive funding. Let us not forget that knowledge is power and that raising children is a community effort. Children do not come with owner's manuals, programs like PAT give parents the tools to help their children thrive.

My daughter is also enrolled in the imagination library program in which she receive a new book every month. She loves getting new books and spends hours looking at her books. She is learning so many valuable things through these books.

An overwhelming body of science and research tells us that investments in early childhood -- such as in-home visits; exposure to plenty of high-quality, age-appropriate books; lots of quality parent engagement; and high quality pre-K -- reap concrete returns from cost savings and greater economic productivity. Investments in early childhood save money in the schools by reducing the need for remediation, special education and holding children back. Investments in early childhood save costs in the criminal justice system and overall welfare.

While I know that you will have to make many difficult decisions while balancing the budget, I urge you consider our future and to not cut educational programs for children. Doing so will have a very negative effect on all of Alaska. It will also cost the state much more money in the future.

Sincerely,
Emily Palmer, Juneau AK

Doniece Gott

From: Holly Willman <akdevushka@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 3:04 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Fwd: Please reinstate support for Early Education

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

As an Alaskan mother of 3 young children ages 3, 5, and 7, I see the positive impacts early childhood learning every day. The human brain undergoes extraordinary development in the first three years of life as children acquire the ability to think, speak, learn, and reason. Research continues to show the experiences humans beings have during this critical time shapes their beliefs and abilities to achieve in the future.

As a mentor to at risk high school youth, I unfortunately also see the negative impacts that not having early childhood learning opportunities brings. It deeply troubles me knowing that fewer than half of Alaska's young children start school with all the skills experts say they need to succeed. I witnessed this first hand while volunteering a couple years ago in my eldest child's kindergarten – it was surprising the wide range of abilities the children had from a few being able to read to some who could not recognize the letters in the alphabet. At 5 - 6 years old, this difference is astounding! The teachers in the K-12 system do their best to support every child, however inevitably many children simply do not have the proper foundation on which to build a higher education. The K-12 system tries to keep up however many kids fall through, and end up need more and more costly intervention services to try to bring them around to being contributing members of our communities. It's simple to me – as a society we will pay now, or pay later, but either way it will cost us. Current research continues to show that early preventive intervention is more efficient and produces better outcomes than remediation later in life. Eliminating early childhood investments now increase a child's chances of going to prison later by up to 39%.

I believe access to books is the most critical thing for early childhood learning - "Having as few as 20 books in the home has a significant impact on propelling a child to a higher level of education, and the more books you add, the greater the benefit." (Family Scholarly Culture and Educational Success: Books and Schooling in 27 Nations, University of Reno Nevada). I also believe that community outreach programs like Parents as Teachers provide critical support for new parents who are struggling to survive or work through challenges life throws at them. I understand this personally as after the birth of two healthy children, our third child had many undiagnosed medical issues that plagued him for the first 2+ years of his life. With support from groups like Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers, we have been able to more positively impact our son and all our children's lives to better support their needs as they grow.

There are a few key pieces of information that make up the business case for the State of Alaska to invest in early childhood learning:

- Parents as Teachers is an evidence-based, home-visiting model that provides parent education and support to pregnant women and families with children from 0-5. Families participate in two personal visits and a group activity every month. Outcomes are exceptionally positive for school readiness.
- Parents as Teachers participants report improved parent-child relationships, less stress, and increased children's school readiness — all for \$4-5,000 per family per year. It makes economic sense to help these young Alaskans achieve higher potentials!
- In March 2016, 20,904 Alaska children 0-5 will receive an Imagination Library book in the mail, at no cost to their families. This is 39% of all children under 5, down from a high of 44% and continuing to decrease due to the State's FY 2017 funding cut. If the funding is cut in full, Imagination Library will not be able to continue across the State.
- Best Beginnings leverages State funding alongside funding from corporate, foundation, and individual donors to support Imagination Libraries across Alaska. Without State funding, these private dollars may be lost, and less children will have the building blocks in place to begin school ready to succeed.
- One year of Imagination Library books (one every month) costs \$30 per child. This is exceptionally efficient use of scarce resources!
- Alaskan's support early learning: Responding to a statewide survey conducted last September, 71% of 750 **Alaskans said that in current tough economic times, they support investment of state funds in early childhood programs as a strategy for ensuring Alaska's long-term prosperity.**

Early education and learning programs are all about providing opportunities for young children and their families to learn, and these critical programs provide excellent value for the dollar compared to recovery programs later.

I urge you to please support restoration of this funding to support Alaska's children today, and our future potential tomorrow!! It is a small but critical investment into efficient programs today that will make an enormous difference in the lives of Alaska's children, and the potential for Alaskan communities to achieve for years to come.

Sincerely,

Holly Willman

Alaskan since 2001, Parent since 2008

Best Beginnings Board Member since 2012

Doniece Gott

From: Meagan Craig <mnewirth@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 3:09 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please Support Best Beginnings

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Meagan Craig and I am currently on the Board for the Imagination Library in Valdez, Alaska. It is my understanding that funding for Best Beginnings has been cut entirely and I beg you to please reconsider. Best Beginnings has helped fund critical programs such as Imagination Library, which is a program that greatly benefits the young children of Alaska. Programs that benefit Alaska's youth should be at the forefront because the children are Alaska's future. Please reconsider the decision to cut funding, Alaska's youth are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Meagan Craig

Please contact your local Legislative Information Office (LIO) with questions or problems.
 A complete list of LIOs can be found at w3.legis.state.ak.us/misc/lios.php

This form must be completely filled out. You may phone, fax, or deliver your POM to any LIO.

From: Please **PRINT** the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mr. / Ms. / Mrs.	First name Hannah	M.I. F	Last name Armstrong	Jr. / Sr. / III
Group affiliation (if applicable)			Daytime telephone number 907-470-4090	
Mailing address Box 2312 Wrangell, AK			Zip code 99929	
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address 45 mile Zimovia			Zip code	
Email address harmstrong@wpsd.us		Signature <i>Hannah Armstrong</i>		Date 3/8/16

To: Put a in the appropriate box(es).

	Committees	House members	Senate members
H or S			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community & Regional	<input type="checkbox"/> Chenault (che)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lynn (lyn)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education (edc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Claman (cia)	<input type="checkbox"/> Millett (mil)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance (fin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Colver (cov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Munoz (mun)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health & Social Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Drummond (dru)	<input type="checkbox"/> Nageak (nag)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Judiciary (jud)	<input type="checkbox"/> Edgmon (edg)	<input type="checkbox"/> Neuman (neu)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor & Commerce (l&c)	<input type="checkbox"/> Foster (fon)	<input type="checkbox"/> Olson (oll)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources (res)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gara (gar)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ortiz (ort)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rules (rls)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gattis (gat)	<input type="checkbox"/> Prutt (pru)
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Affairs (sta)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gruenberg (gru)	<input type="checkbox"/> Reinbold (rei)
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Hawker (haw)	<input type="checkbox"/> Seaton (san)
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		<input type="checkbox"/> Johnson (jhn)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tarr (tar)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Josephson (jos)	<input type="checkbox"/> Thompson(thp)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Kawasaki (kaw)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tilton (tit)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Keller (kee)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuck (tuc)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Kito III (kio)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vazquez (vaq)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Kreiss-Tomkins(kre)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson (wit)
		<input type="checkbox"/> LeDoux (leu)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wool (woo)
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			<input type="checkbox"/> Ellis (ell)
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			<input type="checkbox"/> Olson (ols)
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stedman (smn)
			<input type="checkbox"/> Stevens (stg)
			<input type="checkbox"/> Stoltze (stz)
			<input type="checkbox"/> Wielechowski (wie)

Subject: Fill out the boxes below **OR** enter a Subject.

HB or SB	Bill number	and check one:	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Amend	OR enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
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Message: Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

Please	Keep	the	BSA + \$50	Funding	5
for	next	year.			10
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Please contact your local Legislative Information Office (LIO) with questions or problems.
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This form must be completely filled out. You may phone, fax, or deliver your POM to any LIO.

From: Please PRINT the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mt. / Ms. / Mrs.	First name Jenn	M.I.	Last name Miller	Jr. / Sr. / III
Group affiliation (if applicable)				Daytime telephone number 907 305 0926
Mailing address Box 1899 Wrangell Alaska				Zip code 99929
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address 2.5 Mile Zimovia Hwy				Zip code 99929
Email address jmillerewpsd.us			Signature <i>Jenn Miller</i>	Date 3/7/16

To: Put a ✓ in the appropriate box(es).

	Committees	House members	Senate members
H or S			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community & Regional	<input type="checkbox"/> Chenault (che)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bishop (bis)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education (edc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Claman (cla)	<input type="checkbox"/> Coghill (cgl)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance (fin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Colver (cov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Costello (cos)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health & Social Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Drummond (dru)	<input type="checkbox"/> Dunleavy (dni)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Judiciary (jud)	<input type="checkbox"/> Edgmon (edg)	<input type="checkbox"/> Egan (ega)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor & Commerce (l&c)	<input type="checkbox"/> Foster (fon)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ellis (ell)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources (res)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gara (gar)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gardner (gan)
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation (tra)	<input type="checkbox"/> Guttenberg (gtt)	<input type="checkbox"/> Huggins (hug)
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		<input type="checkbox"/> Vazquez (vaq)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson (wlt)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wool (woo)	

Subject: Fill out the boxes below OR enter a Subject.

HB or SB	Bill number	and check one.	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Amend	<u>OR</u> enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
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Message: Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

I	Strongly	urge	you	to	5
keep	the	BSA +050	funding	for	10
next	year.				15
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From: Please PRINT the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mr. / Ms. / Mrs	First name	M.I.	Last name	Jr. / Sr. / III
Mrs.	Jennifer	O	Gerald	
Group affiliation (if applicable)				Daytime telephone number
				907-874-4577
Mailing address			Zip code	
PO Box 2084 Wrangell, AK			99929	
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address				Zip code
321 First Ave				
Email address			Signature	Date
jgerald@wpsd.us			<i>Jennifer Gerald</i>	3/8/16

To: Put a ✓ in the appropriate box(es).

	Committees	House members	Senate members
H or S			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community & Regional Education (edc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Chenault (che)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bishop (bis)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance (fin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cleman (cla)	<input type="checkbox"/> Coghill (cgl)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health & Social Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Colver (cov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Costello (cos)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Judiciary (jud)	<input type="checkbox"/> Drummond (dru)	<input type="checkbox"/> Dunleavy (dni)
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		<input type="checkbox"/> Herron (heo)	<input type="checkbox"/> MacKinnon (mai)
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		<input type="checkbox"/> Vazquez (vaq)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson (wit)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wool (woo)	

Subject: Fill out the boxes below OR enter a Subject.

HB or SB	Bill number	and check one:	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	OR enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
		<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Amend	

Message: Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

Please	Keep	the	BSA + \$50. ⁰⁰	ending ⁵
for	next	year		¹⁰
				¹⁵
				²⁰
				²⁵
				³⁰
				³⁵
				⁴⁰
				⁴⁵
				⁵⁰

March 8, 2016

Senate Finance Committee

Written testimony on SB139

To the Co-Chairs Senator Kelly and MacKinnon and the Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am writing this letter in support of the OWL (Online With Libraries) program. The OWL Program offers bandwidth support for our local library as well as videoconferencing services, equipment and training for library staff. In a rural community this is a great asset and help to the patrons as well as my staff. Many individuals have been able to participate in various classes and workshops through video conferencing and are able to use the internet to search and apply for jobs, file taxes, etc. This program has enriched our community and for many is the only way they can connect electronically.

I appreciate any support you can give to the OWL Program during this difficult financial time.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify,

Margaret Villarma, Director

Wrangell Irene Ingle Public Library

907-874-3535

I am Jeff Jabusch, the borough Manager for the City and Borough of Wrangell. As the finance director in Wrangell since 1977 and only recently the manager, I have seen the pre-oil years and then the various ups and downs since then.

We support the governor's budget which includes some funding of revenue sharing which makes up about 10% of our general fund budget. This like many of the cuts that you are considering will come at a cost of reduced essential services to especially smaller communities that don't seem to have the revenue generating options and tax base of larger communities. There may be other ways to assist local governments if these cuts are necessary.

1. A good look at the property tax exemption law would be an option. According to the State Assessor's Office, Wrangell has the highest percent of senior exemptions in Alaska. It is hard to find seniors in need to receive this exemption, but in many cases the exemption is for the wealthier in a community. Maybe you make this optional at the community level. I know this option will not be a popular one, but if it could be done on a need basis it may be more tolerable.

I would like to say that Wrangell if given a choice would prefer a state income tax versus a state sales tax. For those cities and boroughs that already have a 5, 6 or 7% sales tax as in Wrangell, Adding a sales tax to that or not allowing us to have 7% would limit our options to raise local revenue for the purpose of offsetting reduced state funding.

In our small community, public broadcasting is essential for the statewide emergency alert system and other important services. We do not have the luxury of other radio stations or local TV stations. If 100% of state funding is cut, our station would not be eligible for federal funds and the station would be shut down. We hope you can give this some consideration.

Finally, my testimony is no different than the thousands of others that will testify to keep various aspects of the current state budget, but after you have listened and decide how to best prioritize the money available, I do support a balanced state budget. Thank you and good luck.

SUSAN G. STEVENS, M.A., B.A.

KSTK - We can't afford to lose it.
Warning of impending disaster, such as
Queen Charlotte EARTH QUAKE allowing
us to get to higher ground. The radio
station draws the community together in
areas of culture (Tlingit Phrase of the
week heard 4 times a week) and music
is an important component that allows us
to know others and brings us closer together
as people and allows opportunity for
new friends and ss. (KSTK Fundraiser - Donate
and they will play the song).

Senior Citizen Tax Exemption - I haven't
been able to pay taxes for years, as I
am on Social Security. Senior citizens
have a lot to contribute. We have paid
our dues; I have worked all my life
since I was 7. ~~I am~~ I am 66
now. I have contributed volunteer
work since I was 32 years old and
continue to now.

Susan G. Stevens pg 2

As for the ALASKA State Ferry:

\$ Senator Murkowski recently got
\$580 million for state transportation.

I heard on the radio last week that
Unalakleet hasn't had a ferry for two
~~weeks~~³⁵ months! They are suffering
because they barely have food left
at the stores and ^{some} subsistence foods
important to their health have high
rates of mercury.

Why do we have to endure cuts
to the ferry system? The poorest
people are hurt by this action.

My name is Christine Jenkins an Alaska native Elder from Wrangell Alaska. I'm here to support that the state keep the Senior Citizen House tax exemption and any cuts that the seniors depend on. It would make a hardship for them to live on. Thank you for considering this opposition.

Legislative Testimony
3-8-2016

Patrick Mayer, Superintendent of The Wrangell public school district

I would like to say thanks to the all of you legislators who were able to meet with students, board members and Superintendents during our recent visits to Juneau, they are our future leaders.

I don't envy you the tasks you have ahead of you as you deal with the state budget.

Thank you very much for restoring the broadband assistance grants that are essential as we look at innovative ways to deliver instruction to students.

I have two requests regarding the state education budget.

- 1) Please keep education in the forefront of budget discussions and hold the BSA steady. Our costs in districts continue to escalate and our monies in the Wrangell public school district and others across the state are put to good use for our students.
- 2) My second request is with regard to the Alaska Department of education and early development budget. There are currently significant cuts proposed to the DEED budget for next year.

As districts, we do rely on the support we receive from DEED. I truly believe that the Department of Educations budget has been reduced to a level where if cut any further they would not be able adequately address compliance issues that support our ongoing receipt of federal dollars for such programs as Title I and Migrant Ed. The dollars associated with these categorical programs make up a significant part of our district budgets.

The current budget for DEED in front of senate finance contains cuts in travel, phone and mail but in reality if these cuts are imposed they will actually translate into reduction of personnel. Therefore, when we reduce personnel that will have a direct impact on the ability of the department to assist districts.

Finally, I would like to encourage you to please take the appropriate steps to craft a sustainable overall budget that includes enhanced revenue measures

Thank You very much for your efforts and your time.

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From: Please PRINT the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mr. / Ms. / Mrs	First name Kathryn	M.I. S	Last name Ballou	Jr. / Sr. / III
Group affiliation (if applicable)			Daytime telephone number 907-359-2544	
Mailing address Box 882 Wrangell, AK			Zip code 99929	
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address			Zip code	
Email address kballou-2012@hotmail.com		Signature Kathryn Ballou		Date 3/7/16

To: Put a in the appropriate box(es).

Committees		House members		Senate members	
<input type="checkbox"/> H or S	Community & Regional	<input type="checkbox"/> Chenault (che)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lynn (lyn)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bishop (bis)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education (edc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Claman (cla)	<input type="checkbox"/> Millett (mil)	<input type="checkbox"/> Coghill (cgl)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance (fin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Colver (cov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Munoz (mun)	<input type="checkbox"/> Costello (cos)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health & Social Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Drummond (dru)	<input type="checkbox"/> Nageak (nag)	<input type="checkbox"/> Dunleavy (dni)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Judiciary (jud)	<input type="checkbox"/> Edgmon (edg)	<input type="checkbox"/> Neuman (neu)	<input type="checkbox"/> Egan (ega)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor & Commerce (l&c)	<input type="checkbox"/> Foster (fon)	<input type="checkbox"/> Olson (oll)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ellis (ell)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources (res)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gara (gar)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ortiz (ort)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gardner (gan)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rules (rls)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gettis (gat)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pruitt (pru)	<input type="checkbox"/> Giessel (gio)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Affairs (sta)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gruenberg (gru)	<input type="checkbox"/> Reinbold (rel)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hoffman (hof)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation (tra)	<input type="checkbox"/> Guttenberg (gnt)	<input type="checkbox"/> Saddler (sad)	<input type="checkbox"/> Huggins (hug)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Hawker (haw)	<input type="checkbox"/> Seaton (san)	<input type="checkbox"/> Kelly (kep)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Herron (heo)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stutes (sts)	<input type="checkbox"/> MacKinnon (mai)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Hughes (hus)	<input type="checkbox"/> Talerico (tal)	<input type="checkbox"/> McGuire (mcg)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Johnson (jhn)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tarr (tar)	<input type="checkbox"/> Meyer (mey)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Josephson (jos)	<input type="checkbox"/> Thompson(thp)	<input type="checkbox"/> Micciche (mhe)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Kawasaki (kaw)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tilton (tit)	<input type="checkbox"/> Olson (ols)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Keller (kee)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuck (tuc)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stedman (smn)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Kito III (kio)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vazquez (vaq)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stevens (stg)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Kreiss-Tomkins(kre)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson (wit)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stoitze (stz)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> LeDoux (leu)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wool (woo)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wielechowski (wie)	

Subject: Fill out the boxes below OR enter a Subject.

HB or SB	Bill number	and check one:	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Amend	<u>OR</u> enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
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Message: Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

Please	Keep	the	BBA+\$50	funding	5
for	next	year.			10
					15
					20
					25
					30
					35
					40
					45
					50

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This form must be completely filled out. You may phone, fax, or deliver your POM to any LIO.

From: Please PRINT the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mr. / Ms. / Mrs	First name Brian	M.I. A.	Last name Merritt	Jr. / Sr. / III
Group affiliation (if applicable)			Daytime telephone number 907 305 0167	
Mailing address Box 401 Wrangell, AK			Zip code 99929	
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address 317 First Avenue			Zip code	
Email address bmerritt@wpsd.us		Signature B. Merritt		Date 3/7/16

To: Put a ✓ in the appropriate box(es).

Committees		House members			Senate members		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hors	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chenault (che)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lynn (lyn)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bishop (bis)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community & Regional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Claman (cla)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Millett (mil)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coghill (cgl)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education (edc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Colver (cov)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Munoz (mun)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Costello (cos)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance (fin)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drummond (dru)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nageak (nag)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dunleavy (dnl)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health & Social Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edgmon (edg)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neuman (neu)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Egan (ega)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Judiciary (jud)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster (fon)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Olson (oll)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ellis (ell)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor & Commerce (l&c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gara (gar)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ortiz (ort)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gardner (gan)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources (res)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gattis (gat)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pruitt (pru)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Giessel (gie)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rules (rls)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gruenberg (gru)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reinbold (rei)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hoffman (hof)
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Affairs (sta)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guttenberg (gtt)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Saddler (sad)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Huggins (hug)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation (tra)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hawker (haw)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seaton (san)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kelly (kep)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Herron (heo)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stutes (sts)	<input type="checkbox"/>	MackInnon (mal)
Special Committees		<input type="checkbox"/>	Hughes (hus)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Talerico (tal)	<input type="checkbox"/>	McGuire (mcg)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Econ Dev., Trade & Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>	Johnson (jhn)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tarr (tar)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meyer (mey)
<input type="checkbox"/>	House Energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Josephson (jos)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thompson(thp)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Micicche (mhe)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fisheries	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kawasaki (kaw)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tilton (tit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Olson (ols)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Military & Veterans' Affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keller (kee)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tuck (tuc)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stedman (smn)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fiscal Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kito III (kio)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vazquez (vaq)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stevens (stg)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Senate World Trade	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kreiss-Tomkins(kre)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wilson (wlt)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stoltze (stz)
		<input type="checkbox"/>	LeDoux (lev)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wool (woo)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wielechowski (wie)

Subject: Fill out the boxes below OR enter a Subject.

HB or SB	Bill number	and check one:	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<u>OR</u> enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
		<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Amend	
		<input type="checkbox"/>		

Message: Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

Please	Keep	the	BSA's	funding	5
for	next	year.	Small	school	10
districts	like	Wrangell	are	already	15
operating	on	a	bare	bones	20
budget.					25
					30
					35
					40
					45
					50

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From: Please PRINT the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mr. / Ms. / Mrs.	First name LAURA	M.I. C	Last name DAVIES	Jr. / Sr. / III
Group affiliation (if applicable)			Daytime telephone number 907 305 0761	
Mailing address PO BOX 1695 Wrangell, AK			Zip code 99929	
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address			Zip code	
Email address ldavies@wpsd.us		Signature <i>Laura Davies</i>		Date 3/7/16

To: Put a in the appropriate box(es).

	Committees	House members	Senate members
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> H or S	<input type="checkbox"/> Chenault (che)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lynn (lyn)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Community & Regional	<input type="checkbox"/> Claman (cla)	<input type="checkbox"/> Millett (mil)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Education (edc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Colver (cov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Munoz (mun)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance (fin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Drummond (dru)	<input type="checkbox"/> Nageak (nag)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Health & Social Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Edgmon (edg)	<input type="checkbox"/> Neuman (neu)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Judiciary (jud)	<input type="checkbox"/> Foster (fon)	<input type="checkbox"/> Olson (oll)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Labor & Commerce (l&c)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gara (gar)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ortiz (ort)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources (res)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gattis (gat)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pruitt (pru)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Rules (rls)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gruenberg (gru)	<input type="checkbox"/> Reinbold (rei)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> State Affairs (sta)	<input type="checkbox"/> Guttenberg (gtt)	<input type="checkbox"/> Saddler (sad)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation (tra)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hawker (haw)	<input type="checkbox"/> Seaton (san)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Herron (heo)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stutes (sts)
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Hughes (hus)	<input type="checkbox"/> Talerico (tal)
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Johnson (jhn)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tar: (tar)
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Josephson (jos)	<input type="checkbox"/> Thompson(thp)
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Kawasaki (kaw)	<input type="checkbox"/> Triton (tit)
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Keller (kee)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuck (tuc)
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Kito III (kio)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vazquez (vaq)
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Kreiss-Tomkins(kre)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson (wit)
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> LeDoux (leu)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wool (woo)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Bishop (bis)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Coghill (cog)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Costello (cos)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Dunleavy (dnl)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Egan (ega)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Ellis (ell)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Gardner (gan)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Giessel (gie)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Hoffman (hof)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Huggins (hug)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Kelly (kep)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> MacKinnon (mai)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> McGuire (mcg)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Meyer (mey)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Micicic (mhc)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Olson (ols)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stedman (smn)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Stevens (stg)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Stoltze (stz)
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Wielechowski (wie)

Subject: Fill out the boxes below OR enter a Subject.

HB or SB	Bill number	and check one:	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	OR enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
			<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Amend	

Message: Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

Please keep the BSA + \$50 funding for next year.				5
				10
				15
				20
				25
				30
				35
				40
				45
				50

Public Opinion message

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From: Please PRINT the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mr. / Ms. / Mrs. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	First name Mikki	M.I. J	Last name Angerman	Jr. / Sr. / III
Group affiliation (if applicable)				Daytime telephone number 907-305-0705
Mailing address PO BOX 7 Wrangell AK				Zip code 99929
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address				Zip code
Email address mangerman@wpsd.us		Signature <i>Mikki Angerman</i>		Date 3/7/16

To: Put a in the appropriate box(es).

Committees	House members	Senate members																																																																																																																	
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">H or S</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td>Community & Regional</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Education (edc)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Finance (fin)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Health & Social Services</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Judiciary (jud)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Labor & Commerce (l&c)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Resources (res)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Rules (rls)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>State Affairs (sta)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Transportation (tra)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Other:</td> </tr> </table>	H or S		Community & Regional			Education (edc)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance (fin)			Health & Social Services			Judiciary (jud)			Labor & Commerce (l&c)			Resources (res)			Rules (rls)			State Affairs (sta)			Transportation (tra)			Other:	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Chenault (che)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Claman (cla)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Coiver (cov)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Drummond (dru)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Edgmon (edg)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Foster (fon)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Gara (gar)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Gattis (gat)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Gruenberg (gru)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Guttenberg (gtt)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Hawker (haw)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Herron (heo)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Hughes (hus)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Johnson (jhn)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Josephson (jos)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Kawasaki (kaw)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Keller (kee)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Kito III (kio)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Kreiss-Tomkins (kre)</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>LeDoux (leu)</td></tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chenault (che)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Claman (cla)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coiver (cov)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drummond (dru)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edgmon (edg)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster (fon)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gara (gar)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gattis (gat)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gruenberg (gru)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guttenberg (gtt)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hawker (haw)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Herron (heo)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hughes (hus)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Johnson (jhn)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Josephson (jos)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kawasaki (kaw)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keller (kee)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kito III (kio)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kreiss-Tomkins (kre)	<input type="checkbox"/>	LeDoux (leu)	<table style="width: 100%; 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Subject: Fill out the boxes below OR enter a Subject.

HB or SB	Bill number	and check one:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Support	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	Oppose	<u>OR</u> enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
			<input type="checkbox"/>	Amend	

Message: Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

Please	Keep	the	BSA + \$50 funding	5
for	next	year.		10
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Please contact your local Legislative Information Office (LIO) with questions or problems.
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This form must be completely filled out. You may phone, fax, or deliver your POM to any LIO.

From: Please PRINT the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mr / Ms / Mrs.	First name: John	M.I. W.	Last name: Morse	Jr. / Sr. / III
Group affiliation (if applicable)			Daytime telephone number 907 874-2088	
Mailing address P.O. Box 75 Wrangell AK			Zip code 99929	
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address: 516 Evergreen Ave Wrangell AK			Zip code	
Email address		Signature		Date

To: Put a in the appropriate box(es).

Committees		House members		Senate members			
H or S		<input type="checkbox"/>	Chenault (che)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lynn (lyn)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bishop (bis)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Claman (cla)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Millett (mil)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coghill (cgl)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Colver (cov)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Munoz (mun)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Costello (cos)
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kreiss-Tomkins(kre)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wilson (wit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stoltze (stz)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LeDoux (leu)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wool (woo)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wielechowski (wie)

Subject: Fill out the boxes below OR enter a Subject.

HB or SB	Bill number	and check one:	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Amend	OR	enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
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Public Opinion Message

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From: Please PRINT the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mr. / Ms. (Mrs.)	First name Kenak	M.I. -	Last name Davies	Jr. / Sr. / III
Group affiliation (if applicable)				Daytime telephone number
Mailing address PO Box 1721 Wrangell, AK.				Zip code 99927
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address				Zip code
Email address kdavies@cupsd.us			Signature <i>Kenak Davies</i>	Date 2/7/16

To: Put a in the appropriate box(es).

	House members	Senate members																																																																																																																																																											
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HB or SB	Bill number	and check one:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Support	<u>OR</u> enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
			<input type="checkbox"/>	Oppose	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	Amend	

Message: Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

<i>Please</i>	<i>keep</i>	<i>the</i>	<i>BSA + \$50</i>	5
<i>for</i>	<i>next</i>	<i>year</i>		10
				15
				20
				25
				30
				35
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				50

Please contact your local Legislative Information Office (LIO) with questions or problems.
 A complete list of LIOs can be found at w3.legis.state.ak.us/misc/lios.php

This form must be completely filled out. You may phone, fax, or deliver your POM to any LIO.

From: Please PRINT the information below. This form must be signed by the sender.

Mr. / Ms. (Mrs.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	First name Arlene	M.I. J	Last name Wilson	Jr. / Sr. / III
Group affiliation (if applicable)			Daytime telephone number 907-874-2466	
Mailing address PO Box 889		Wrangell		AK
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address			Zip code 99929	
Email address awilson@wpsd.us		Signature <i>Arlene Wilson</i>		Date 3/7/16

To: Put a in the appropriate box(es).

Committees		House members		Senate members			
<input type="checkbox"/>	H or S	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chenault (che)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lynn (lyn)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bishop (bis)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community & Regional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Claman (cla)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Millet (mil)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coghill (cog)
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Health & Social Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edgmon (edg)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neuman (neu)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Egan (ega)
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Subject: Fill out the boxes below OR enter a Subject.

HB or SB	Bill number	and check one:	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<u>OR</u> enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
			<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Amend	

Message: Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

Please	keep	the	BSA + \$50	funding	5
for	next	year.	Our	children	10
are	the	future	of	Alaska.	15
They	have	no	say	at	20
this	time	of	their	life.	25
Please	support	and	represent	Alaska's	30
future	generation.	Every	dollar	counts!	35
					40
					45
					50



AKLN: a full service network providing a community of learners experience through quality on-line courses, career pathways, culturally relevant options and supplemental counseling and guidance for Alaska's high school students regardless of geography. AKLN objectives are:

- Equitable access to rich and varied learning opportunities for Alaska;
- Clearly-articulated programs of study and, where appropriate, dual credit opportunities;
- High-quality professional development opportunities in support of AKLN for Alaskan teachers and other educators;
- Expand partnerships to include Alaska universities and other technology based non-profits.

Growth of Alaska's Learning Network:

AKLN has expanded our network to the entire state of Alaska, by working with more than 40 school districts and over 82 different high schools to help Alaskan students achieve **equal and equitable academic success**.

Course Enrollment:

SY: 2014/2015 740 students taking 921 courses

**including Summer classes*

SY: 2015/2016 733 students taking 878 courses

** NOT including summer classes*

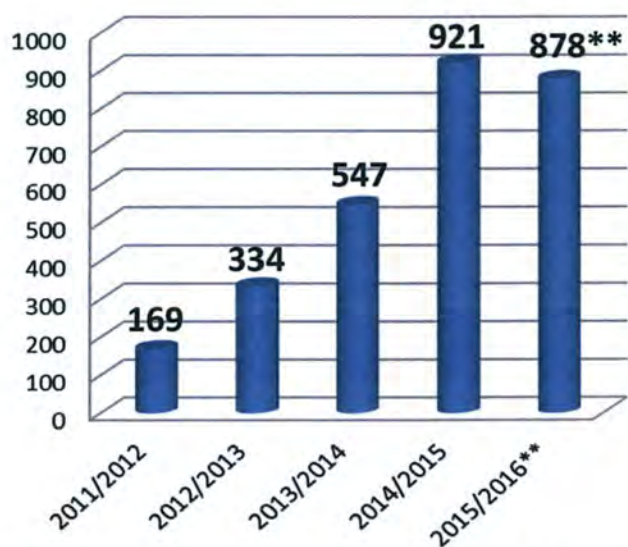
Completion Rates:

Fall 2014 296 Students Completed 79%

Spring 2015: 318 Students Completed 87%

National Average SY 2014/2015: 61%

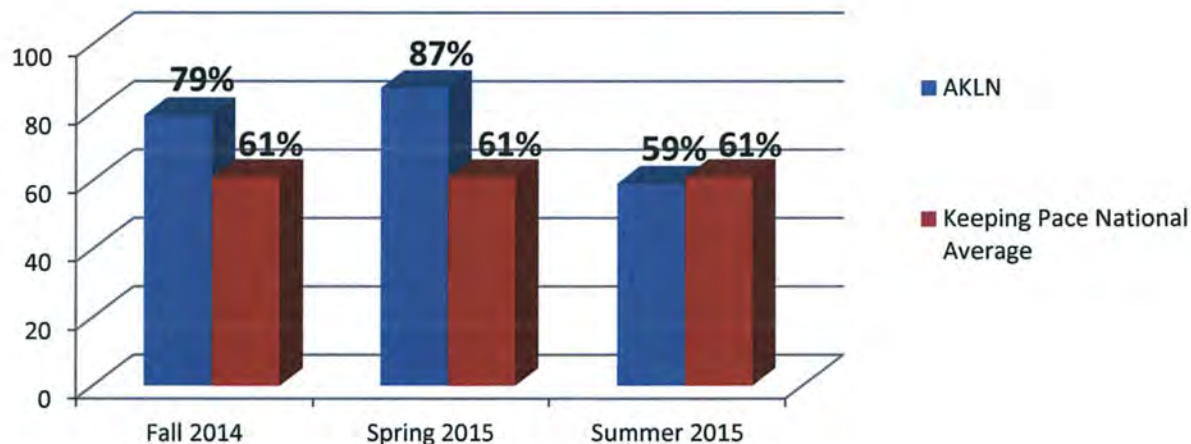
AKLN Total Enrolled Courses



** Numbers reflect a three semester academic year, (Fall, Spring, and Summer). The numbers reported for 2015/2016 only reflects Fall and Spring.

Comparative Completion Rates 2014-2015

AKLN's completion rate is based on students successfully meeting all course requirements, and earning a grade of C or better



AKLN Accomplishments: STUDENTS

- **Equity and access** at its core, AKLN offers over 90 challenging courses that provide all Alaska high school students, especially those from rural communities the opportunity to become college/career ready and eligible for the Alaska Performance Scholarship.
- **AKLN enrollments increased** from 169 in 2011-2012 (initial year) 921 enrollments in 2014-2015.
- Students from **44 of the 53 Alaskan school districts** are enrolled in AKLN classes.
- AKLN meets the needs of Alaska's highest performing students with **Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, World Languages, and Career/Technical Education (CTE) courses.**
 - Introduction to **Tlingit** began this year in AKLN's effort to include indigenous languages to its world language course offerings.
- AKLN serves **credit recovery** students, as well as those seeking credit by examination.
- AKLN's **academic counselor** tracks student success and maintains personal contact with students, parents, teachers, course mentors, and onsite supervisors.
- AKLN students receive **support from an academic counselor, on-site supervisors, and course mentors.**
- AKLN provides **dual high school and college credit opportunities** through Tech-Prep and optional testing.
 - AKLN Algebra II course is currently aligned with university Math 105. Upon successful completion of the course, students have the opportunity to take a Math 105 competency exam with the intent of receiving 3 college credits. AKLN's pre-calculus course will be aligned to Math 107 and students will have the opportunity to earn 4 college credits.
- AKLN summer session for students wanting **credit recovery, advancement, and/or enrichment.**
- **AKLN Endorsements** (Leadership, Honors, Indigenous Studies, and Career Pathways)
 - **Health Career Pathway and Education Pathway** with Future Educators of Alaska (FEA) and Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska's Schools (PITAAS) partnership.
 - **Indigenous Studies/Early Scholars Endorsement** to assist Alaska Native students
- AKLN sponsored **Summer Boost Camp** (June 2015) that brought a dozen Alaska Native Students primarily from rural areas to the UAS campus to jump start their AKLN coursework and be introduced to college life.

AKLN Accomplishments: EDUCATORS

- AKLN provided training and **College Board certification for 9 AP teachers statewide.**
- **Professional Development** course opportunities for teachers and para-professionals through the University of Alaska Southeast Professional Learning Center.
- **Grow Our Own Teacher** opportunity through FEA and PITAAS. Currently AKLN has 44 students in this program.
- **AKLN's Board of Advisors is composed of superintendents** from across the state who believes in the future of distance education in Alaska.
- **AKLN/UAS Fall Conferences:** Teaching & Counseling the Online Learner 2015; Education, Employment, & the Economy 2014; College & Career Readiness 2013.
- **Summer STREAM** (Science, Technology, Reading, Art, and Math) Institutes that provide professional development integrating Western Science with Traditional Ways of Knowing.

Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Public Testimony on Finance Budget

March 7, 2016

Good Afternoon Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to speak regarding the Budget/Cuts.

I am Sasha I. Soboleff, Grand President of the Alaska Native Brotherhood, an organization which has been in recorded existence for 104 years coupled with our Alaska Native Sisterhood 101 years old for which we have a singular word written as our MISSION, EDUCATION .

Anb/ans ORGANIZATIONS have addressed several key historical issues among those are the Right To Vote, Recognize Alaska Natives as Citizens and integrated Public Schools for our children, among other issues.

We are the VOICE of our 30 thousand members in SE Alaska & some western villages. We bring the Educational Issues which are threatened, again which impacts our children.

Since the late 1800 & early 1900s our cultures have been impacted by the western culture. The Teachers and western influences immediately impacted our family units which became fractured & remains today in that mode of sensitivity and fragility. Layer in the complexities of the passage of several Territorial Laws and Statehood plus the passage of ANCSA and ANICLA, this mix is toxic at best.

Since EDUCATION is our mission, cutting education further marginalizes our opportunities and pushes our children even further away from equal education opportunities.

How do we address that?

One must look for successful learning opportunities for students. That examination must include a learning which views the new challenges "through a cultural Lens."

How do we address the overall Alaska State Average Native DROP OUT RATE OF 63.2% a statistic which has remained unchanged for 40+ years.

Our emphasis to feed and support the AKLN program which has a proven record via University Alaska Southeast which recognizes the "Native Skill Set" in learning.

What is that "Skill SET?"

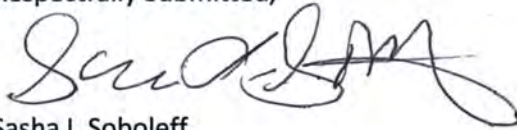
It is the processing of all information by what we SEE, by what we HEAR, by what we SMELL, by what we TOUCH and TASTE.

AKLN has served Native Students during the 2015 school year starting with 264 and increasing to 740 students currently.

Cut you must, but Don't push our Alaska Native Students further away from the educational opportunities.

Thank you for this sober and challenging exercise.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sasha I. Soboleff', written in a cursive style.

Sasha I. Soboleff

Alaska Native Brotherhood

Grand President

030716

March 2, 2016

Senate Finance Committee Members
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: Operating Budget Testimony

Dear Senators Kelly and MacKinnon and other Committee Members,

With this letter, I wish to offer testimony about some issues included in the 2017 Operating Budget which will have a severe impact on Alaska's municipalities. Rather than anecdotal information, I will provide in this letter, some actual numbers that show real impacts. Thank you for all of your hard work with regards to this budget and I know the hours of testimony is difficult and can make your jobs even harder.

As I testified on Tuesday, March 1st, during the House Finance committee hearing, a decrease in Revenue Sharing will be difficult to larger communities and catastrophic to smaller ones. However, those impacts cannot be viewed in a vacuum, as many other impacts have recently affected municipalities in a large way.

Two years ago, upon the passage of HB 385, the final version that was passed by the Legislature was changed in the last few hours of the session and subsequently left municipalities with a \$2.5 billion in additional costs towards the PERS unfunded liability. The state's "on behalf" payments have dropped significantly; municipalities still continue to pay 22%, but now we will pay that amount for an additional 9 years. We hear rumors of the agreed 22% of salary rate being in jeopardy. That was an agreed upon rate between the municipalities and the state due to the state's inability to determine the actual pension liability for each employer. Municipalities had originally advocated for 18%, but the Legislature chose 22%.

If the Legislature should choose to raise the 22% rate, municipalities will pay an additional \$5.5 million per year with every 1% rate increase.....for approximately 34 more years. For municipal owned entities such as hospitals will contribute over \$525,000 more per year. Boroughs and cities that are required to support local school districts will see their contribution rate increase with a raise in the PERS rate. The total impact on school district PERS contributions will be approximately \$3.3 million per year. Municipalities will end up funding more than \$2.6 million of that increase. An increase in the cap will also affect pension liability allocations, resulting in a larger portion of total liability being recorded on non-State employers' books.

We have also heard discussion of changing the language in AS 39.35.280 from "shall" to "may." This language change will, again, financially devastate many municipalities. Gone will be the ability to budget, as we will never be able to determine the rate from year to year. Those rates are subject to population changes, retirements and the market.

Municipalities have already seen many changes due to the State budget situation. We have often heard Legislators mention the need to shrink the footprint of government. However, we have seen not so much a shrinkage as a cost shifting. Those shifts have come through in areas such as airport maintenance, jails, policing and others. A lack of capital projects will start to see large impacts as local infrastructure begins to crumble. Education cuts will put more emphasis on municipalities to fund to the cap, in order to have a well-educated population.

The bottom line is that municipalities cannot see decreases in Revenue Sharing coupled with increases in most other areas. We, then, have no choice but to either severely curtail services or increase taxes. When the people mention more cuts in government, I am sure they do not mean unplowed municipal roads which allow people to get to work; no response when 911 is called; no response when a resident's house is on fire; water systems that cannot be kept up to state or federal standards; trash collecting on streets for long periods of time.

Please take a holistic view of what municipalities provide to YOUR constituents. They provide the services that you, the State, will not or cannot provide.

Thank you,

Kathie Wasserman
Executive Director

February 18, 2016

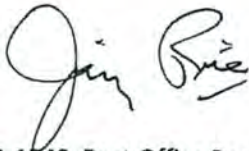
Dear Alaskan Legislator:

Please consider the following suggestions to bring State spending under control. I urge you to take bold steps to reign in the inflated State budget. My suggestions are as follows;

1. Cut the State Budget to 2000-2004 levels. Reduce each department back to that level of funding.
2. Cut the University of Alaska budget to 2000-2004 levels. Close about twelve of the campuses in small communities.
3. Repeal SB21. Repeal all oil and gas tax credits. Impose a production tax per barrel of oil produced. Big oil lobbyists have hoodwinked Alaska and this must stop.
4. Impose a tax on natural gas in the ground of the big three. The tax should be at least \$500 million per year until a gas line is built. It is our gas and Big Oil must pay for their failure to bring it to market.
5. Impose a tax on each commercially caught fish by species. Impose a tax on all sport caught fish per box or cooler shipped out of state. Tax all charter fishing services.
6. Release from prison all low level drug offenders and nonviolent crime offenders. Place them on home arrest with ankle bracelet monitoring which they will pay for.
7. Stop the Defined Benefit Pension system for all newly hired Alaskan Judges. The unfunded liability is \$59 million. It is completely unfair to all other state employees who are under a Defined Payment Pension with a 401K. This will save money over time.
8. Revamp the Alaska Permanent Fund. Provide for all interested Alaskans a onetime only cash out from the Permanent Fund. Each person who elects the one time cash option of \$20,000 will not be eligible for the annual permanent fund dividend again. Those citizens who elect to stay in the annual dividend program may do so but will not receive a cash out option ever again. This cash out plan will stimulate the Alaskan economy. It will reduce the damage from job losses (See 1 and 2 above) in the State government and the private sector economy. This cash out option will remove the yearly arguments about the use of the fund by reducing the number of applicants by at least sixty percent.

In conclusion, I ask that as an elected official you consider the ordinary working Alaskan. The big corporations have controlled politics in Alaska too long. Remember who you work for. The bloated State budget must be cut drastically. The free ride for the oil companies must end now. Take bold steps to eliminate the deficit. Stop the foolish accounting of new oil, old oil, credits, and incentives. Do not touch the Permanent Fund for state government operation. Do not impose income taxes on working Alaskans while the oil companies pay nothing for our oil. I ask for your leadership and support on implementing these suggestions. Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,



Jimmy Rice 907-262-1540 Post Office Box 4063 Soldotna, Alaska 99669 jimbob@gci.net

Alaska State Legislature
Legislators'
Alaska State Capital Building
Juneau, Alaska, 99801

February 29, 2016

Re: State Budget Comments

Dear Legislators:

This letter is to express my support for developing a comprehensive state fiscal plan and sustainable budget this legislative session. Solving our deficit simply cannot be accomplished in operating budget reductions alone, and requires generating funds to pay for government services through increased costs to everyone.

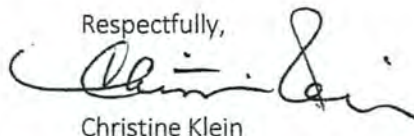
As a lifelong Alaskan raised in a rural area, state income tax and local school tax were for years taken from my paycheck starting age 14. My parents had me file tax returns to 'learn how to do it', and get a portion back at the time. It was a good lesson. Nobody likes or wants to give away hard earned money to pay any kind of taxes. There is no choice but to revisit getting everyone to help pay their way for services and the way we choose to live. Alaska once had very respectful programs—even before we relied on oil & gas revenue and enormous federal funding. Our dependency on one industry and federal money paying for programs & projects is untenable. Generating revenue from all of us will be very painful; but doing nothing will result in a far worse economic collapse than we lived through in the mid '80s.

The time is now for developing a comprehensive and sustainable fiscal plan. It needs to be fair, consistent, and have impacts across the board to all businesses, every citizen, out of state workers, non-resident permit holders', and seasonal visitors'. Please consider all options of revenue to pay for the basic services our constitution guarantees. It's standard in business and for every other state in the United States, most have far fewer savings options tucked away—and don't issue annual dividend during budget deficits. Our state has options and EVERYTHING should be on the table to develop a solution. I support consideration of and a mixture of ALL measures below, as you AND the Governor balance Alaska's budget gap and create a long term fiscal plan this year:

- Utilize savings from Alaska state budget reserves - constitutional reserve and permanent fund earnings; however, used only for services guaranteed in our original or current state constitution.
- Immediately reduce, cap, and/or cease Alaska permanent fund dividends distributed.
- Start State personal income tax based on a percentage of Federal tax. This will capture workers and fishing permit holders living outside Alaska who take resources away spending elsewhere.
- Reduce state funds distributed to communities without local sales tax to contribute to their own costs (city with majority of state population has no sales tax despite nearly every other village, town and city having a local sales tax to help offset their own costs). This would help reduce reliance on state funds and capture revenue from seasonal tourism.
- Return to a mandatory once annual state education fee from all adults 18 years of age.
- Initiate a State Sales Tax on non-food items.

All of these measures will be distasteful and difficult, but must be part of a sound solution. As a current and long-time small business owner, this process is going to be painful for me and my family as well, but it is necessary and overdue. Thank you.

Respectfully,



Christine Klein

March 1, 2016

Alaska House Finance Committee

Senator Pete Kelly
Senator.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov
Fax: 907-465-4714

Senator Mike Dunleavy
Senator.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov
Fax: 907-465-3805

Senator Click Bishop
Senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov
Fax: 907-465-5241

HB256: APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET/LOANS/FUNDS

Budget Idea Request

Dear Senators:

My first and foremost thought to solving our issues with the Alaska State budget is to follow in the example of the states that precede us in regards to Marijuana Tax. We've already legalized it, so let's get it going so we can tax it to make it all worth our time.

In Colorado alone, according to the Denver Post posted 10/09/2015, Colorado recreational marijuana sales were coming in at \$59.2 million per month. When combined with medical sales of \$41.4 million per month the total is over \$100 million in sales PER MONTH. I know we're not Colorado, but the evidence of major increase in tax revenue is crystal clear.

According the Denver Post article: "There are three types of state taxes on recreational marijuana: the standard 2.9 percent sales tax, a 10 percent special marijuana sales tax and a 15 percent excise tax on wholesale marijuana transfers. For August, Colorado collected \$11.2 million in recreational taxes and fees and \$2.0 million in medical taxes and fees, bringing the 2015 cumulative revenue total to nearly \$86.7 million. In 2014, total marijuana tax revenue was \$76.2 million." It is obvious that the further along an industry like this gets, the more revenue (tax and business) will only increase.

According to the Huff post Politics 07/06/2015, one year of legal marijuana generated \$70 Million in Tax Revenue for Washington State. This was double the forecasted revenue.

In an awesome article by Investopedia 04/14/15: "Which State generates most tax revenue marijuana sales? Colorado is leading the way at a tax rate 27.9% commercial, 2.9% medical. Washington comes in second with analysts estimating \$1.9 billion in marijuana tax dollars over the first five years."

So I ask you, it is not going to take billions of dollars to run the marijuana department of the state. Colorado had an excess in 2014 that enabled them to set aside \$40 million for schools! Not only will this help Alaskan's, it will obviously make money locally and add additional tourism during the summer months.

Does taxation of marijuana seem more profitable to fixing our budget than taking away our PFD's or a state sales tax of \$6%? I have attached my recent letter to the senators regarding the sales tax and more ideas regarding the budget. I explain how taxing its residents by way of income will only hurt the state; however this is a recreational tax and is much, much more easily accepted by the general public.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Adam and Raymie Rushing

Adam and Raymie Rushing
PO Box 799
Delta Junction, AK 99737

attachments: HB134 Letter by Adam and Raymie Rushing 02/24/2016

February 24, 2016

Alaska State Labor & Commerce Committee

The Honorable Senator Mia Costello
State Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99701-1183
Senator.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov
Fax: 907-465-2040

RE: SB 134
State Sales Tax Proposal of 6%

Dear Senator Mia Costello, Senator Cathy Giessel, Senator Kevin Meyer, Senator Gary Stevens, and Senator Johnny Ellis:

I respectfully wish to have my voice heard prior to the vote to initiate Alaska state tax of 6% as proposed in SB 134.

The letter by the Governor states that this proposed state tax "The relatively modest tax is expected to raise approximately \$200,000,000 annually."

As an Alaskan, I feel my voice needs to be heard on this issue at hand. I also know that many Alaskan's feel the same as I do - that one of the major draws to this state and surviving its unique and harsh conditions is the long standing NO State Income Tax! I will outline below many reasons I am against this action and make it as brief as possible.

1. Alaska is already incredibly expensive to live in. A tax will not increase your population or business, but in turn will hurt the Alaskan economy. I am sure you are familiar with the Council for Community and Economic Research Index, First Quarter 2015. If you have not seen it, I would just take a look at it. To give you an idea, for the Interior of Alaska our utility costs are at 245.3 where as the National Average is 100.0. Alaskans have chosen to live here and it already costs us an arm and a leg to do so. Do you really think our economy, which has a 6.7% unemployment rate, can take on a state income tax too? How will that impact our retirement community whom create commerce in Alaska by residing here income tax free? Will they decide to go to WA, NV, TX or FL? Why not KEEP the residents you already have!

2. The Governor is asking that its citizens take the responsibility of mismanagement of money, leading to a projected \$427 Million deficit next year! Alaska has never needed to incorporate an income tax in prior years in order to prosper; yet the state continues on. No one seems willing to cut the unnecessary items in the budget. Why is it that the answer to Government overspending always seems to be more taxes on the citizens? Those whom have been entrusted to run this Great State's budget need to figure out what THEY are doing wrong and fix it so that it can work on the amount they are already given instead of punishing the State's residents. This may be as simple as using Skype vs Travel, scanning documents vs photocopying. I could easily see millions being saved in those two line items alone! Alaskan's WILL respect those types of cuts, because that is how we handle money in our homes. Cut in the areas were you cannot afford and/or do not need, and trim the fat everywhere else!

3. Consider a state income tax resident exemption. Working in our state is a sizeable population who regularly commute to their homes in the Lower 48. Many of these people have high-paying incomes from the North Slope, commercial fishing and mining. They pay no state income tax to Alaska, and possibly not even in their home state. Yet, Alaska provides for them a paycheck as well as roads, airports, docks, hospitals and other services.

Right now there is NO incentive to LIVE and WORK in Alaska, why not change that? YOU have the power to do so. If you choose to live and work in Alaska don't be penalized, choose to tax those that choose to work in Alaska, yet live out of state and don't get taxed by a state income or a sales tax? Right now it can be cheaper to live in Washington State (no state taxes) and spend the money to fly to work once a month, thus taking ALASKAN money right out of the state!

An income tax with resident exemptions can be easily monitored because of our Permanent Fund Division. Bona fide Alaskan residents receive the PFD, non-residents do not. Therefore, this income tax with resident exemptions could be readily enacted and monitored with minimal expense, as the system is already in place.

SB 134 does not make any sense to me. An income tax not bring any net new money into our economy! We CHOOSE to live in this state with one of the biggest benefits being no state taxes. Everything else here is an expense, including gas for our vehicles - being one of the highest in the nation and utilities being 145.3 CPI ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE (for us here in the interior). We may not, as a community, be able to afford to ride another expense. In order to have a quality of life, it may force people out of the state! Is Alaska ready to take that responsibility too?

We are Alaskans, and we believe in doing things for ourselves. This is simply taking money from its residents and giving it to the government. This does not create wealth for the state - just transferring over our resources to the government, so it can spend that too. Alaska is not California, DC or New York. As Alaskans are we live in the harshest and most stunning environment possible in the United States! We proudly live here and we do so with respect for state. But living here takes money; so logically following, if you take more from Alaskan's pockets, they have less to feed their families and heat their homes. Let's instead cut where we

need to cut in the budget and make it right! Please don't forget it's our choice to reside in this amazing state, and I don't know if this economy we have can take a state income tax without having significant losses!

Respectfully,

Adam and Raymie Rushing

Raymierushing@gmail.com

907-460-0129

Delta Junction, Alaska

reference: Alaska Economic Trends, July 2015

U.S. DRUGS

Colorado Raised More Tax Revenue From Marijuana Than From Alcohol

Tanya Basu @mstanybasu Sept. 16, 2015

It clocked in at \$70 million last fiscal year alone.

Pot is a boon for tax revenues in Colorado, outpacing revenue from alcohol taxes in the fiscal year ending on June 30.

Colorado collected almost \$70 million in marijuana taxes during that time, nearly double the \$42 million collected from alcohol taxes. The state had a tax holiday for marijuana on Wednesday, an event that was welcomed by consumers and producers alike.

The sales tax holiday underscores the sheer productivity of marijuana taxes, Mason Tvert, director of communications for the Marijuana Policy Project, told the *Colorado Spring Business Journal*.

"Marijuana taxes have been incredibly productive over the past year, so this tax holiday is a much-deserved day off," Tvert said. "This will be the one day out of the year when the state won't generate significant revenue. Over the other 364 days, it will bring in tens of millions of dollars that will be reinvested in our state."

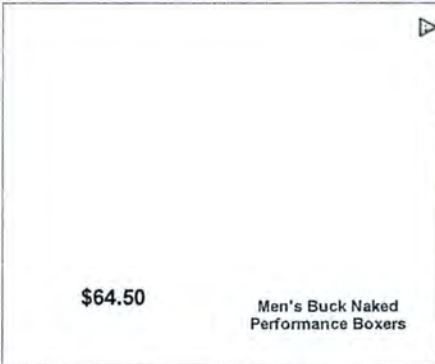
Tvert's prediction isn't an exaggeration, as Colorado's data indicated that the 10% retail tax on marijuana and 15% excise tax for large wholesale weed has been fruitful.

On the state's one-day tax holiday, shoppers saved about \$20 an ounce on Wednesday, but distributors saved roughly \$300 a pound, with one grower telling ABC he "probably saved \$45,000 before lunch."

For a month-by-month breakdown of Colorado marijuana tax collections, [click here](#).



Jon Paclaroni—Moment Editorial/Getty Images
Denver, Colorado- Interior of a commercial medical and recreational marijuana grow facility.



MARIJUANA ON THE COVER OF TIME



Cover Credit: GARY TRUDEAU

The Dec. 9, 1996, cover of TIME

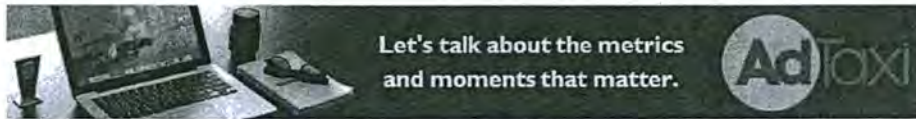
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Let's talk about the metrics and moments that matter.



THE DENVER POST (<http://www.denverpost.com>) DENVER AND THE WEST (/NEWS)

Denver, CO | Now: 45°

(<http://www.denverpost.com/weather>) | High: 62°

(<http://www.denverpost.com/weather>) | Low: 31°

(<http://www.denverpost.com/weather>) | 5-Day Forecast

(<http://www.denverpost.com/weather>)



Lakewood mom doubles down, gives birth to second Leap Day child

(<http://www.denverpost.com/news>)



Denver, Aurora firefighters battle brush fire on Alameda

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Von Miller wants to be a Bronco for "entire career"

(<http://www.denverpost.com/bronco>)



Dam breaks on Colorado barrel bill with water compromise

(<http://www.denverpost.com/news>)

DENVER AND THE WEST

Colorado monthly marijuana sales eclipse \$100 million mark

Colorado recreational marijuana sales are close to \$60 million in August 2015; medical marijuana sales climb slightly

By Elizabeth Hernandez

The Denver Post (mailto:ehernandez@denverpost.com?subject=The Denver Post:)

POSTED: 10/09/2015 05:41:12 PM MDT | UPDATED: 5 MONTHS AGO

58 COMMENTS (http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_28947869/COLORADO-MONTHLY-POT-SALES-PASS-100-MILLION-MARK#DISCUS_THREAD)

Monthly marijuana sales in Colorado have soared past the \$100 million mark for the first time, according to the August recreational and medical marijuana sales data from the state Department of Revenue released Friday.

Once again, marijuana sales surpassed the previous month's numbers with recreational marijuana coming in at \$59.2 million and medical marijuana tallying \$41.4 million.

The combined \$100.6 million in marijuana sales continues the month-to-month record-setting trend for 2015.

Recreational cannabis sales began on Jan. 1, 2014 in Colorado, the first state to launch a retail marijuana program. In that first month, there were \$46.9 million in total sales — \$14.7 million was recreational, \$32.2 million medical. August 2014 marked the first time that recreational sales exceeded medical sales.



(portlet/article/html/imageDisplay.jsp?contentItemRelationshipId=7131374)

Colorado marijuana sales in August surpassed \$100 million for the first time. (Denver Post file)

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There are three types of state taxes on recreational marijuana: the standard 2.9 percent sales tax, a 10 percent special marijuana sales tax and a 15 percent excise tax on wholesale marijuana transfers. For August, Colorado collected \$11.2 million in recreational taxes and fees and \$2.0 million in medical taxes and fees, bringing the 2015 cumulative revenue total to nearly \$86.7 million. In 2014, total marijuana revenue was \$76.2 million.

Perhaps the most-watched figure in the state's marijuana tax data is the 15 percent excise tax that is earmarked for school construction projects. In August, that tax brought in \$3.3 million, up from \$3.1 million in July.

Another state recently joined Colorado and Washington in selling marijuana to adults 21 and older. During Oregon's first week (<http://www.thecannabist.co/2015/10/09/oregon-marijuana-sales-recreational-debut-colorado-washington/42068/>) of legal recreational marijuana sales, which started Oct. 1, retailers sold an estimated \$11 million worth of pot.

In contrast, Colorado's first week of legal sales reached \$5 million.

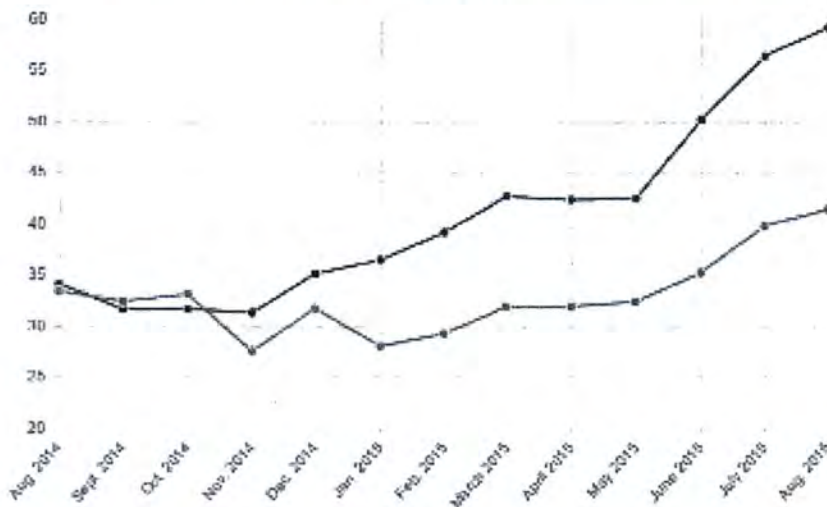
Elizabeth Hernandez: 303-954-1223, ehernandez@denverpost.com or twitter.com/ehernandez



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Sales stats for Colorado weed

A month-by-month look comparing sales of recreational and medical marijuana



2015 Recreational total (8 months)
\$369,062,012

2015 Medical total (8 months)
\$269,979,424

2015: \$639,041,436

2014 Recreational total (12 months)
\$313,226,353

2014 Medical total (12 months)
\$385,972,452

2014: \$699,198,805

Source: Colorado Dept. of Revenue; graphic by Kevin Hamm, The Denver Post

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One Year Of Legal Marijuana Generated \$70 Million In Tax Revenue For Washington State

07/06/2015 06:50 pm ET | Updated Jul 07, 2015

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Matt Ferner
National Reporter, The Huffington Post

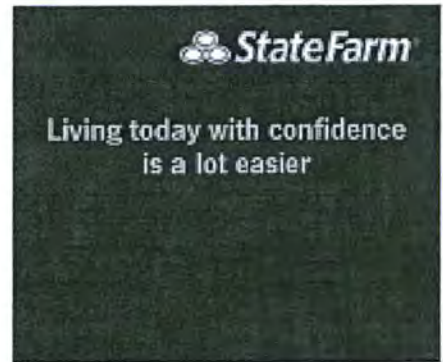


ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington state raked in more than \$70 million in taxes during its first year of legal and regulated marijuana sales.

The [Washington State Liquor Control Board](#), the government body charged with overseeing the state's marijuana industry, reports that state pot shops sold more than \$257 million worth of marijuana, generating more than \$64 million through July 1 thanks to the state's marijuana excise tax.

Add in local sales and other taxes, and Washington's state and local governments have collected more than \$70 million, [according to The Associated Press](#) -- roughly doubling the state's original marijuana tax revenue forecast of \$36 million for the first year of sales.



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"These impressive numbers are likely to catch the eyes of policymakers in other states that could use a little help closing their budget gaps," Tom Angell, chairman of the advocacy group Marijuana Majority, told The Huffington Post.

"While this amount of money isn't nearly enough to run a whole state with, these are real dollars that can now be spent on things like schools, healthcare and road repair instead of going straight into the pockets of the drug dealers who controlled the marijuana market prior to legalization," Angell added. "And this is only the first year. Expect to see even more revenue generated -- and more jobs created -- in the next few years."

Here's a look at rising marijuana sales and taxes in Washington state in the last year:

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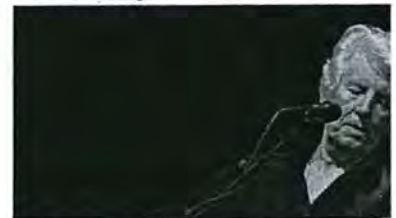
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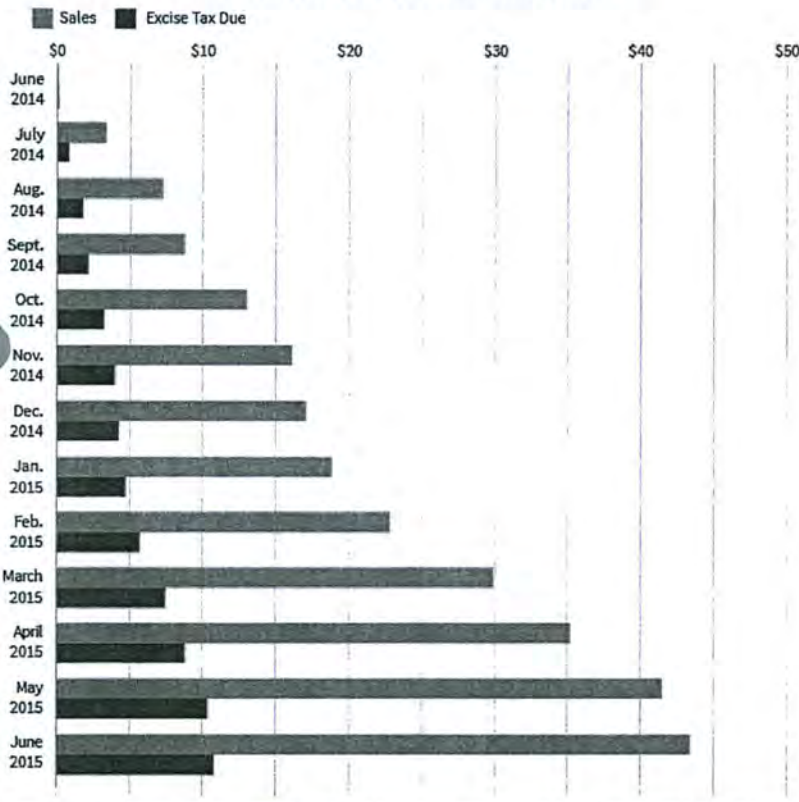


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Recreational marijuana sales and tax due, in millions of dollars



Source: Washington State Liquor Control Board

THE HUFFINGTON POST

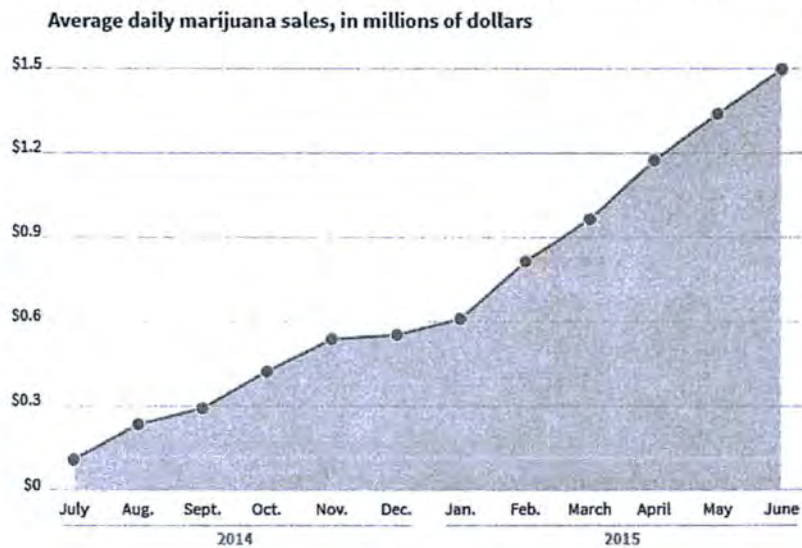
Despite the state's slow start getting its regulated pot industry off the ground and early concerns about [marijuana shortages](#), the Evergreen State topped Colorado's first-year marijuana tax revenue of [about \\$44 million](#). While voters in both states legalized recreational marijuana in 2012, Colorado became the first state -- and first government in the world -- to regulate marijuana production and sales when its first shops opened on Jan. 1, 2014. The first marijuana shops in Washington state didn't open until July of that year.

Since then, marijuana sales have increased steadily across the state. The state Liquor Control Board reports that the state's marijuana businesses are

selling nearly \$1.5 million in marijuana per day from about 160 retailers statewide, as of July 1. Here's what average daily sales looked like in the past year:

Marijuana Sales Increasing In Washington

Data from Washington state is showing that weed sales and taxes collected are increasing dramatically by the month.



Source: Washington State Liquor Control Board

THE HUFFINGTON POST

In the first year of legalization, Washington state's marijuana businesses sold more than 22,000 pounds of marijuana and 700,000 marijuana-infused edible products, including both solids and liquids. Meanwhile, state cultivators harvested nearly 60,000 pounds of marijuana flower.

The state has approved more than 6 million square feet of plant canopy to produce marijuana to date, according to data HuffPost received from Brian Smith, the communications director for the state Liquor Control Board.

Besides Washington and Colorado, two more states -- Oregon and Alaska -- as well as the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana for recreational purposes. While Oregon's new law went into effect just last week and Alaska's went into effect in February, the first shops in both states aren't expected to open until 2016.

Legal marijuana is the fastest-growing industry in the United States, a recent industry report found, and if the trend toward legalization spreads to all 50 states, marijuana could become larger than the organic food industry.

Marijuana remains illegal under federal law.

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Colo. pot users helping build schools with tax dollars

Trevor Hughes, USA TODAY 5:25 p.m. EST February 17, 2015



(Photo: Trevor Hughes/USA TODAY)

DENVER – Colorado's marijuana users are helping to buy new roofs, boilers and security upgrades for public schools across the state as the first round of special pot taxes gets allocated later this year.

The state's voters in 2012 legalized pot sales – and taxed them heavily – in part because the constitutional amendment promised that \$40 million dollars a year would go toward school construction across the state. In the first full year of sales, however, the state expects to collect only about \$17 million in special school taxes levied on the marijuana industry. Still, it's better than what the state collected the year before: nothing.

"The people who were smoking marijuana before legalization still are. Now, they're paying taxes," Gov. John

Hickenlooper said.



USA TODAY

[Vermont lawmakers consider legalizing marijuana](#)

[\(http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2015/01/27/vermont-lawmakers-consider-legalizing-pot/22431415/\)](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2015/01/27/vermont-lawmakers-consider-legalizing-pot/22431415/)

Overall, Colorado collected about \$63 million in marijuana taxes in 2014 on an industry worth about \$700 million. Much of that tax money goes directly into the state's general fund, not into the specific school-construction account. The school-construction money comes from a 15% tax levied on wholesale sales from growers to recreational marijuana retailers. Much of the rest of the tax money is being dedicated toward drug-abuse education, research and substance abuse treatment. Because Colorado was the first state to legalize and tax recreational marijuana sales, lawmakers across the country are closely watching its experiences.

"It is money we're trying to put to good use," said Sen. Pat Steadman, a Democrat and member of the Colorado Legislature's budget-writing committee. "We had no tax money to combat these ills when it was being sold illegally."

Sweet Grass Snickerdoodle Cookie 10mg	\$3.50
Sweet Grass PB Cookie 10mg	\$3.50
Creeo Sack	\$1.88
1 Penny	\$0.01
1 Penny	\$0.01
1 Penny	\$0.01
SUBTOTAL: \$83.63	
CO STATE TAX	\$1.84
DENVER CITY TAX	\$2.30
SPECIAL DISTRICT TAX	\$0.70
CO SPECIAL TAX	\$6.17
DENVER SPECIAL TAX (RETAIL)	\$2.18
TOTAL	\$76.80
PAID	\$100.00

A copy of a receipt from a Denver marijuana store shows the taxes paid on the transaction. (Photo: Trevor Hughes/USA TODAY)

A delegation of Vermont policymakers visited Denver this month as the Green Mountain State considers legalization, the latest in a string of visitors curious to better understand how Colorado is handling the end of marijuana prohibition. Driving the Vermont delegation's visit is an independent report suggesting Vermont could see new taxes revenues worth \$20 million to \$75 million annually, in part paid by pot tourists from Massachusetts, New York and New Hampshire.

"Our assumption is that it would take the industry a few years to ramp up," said Scott Newell, director of the office of capital construction for the Colorado Department of Education. Washington state, which has also legalized recreational marijuana, also expects to see its tax collections grow over the coming years.

Washington expects to collect about \$694 million in state revenue through the middle of 2019, according to state budget projections, although it collected only about \$40 million in recreational marijuana taxes in 2014.

In Colorado, Newell's office oversees the marijuana money being dedicated toward school construction. He said he expects to have about \$17 million to hand out in this first round, with the \$40 million annual allotment available in a few years. In Colorado, a small rural, public charter school could be built for \$10 million, he said, while an urban high school could cost \$100 million or more.

"There's a lot more sales taxes being generated than excise taxes, and sales taxes don't go to this program," he said. "There's been a common misconception on marijuana tax."



USA TODAY

[Denver airport bans pot-themed souvenir sales](#)

[\(http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/01/28/dia-marijuana-products/22486127/\)](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/01/28/dia-marijuana-products/22486127/)

Colorado policymakers in 2014 discovered that far fewer people than expected switched from medical marijuana to recreational marijuana once it was legalized Jan. 1, 2014. Medical marijuana is taxed at a far lower level, and most heavy users opt to spend \$15 on a state-issued "red card" allowing them to buy medical pot. In most cases, the marijuana itself is exactly the same. A study commissioned by the state found that in some ski towns, tourists were buying 90% of the recreational marijuana sold.

In part because medical users aren't switching, the state's tax collections are below predictions. And home-growers are exempt from the state's tax system since they're not legally allowed to sell their crops, although some clearly do, according to police.

A state study said that gray market of home-growing is a factor in dragging down tax collections, since illegal transactions remain untaxed.

Legalization advocates say there was always bound to be growing pains, but they point out the irony that some Colorado policymakers are peeved the state collected less marijuana tax than expected. This is an industry, after all, that operated totally illegally just over a year ago.

"There are hundreds of millions worth of marijuana sales now taking place in licensed taxpaying businesses, instead of on the underground market," said Mason Tvert of the Marijuana Policy Project, which backed Colorado's legalization efforts. "The tax revenue is a bonus but our overall goal was to eliminate the underground market."

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March 3, 2016

Senate Finance Committee
House Finance Committee
Senator Donny Olson
Representative Neal Foster
Representative Benjamin Nageak

Please reconsider the potential closure of the Nome Youth Facility (NYF). The facility services the Bering Strait Region and the Northwest Arctic Borough.

The Bering Strait Region includes 17 villages; and the NANA Region services 11 communities. Clients at the NYF may fluctuate at times but not having the facility available for the two regions is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of our greatest assets, the youth in need.

The only mode of transportation for both hubs is air transportation; transporting clients to an urban setting for youth services is not only expensive but it is a disservice to their culture and family ties. Transporting them to urban settings will only serve to reinforce their differences and not be productive.

Clients at the NYF are afforded an education while incarcerated; continuing education is an important component to the wellbeing of our future assets, our children. Non client youth are able to attend classes at NYF also. Many have gone on to graduate, earning a high school diploma; without NYF and its school, they never would have been able to achieve this important goal.

The youth of NYF are a visible and a viable part of the Nome community. They are extremely active in community work service – they set up / take down chairs, they clean different facilities around town, they partake in whatever is asked of them without complaint if it is within their scope and plan. They make a good impression to all those they work with and for. They are given a chance to build up their own self-esteem and worthwhileness...in a setting that closely resembles their own communities. All of this would be lost if the NYF were to close.

Please do not eliminate the funding for the Nome Youth Facility. Please show the youth in our regions that they matter and make a difference.

Sincerely,
ASEA Local 52 – Nome Chapter (representing Nome, Kotzebue, and Barrow)

March 1, 2016

Legislators
State of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska

Re: Three, (3), Billion Plus dollar deficit, suggested fix:

Dear Lawmakers:

Greetings, and thank you for allowing everyday people to help you fix a problem long in the making. A little about what I do that might qualify my input and suggestions.

Back in 1984 I became "board-member," of an ANCSA corporation and have been that since. In 1991 I became "Tribal Administrator," for our village tribal government and have been in executive management of that entity since, in one form or another.

With that back-ground I listened to the presentation being shopped around by Mr. Gunther Knapp and using my "gifted ability," to see how things are and outline a way to improve them here is what came to mind:

First whomever the idiot is, who promoted and/or supported, got us in this fix, having "One major income stream," to rely on, Or put all our eggs in one basket sort-to-speak, you need to irrevocably get rid of him/her/them and as lawmakers create a policy, qualification, law which while lawmakers and/or governors are being interviewed for this job or jobs they must show proven experience of promoting "income diversification and fiscal restraint,"

Secondly another qualification, law and/or policy needed adopting before you are not looking at a 3 billion dollar deficit is at "NO Time," will the State of Alaska per-capita expenditure –per Alaskan exceed a equally weighted formula of State income verses State expense, (I pray I'm saying that right; According to Mr. Knapp's presentation, IF I remember right, each of us are a running a \$4,750.00 + more or less cost per person expense in the State operating budget, mostly funding the exurbanite education and health budgets, Un-sustainable and not with the norm of other states).

Thirdly; Create another law, policy and/or qualification requiring Alaskans adopt a State vision statement-Mission statement lawmakers/Governors are to follow; requiring diversification of income streams, not this 95% of our income is from oil sales and 5% is from all other resource sales; I reality it should look similar to this: 1/6th Oil, 1/6th Fisheries, 1/6th Minerals, 1/6th Land and 1/6th Water, 1/6th

other Sales equals total State budget, including capital expenditures. These resources named may not be the exact items but you get the concept I hope.

Forth; Immediately get your health and education expense back to within other State standards only an appropriate sum which can be sustained, so what if it hurts extremely bad immediately, it's like pulling a band aide, get it back to realistic per capita expenditure;

Finally; "IF" your chicken, for this immediate budget year then do a 1/3 based upon actual reoccurring income-1/3 withdrawal from State savings account and 1/3 cut total costs,(again mostly health and education, bring it back into sustainable realities); next budget period do it again till you're within income/expense budget guidelines, ending your use of State savings account. It sounded from Mr. Knapp other states per capita expense is around \$500.00 each total for all serves provided by State government and hey we got less people than many states.

By the way, we really don't need so many legislators, staff support, offices space costs, etc., for a state with the population we have, cut that cost in-half too.

Thank you for allowing ordinary Alaskans the opportunity to fix the problems you all created.

Lee Stephan



City of Kaktovik
PO Box 27 • 2051 Barter Avenue, #27
Kaktovik, Alaska 99747

www.cityofkaktovik.org
office@cityofkaktovik.org
907.640.6313 • 907.640.6314, fax

March 3, 2016

RE: testimony presented to Alaska legislature advocating for continued Revenue Sharing

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Tori Sims, and I am the City Administrator for the City of Kaktovik, Alaska.

Kaktovik is a community of 300 people. We are located on the Arctic Ocean coast, and our village is within the boundaries of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Yes, we are located amidst vast resources, both onshore and offshore. And in the face of this reality, Kaktovik residents look to their local government to facilitate the flow of information regarding issues that affect them not distantly, but directly.

The City of Kaktovik serves as a primary local clearinghouse for information and decision-making about industrial development, tourism, conservation, and arctic research.

Constant and growing focus on Alaska's arctic places ever-increasing demands on my office to serve Kaktovik residents with proper representation and awareness as we move into the future.

I cannot overemphasize the importance of Revenue Sharing to the City of Kaktovik. Revenue sharing comprises about one third of our budget, and covers our basic operations— power, water, supplies, and fuel. The remainder of our municipal budget is largely devoted to staffing. A cut to our budget would mean either cutting the power, or cutting our staff, neither of which is an option.

Kaktovik is ready to move into the future, considering all options available to our small but significantly-located community. However, to continue to provide anything beyond the most basic functions of local government, we respectfully request the continued funding under Alaska Revenue Sharing.

Thank you.

Evelynn Trefon
PO Box 244
Iliamna, AK 99606
Tel 907-444-8875
evelynntrefon@gmail.com

FEBRUARY 29, 2016

Senator Pete Kelly

State Capitol

Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am writing to you in regards to a few items of great concern for my community with the proposed FY17 budget. I am a resident of Newhalen in the Lake Iliamna area, the Vice Mayor for the Newhalen City Council, and am on the Board of Directors for Iliamna Newhalen Nondalton Electric Co-Op. Please see my concerns below on Proposed Fuel Increases, Community Revenue Sharing, Power Cost Equalization, Income and Sales Taxes, Iliamna Trooper Station, and K-12 Funding.

Proposed Fuel Increases

HB 249 is about increasing taxes on different forms of fuel in the State of Alaska. Throughout all of rural Alaska, this will impact us the most. Increasing the aviation gas tax from 4.7 cents to 10 cents per gallon is going to hurt rural Alaska. We greatly dependent on air travel and air freight. Any increase on jet or aviation fuel will in turn increase our airfare and freight prices. In speaking with local air charters, they use around 60 gallons of jet fuel for a 55 minute, one-way flight from Anchorage to Iliamna. Rates for this flight are currently \$190.00 for residents and \$240.00 for non-resident. Increasing jet fuel by 6.8 cents to \$0.10 cents per gallon would cost the air taxis an additional \$408.00 per flight. On a 9 passenger plane, this is an additional cost of roughly \$45.00 per person raising the rates to a minimum of \$235.00 for resident and \$285.00 for non-resident for a one-way flight.

For general freight, we currently pay \$0.60 to \$0.95 cents per pound. A 52-pound variety meat pack from Mike's Quality Meats currently costs \$255.00. Freight would be an additional cost of approx. \$50.00. I could not even begin to speculate how the increased fuel prices will impact our freight rates. Some would cry, "well why doesn't rural Alaska subsistence hunt?" We do, but that also requires gasoline (air freight and barged in), oil (air freight), a snow machine or ATV (barged in or air freight), bullets (air freight), a gun (air freight), proper clothing for the elements (air freight), and much more.

The proposed gasoline fuel tax increase from 8 cents to 16 cents per gallon would increase our current rates of fuel from our "low" price of \$4.64 to \$4.72 per gallon at minimum. Increases on fuels will not solve any problems in rural Alaska. It will only generate more.

Increases on the aviation and jet fuels will also increase expenses of our commercial fishermen. Most fishermen fly to their fishing locations each summer. They also have their freight flown in. Increasing taxes on gasoline, jet, and aviation fuels will potentially bankrupt our fisher people and cause the sell of more permits to people Outside. Fish prices are already at super low levels and tacking on more expenses to them is ruthless and irresponsible. Our commercial fishermen and rural Alaskans can only take so much before their backs will break and they will sink.

Community Revenue Sharing

At our last city council meeting, we were advised that our yearly Community Revenue Sharing from the State of Alaska will be decreasing by \$34,085.00 to \$67,170.00. This will GREATLY impact our community and all municipalities throughout Alaska. This was also decreased by approx. \$5000.00 from FY15 to FY16. For FY17, we are basically being asked to eliminate more than 1/3 of our yearly budget.

Community Revenue Sharing has become an integral part of the City of Newhalen. It represents nearly 90% of the yearly budget. We use these monies to provide needed services and jobs for the community. The population of Newhalen is approximately 200 people. Of these, less than 25% have full or part-time employment. Through a recent door-to-door survey, it was documented that 80% of our residents fall below the poverty line.

As a city, we are looking at other sources of income and eliminating expenditures. Options being considered are: closing the community health clinic, looking at new sites to sell gravel, licensing dogs in the community, and more. The selling of gravel brings an additional source of money for the city. However, 50% of the money from the sales must be sent to Bristol Bay Native Corporation, as they own the mineral rights to all the land in the area. We do not have a savings account to fall back on, and there is no "extra money" to start one. Every penny that is received by the city is spent to the fullest possible potential.

Below is data from the State of Alaska's website that shows the amount of revenue sharing for the past 11 fiscal years for three rural cities in Southwest Alaska: Newhalen, Nondalton, and New Stuyahok. I have also included if the cities lost or gained revenue compared to the year prior.

Fiscal Year	Newhalen	Nondalton	New Stuyahok
Population Est. (2013)	193	166	529
FY17	\$67,170.00	\$65,853.00	\$76,366.00
FY17 Vs. FY16	<i>-\$34,085.00</i>	<i>-\$33,459.00</i>	<i>-\$38,085.00</i>
FY16	\$101,255.00	\$99,312.00	\$114,451.00
FY16 Vs. FY15	<i>-\$5,128.00</i>	<i>-\$5,128.00</i>	<i>-\$5,541.00</i>
FY15	\$106,383.00	\$104,051.00	\$119,992.00
FY15 Vs. FY14	<i>+\$1,803.00</i>	<i>-\$101.00</i>	<i>-\$263.00</i>
FY14	\$104,580.00	\$104,152.00	\$120,255.00
FY14 Vs. FY13	<i>-\$44,484.00</i>	<i>-\$44,152.00</i>	<i>-\$50,406.00</i>
FY13	\$149,064.00	\$148,304.00	\$170,631.00
FY13 Vs. FY12	<i>+\$8,470.00</i>	<i>+\$9,434.00</i>	<i>+\$8,825.00</i>
FY12	\$140,594.00	\$138,870.00	\$161,806.00
FY12 Vs. FY11	<i>+\$36,469.00</i>	<i>+\$33,542.00</i>	<i>+\$39,777.00</i>
FY11	\$104,125.00	\$105,328.00	\$122,029.00
FY11 Vs. FY10	<i>-\$139.00</i>	<i>-\$977.00</i>	<i>+\$981.00</i>
FY10	\$104,264.00	\$106,305.00	\$121,048.00
FY10 Vs. FY09	<i>-\$342.00</i>	<i>+\$204.00</i>	<i>+\$1,960.00</i>
FY09	\$104,606.00	\$106,101.00	\$119,088.00

As shown above, we are not the only community in Alaska that is facing a budget crisis if this revenue continues to be decreased or eliminated. The City of Nondalton is located approximately 18 air miles north of Newhalen. They also rely heavily upon revenue sharing as their ONLY source of non-locally generated income. Both cities provide the core community services to their people such as septic pumping, water and sewer, garbage removal, and managing the dump. The cities also provide a source of employment to four people in Newhalen and six people in Nondalton, who would otherwise be without a job. If revenue sharing continues to drop and even disappears, it would devastate the cities of Newhalen, Nondalton, and many, many more throughout Alaska.

Ms. Kathie Wasserman, Executive Director of the Alaska Municipal League, has said time and time again, "they (the state) can 'save' money until some of these municipalities shut down and then all the liability of that municipality goes to the state." What Ms. Wasserman is referring to an Alaska Statute that states if a municipality has to shut down, the state would incur all of the cities expenses and responsibilities that it has to a community to provide the essential services such as water, sewer, trash disposal, etc. I fear without revenue sharing, this will happen to many communities throughout Alaska.

Power Cost Equalization (PCE)

"PCE was instituted as a program to provide economic assistance to customers in rural areas of Alaska where the kilowatt-hour (kWh) charge for electricity can be three to five times higher than the charge in more urban areas of the state. PCE fundamentally improves Alaska's standard of living by helping small rural areas maintain the availability of communications and operation of basic infrastructure and systems, including water and sewer, incinerators, heat and light. PCE is a core element underlying the financial viability of centralized power generation in rural communities." These are not my words but Alaska Energy Authority's on their fact sheet about PCE. Each one of those words rings true.

Based on the reporting period from 07/01/14 to 06/30/15, Iliamna Newhalen Nondalton Electric Coop (INNEC) provided electric service to a combined community population of 476 people. There were 187 residential and 15 community facility customers that qualified for the PCE credits. In 2015, INNEC, generated 903,259 total PCE eligible kWh. For 2015, the last reported average PCE payment per eligible kWh was \$0.24. This equates to \$216,782.16 savings for the three communities, or roughly \$1,073 per eligible customer. An average family of four pays roughly \$150.00 per month. Without PCE, they would be facing around \$240.00 (roughly \$90 more per month). That is a big added cost for our residents who are already struggling with their day to day expenses.

For our residents to continue to thrive and be able to afford their electrical expenses, PCE must be held intact for its specific use. Without it, rural Alaskans across the state will suffer and it will be detrimental.

Income and Sales Taxes

A broad income tax has been proposed at the state level. For a small community such as Newhalen, it would apply too much pressure to our already too tight belts. I believe this could be a great revenue source generator for the state as a whole, but it should be imposed on people who make more than \$150,000 per year. In Ohio, they currently have a 5.925% on income tax for people whose income is over \$200,000. Hawaii imposes a rate of 11% for income over \$200,000. I believe either of these options to be fair and just. Here are some other examples across the nation:

Connecticut: 6.5% on income over \$500,000

New Jersey: 8.97% on income over \$500,000

North Dakota: 4.86% on income over \$373,650

Rhode Island: 9.9% on income over \$373,650

Maryland: 6.25% on income over \$1 million

New York: 8.97% on income over \$500,000

Oregon: 11% on income over \$250,000

Vermont: 8.95% on income over \$373,650

Tennessee charges a 6% tax on interest and dividend income but wages are not taxed. This is a very interesting idea considering how many different corporations offer their shareholders a dividend.

The idea of a Statewide sales tax has been tossed around as well. For Newhalen, a state or local sales tax would not help to fill anyone's coffers in a positive way. There are only two local businesses in Newhalen – Newhalen Bingo and INN Electric Co-Op. Imposing any taxes on Bingo would potentially drive

sales to our neighboring village of Iliamna, which is also currently tax free. Instituting taxes on INN Electric Co-Op would only initiate more harm to our residents by potentially driving up rates.

Iliamna Trooper Station

Trooper Joe Minnick is currently stationed at the Iliamna Trooper Station in Newhalen. He is our closest form of law enforcement in the Lake Iliamna, Lake Clark, and Kvichak River area. Currently, there are no Village Public Safety Officers or Village Public Officer in any northern Bristol Bay villages, which includes Port Alsworth, Nondalton, Iliamna, Newhalen, Pedro Bay, Pile Bay, Kokhanok, Igiugig, and Levelock. According to Bristol Bay Native Association, due to budget cuts by the State from last year, the open position for a Rover Village Public Safety Officer for the Northern Region has been eliminated. If Trooper Minnick were taken out of the northern Bristol Bay Region, it would be tragic and potentially devastating for our communities. We value him as a true asset to the region and rely on him and his authority.

K-12 Funding

"I believe the children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead the way," – Whitney Houston

I believe in this statement. We owe it to our children to ensure that children in schools with enrollments of 10 (Chignik Bay School) all the way to 2,222 (East High School) deserve a proper and well funded education. With other proposed items in the budget, schools throughout the state will need to figure out how to make the same dollar stretch further, even without even considering more budget cuts for themselves

Conclusion

I guess my main purpose of writing this letter is not to offer solutions. It is to remind you that for every action that is taken during this legislative session, we will be effected. You have been elected by the people to represent the people of your district. We have entrusted you with this great duty. It is your job to weigh all the options presented before you and figure out how to get us out of this mess, and hopefully prevent it from happening again. Rural Alaskans deserve a voice. Remember us. Remember how we live and what it takes to live here.

SINCERELY,

Evelynn Trefon

**Vice Mayor, City of Newhalen
Secretary, INN Electric CO-OP
Resident of House District 37 and Senate District S**

Doniece Gott

From: Michael Fleischhauer <bigshaheen46@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2016 7:36 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee; Sen. Dennis Egan
Subject: Alaska's Highways


Most of our Great Land population is centered around Anchorage and Fairbanks and there are numerous roads and highways in the area. All of the people who live in these areas have access to the many opportunities available there. Certainly it is necessary to keep the roads and highways safe and well-maintained so that the residents can continue to enjoy the necessities and, yes, the luxuries available to them. Such things as groceries, fuel, building supplies, medical facilities and educational facilities are clearly within reach.

Another large portion of our State is not connected to such things by land. Many of these people must rely on the Alaska Marine Highway to reach them.

Therefore, it is necessary - no... it is MORAL and RIGHT - to fund the safe and well-maintained MARINE highway where it exists so that the thousands of residents who rely upon it have access to the same kinds of facilities that are available to those who use the land-based highways.

PLEASE!!! Fund our ferry system. Keep it viable. It is a big part of the life blood of this State and has been since its inception.

Thank you.

 Michael Fleischhauer
State Retiree
Juneau

Doniece Gott

From: Linda Kruger <lindalaska2003@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2016 8:59 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Sen. Dennis Egan; Bill Legere
Subject: Budget considerations

Greetings,

First, thanks to you all for serving our great state. Times are tough and I appreciate your willingness to focus on important issues and make thoughtful, tough decisions that will keep our state moving forward.

I'm concerned about proposed cuts to (1) K-12 education and (2) our university system--both are critical for the future of our state; (3) our ferry system, the backbone of our transportation system in Southeast Alaska - important for commerce, tourism, medical appointments, visiting friends and family, school athletics and other school related travel; and (4) public broadcasting - important in bigger communities and the only way many of our smaller communities in the state get state and local news.

We are fortunate in Juneau to have many great radio stations but we have seen our local newspaper wither to a shadow of its past. Here in Juneau, as in many smaller communities, many residents are dependent on local public radio stations for a diverse mix of local, state and national news, coverage of current events and items of interest. In some smaller communities across the state public broadcasting may be the only connection they have to local news and community happenings, including issues pertaining to safety and well-being. It is important to maintain support for this critical service.

While I love my PFD and dislike taxes as much as anyone I realize solutions to our budget issue must include consideration of lower PFDs, some sort of tax (I prefer an income tax), and reformulation of how we tax natural resource extraction. We must all join in exploring creative ways to bring new economy to our state.

Sincerely,

Linda Kruger
3042 Nowell Avenue
Juneau, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Reiss & Lekness <jbreiss1@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2016 4:45 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Early Childhood Preventive Programs - DO NOT CUT

I am requesting to not cut funding for preventive programs from the state budget. Such programs give families and children the tools to feel safe and confident and plays a key role in ending domestic violence. Science supports this thesis. If anything, increase funding.

The funds you plan to cut support key programs including: Parents as Teachers and Best Beginnings. Included in the appropriation should be additional fund for early childhood. These programs are integral to combating sexual and drug abuse by instructing in healthy life practices.

I recognize that tough financial decisions must be made. Be aware, such cuts will have a long term negative impact on Alaska families and their communities.

I believe early childhood education matters and is the correct way to spend state funds.

Linda Lekness

Sprout Family Service Board Member

Homer

Doniece Gott

From: Patrick Dalton <daltonlogshells@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2016 8:37 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: budget cuts

Finance Committee,

Thank you in advance for reading and considering my testimony. I have been testifying on the budget but I am unable to come in the daytime. I am appalled at many of the testimonies I heard from across the state. I am appalled at the selfish behavior of the Alaska residents that are whining to keep their special project. They are only thinking of themselves and not the long term effects on Alaska.

When any of us has a budget crisis for whatever reason we have to make some tough choices and cut our spending, change our habits and make responsible, mature choices. We have to live within our means unless we expect the government to bail us out. That is irresponsible, immature, and part of the reason we are in the budget crisis we are in.

I look over the bills that are in the committees and am shocked at the intrusive bills that will cost this state even more money. When there is a crisis a triage should occur and all the bills that are going to cost even more money and intrusion should be trashed before they even go to the next committee. The legislature is over half finished and very little has been accomplished. Please set your priorities.

Plan has been given to all the legislators that would balance the budget without a tax. It is the uflalaska.com plan. Have you read it? It is 96 pages of sound plans that would balance the budget. There is no excuse not to balance the budget when you have a plan that could be implemented, a solution to the crisis.

Governor Walker has inherited a budget crisis and is handling the crisis in an irresponsible way. You cannot introduce legislation that will cost even more money, cuts have to be made. Vetoes need to be made if it is not a cut in the budget.

Most of us enjoy our freedoms and lives in Alaska. That is why we are here putting up with the long winters. The legislature has a responsibility to preserve this state and stop modeling us after the other states. The 2016 legislature needs to leave a legacy of the one that cut the budget, stopped the taxes, did not raid the reserve fund, and held strong against the irresponsible whining of all the special interest groups. Take your position seriously and responsibly. Set an example to the residents of Alaska and do what it takes to stop the freight train of this budget crisis. At the end of the day and the end of your life you will be accountable for your decisions to Alaska residents and to God. What kind of legacy will you leave?

Thank you for your service and attention.

Sharon Dalton
Delta Junction

Doniece Gott

From: McKibben Jackinsky <mckibben.jackinsky@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2016 1:54 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: STATE BUDGET

Please stay focused on solving the state's budget crisis and freeing Alaska from its dependence on oil and gas; and avoid becoming distracted by anything else.

Sylvester D. Mazen
sylvestermazen@gmail.com

McKibben Jackinsky
mckibben.jackinsky@gmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Tom Moran <TMoran@nomealaska.org>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2016 2:04 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON FY17 OPERATING BUDGET

Greetings:

Please let this e-mail serve as written testimony in support of the operating budget that has passed through the House. Governor Walker has been faced with a very unique challenge that I do not envy one bit. Our state's economy, predicated on the oil industry, is on the brink of collapse. While some of our citizenry urges us to "Cut the fat!," we all know that there isn't anything to cut. Alaska is entitled to the same level of government services that the rest of the country receives. The economies of our continental brethren, however, have not been based wholly on what appears to be a dying industry. Just like the next Alaskan, I hope for a return to the days of \$100+ per barrel...but I'm not holding my breath. And even if oil prices suddenly do soar, the fact will remain that our economy is a one-trick pony. It's time to diversify our interests and protect our infrastructure. Many people in the lower 48 call Alaska a "Libertarian state," but I believe that perception has been colored, in large part, by the fact that we do not adequately tax our citizenry, while literally paying them for their citizenship. I am not advocating for a tax-and-spend government; rather, I am advocating for our government, with whichever party is in the leadership, to see the writing on the wall and change with the times. My sentiment is that it's time to turn the page on the old way of doing things. Please count this testimony as a ringing endorsement for a budget that increases revenues rather than decreases expenditures.

Most sincerely,

Thomas C. Moran

City Manager

102 Division Street

P.O. Box 281

Nome, Alaska 99762

P: 907.443.6600

F: 907.443.5349

"Do more than is required of you." - General George S. Patton, Jr.

Doniece Gott

From: Eric Knudtson <epknudtson@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 06, 2016 3:56 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Fiscal Year 2017 budget

I would like to see the budget deficit addressed by using our PFD's and a new state income tax to create new revenue rather than reducing our budget farther.

Thank you,
Eric Knudtson
Homer, AK

Doniece Gott

From: Gary Miller <gmiller.juneauak@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 10:09 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Education

My wife and I are raising our seven year old grandson so education is our highest priority. I hope the legislature continues to keep educational costs up with inflation.

I believe in a school tax, income tax and tapping into the Permanent Fund Earnings. Drastic measures need to be taken to keep our state from going bankrupt in four years.

Gary Miller
20135 Cohen Dr
Juneau, AK 99801-8211
(907) 789-3757

<http://www.rpea.apea-aft.org/>
RPEA@alaska.net

Doniece Gott

From: beth@bethsvalleyviews.com
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 10:43 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Rep. Cathy Tilton; Sen. Bill Stoltze
Subject: 2017 Budget Crunch

Dear Esteemed Members of the AK Senate Finance Committee,

It is my sincere hope that you are planning on ensuring that Alaska's 2017 *Bottom Line* Budget is no more than \$4.5 B. I also encourage you to disregard any consideration of a reconfiguration of the Permanent Fund. Yes, I mean the entire fund - corpus, reserves, inflation proofing and dividends.

Additionally, I believe that any change to the oil industry's tax credit system as established by SB 21 is a terrible idea at this time. Just when the law is working, someone tries to shut it down.

Taxes, of any kind, should be disregarded until the State's Budget is at \$3.2B.

Finally, the employees of the Departments and Divisions and Sections of the government whom we pay should be severely and publicly chastised when they cut the 'boots on the ground', e.g., fire fighting/prevention, troopers, emergency services, infrastructure maintenance and classroom teachers. Travel for anything that is not related to the direct services herein should be considered luxuries and cut before any of these types of services and activities.

Luxury items would include:

- travel outside of the state for any reason. Any out-of-state travel should require approval of the Governor's office and be posted on the internet with a direct link from the Governor's web page. Bring the training up here if it is that necessary.
- in-state travel that is not directly related to infrastructure maintenance or consolidated training opportunities should require approval of the Governor's office and be posted at the same direct link from the Governor's web page.

Special Sessions should be held in Anchorage with those who live outside of the City using the local Legislative Information Offices (and not per diem) to participate.

- Vacant positions - all vacant positions that do not provide direct services (see previous paragraph) to the citizenry should be eliminated. The Alaska Policy Forum has used a FOIA to determine that 4,000 vacant positions exist at a potential \$20M cost.

Regardless of the pain and anguish all of this may cause us, it is my belief that not one of you would make a plan for emptying out your savings plans to continue spending until all of your financial resources are lost.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

Beth Fread

Palmer, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Seese, Cheryl <cseese@kpb.us>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 10:48 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Operating Budget

Importance: High

Dear honored public servants,

Thank you for your great efforts in finding ways to reduce the overall budget and finding ways to increase revenue in order to balance our overall budget and reduce Alaska's debt.

I propose several ways.

Continue to cut spending anywhere and everywhere we can.

Levy a sales tax of 2% to 3% everywhere but maybe small communities in the bush; this way EVERYONE PAYS including tourists and those who have sin habits (cigarettes/alcohol) but live on the government dole.

Levy income tax ONLY on workers who take their pay outside of Alaska where their residence is.

Do Not fund Governor Walker's Medicaid bill. The middle class is being crushed by the cost of carrying the weight of the lower class. We do not need another, costly program with a bottomless pit to pay for (we pay our Social Security). And as you know the Federal Government will only subsidize the Medicaid program for a few years and then we fund 100% of it.

Work on finding and preventing fraudulent welfare claims and worker's comp claims.

Don't let Walker ruin our Gas Line opportunities; and don't put unfair costs on the oil companies which support our state.

In closing please know that I very much appreciate your efforts on behalf of all Alaskan's. Thank you.


Most Respectfully,

Cheryl Seese


(907) 351-9138

(907) 224-6826

319 Ballaine Blvd.

Seward, AK 99664

Mailing:

 Box 1971

Seward, AK 99664

Respectfully,


Cheryl

Cheryl Seese

KPB Seward Annex

PO Box 2188

Seward, AK 99664


(907) 224-2001

Doniece Gott

From: Ann Turner Olson <ann_turnerolson@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 11:37 AM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna MacKinnon; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FUNDING

corrected email addresses, thank you

Ann Turner Olson, LCSW, Counseling Services
9000 Glacier Hwy, Suite 304
Juneau, AK, 99801
907.790.1090
907.723.5219

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Ann Turner Olson <ann_turnerolson@yahoo.com>
To: "representative.anna.mackinnon@akleg.gov" <representative.anna.mackinnon@akleg.gov>
Cc: "representative.anna.mackinnon@akleg.gov" <representative.anna.mackinnon@akleg.gov>;
"Rep.lynn.gattis@akleg.gov" <Rep.lynn.gattis@akleg.gov>; "Rep.tammie.wilson@akleg.gov"
<Rep.tammie.wilson@akleg.gov>; "Rep.dan.saddler@akleg.gov" <Rep.dan.saddler@akleg.gov>;
"Rep.cathy.munoz@akleg.gov" <Rep.cathy.munoz@akleg.gov>; "Rep.scott.kawasaki@akleg.gov"
<Rep.scott.kawasaki@akleg.gov>; "Rep.bryce.edgmon@akleg.gov" <Rep.bryce.edgmon@akleg.gov>;
"Rep.steve.thompson@akleg.gov" <Rep.steve.thompson@akleg.gov>;
"Rep.david.guttenberg@akleg.gov" <Rep.david.guttenberg@akleg.gov>; "Rep.less.gara@akleg.gov"
<Rep.less.gara@akleg.gov>; "Rep.lance.pruitt@akleg.gov" <Rep.lance.pruitt@akleg.gov>;
"lhscfin@akleg.gov" <lhscfin@akleg.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2016 11:19 AM
Subject: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FUNDING

Dear Finance Committee Chairs and Members,

I AM WRITING TO ADD MY ENDORSEMENT OF THE CRITICAL ROLE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS PLAY IN OUR COMMUNITY. I SUPPORT THE COMMITTEE ACCEPTING THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT GRANTS.

AS A PRIVATE SECTOR MENTAL HEALTH THERAPIST, I WORK CLOSELY WITH OUR COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMS. I HAD OCCASION THE PAST WEEK TO COLLABORATE WITH **JUNEAU ALLIANCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH, Inc (JAMHI)** TO HELP ONE OF MY CLIENTS OBTAIN PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY SERVICES. WITHOUT THESE SERVICES THIS INDIVIDUAL WOULD NOT HAVE OBTAINED THE EMERGENCY CARE NEEDED, MAY WELL HAVE HURT OR EVEN KILLED HIMSELF OR HARMED SOMEONE ELSE AND VERY LIKELY WOULD ENDED UP IN JAIL. JAMHI WORKED WITH ME AND THIS INDIVIDUAL'S FAMILY MEMBER TO GET THE IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE NEEDED.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ALL COMMUNITIES HAVE ACCESS TO THESE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACROSS THE CONTINUUM - FROM GENERAL OUTPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH AND CASE MANAGEMENT TO CRISIS EMERGENCY SERVICES. THE LACK OF THESE SERVICES WILL AFFECT ALL PARTS OF OUR COMMUNITIES, LAW ENFORCEMENT, JAIL/PRISONS, HOSPITALS, FAMILIES, SCHOOLS AND MORE. THE FUNDING THE STATE PROVIDES IS ESSENTIAL TO KEEPING THESE CRITICAL SERVICES INTACT AND PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE PERSONS IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

Thank you for accepting the Governor's proposed budget for behavioral health treatment grants and for recognizing the absolutely important role behavioral health plays in all of the reform efforts, strategies, and initiatives to reduce healthcare and other costs." Thank you as well for the difficult jobs you perform for our State.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Turner Olson
Juneau resident since 1979

Ann Turner Olson, LCSW, Counseling Services
9000 Glacier Hwy, Suite 304
Juneau, AK, 99801
907.790.1090
907.723.5219

Doniece Gott

From: Kristin Cox <drkristinnd@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 12:05 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please do not cut services

Please do not cut services to the most vulnerable Alaskans. These proposed budget cuts are barbaric. Cutting services does not eliminate the need for these services. These cuts will only cost us more in more costly services later down the road, not to mention dignity and quality of life as well as lives themselves of care givers and patients/clients/family members.

It is time to raise revenue to invest in our families, children and communities. It's time Alaskans pay an income tax and don't expect a government and services for nothing.

Respectfully submitted.

2.5%, or half the \$450,000 cut considered by the

--

Kristin Cox, ND
Rainforest Naturopathic Medicine
2703 David St.
Fairbanks, AK 99801

Doniece Gott

From: Bob and Carol Thompson <jcibt@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 12:57 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Sen. Click Bishop; Rep. Jim Colver
Subject: Senate Finance Committee

I support Representative Paul Seaton's HB365 which converts PFDs to tax credits against a state income tax. This is the best idea I have heard to utilize PFD earnings while adding some progressivity to the system and not overburdening lower income Alaskans.

Bob Thompson
Palmer, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Brian Hakkinen <brianofkasilof@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 2:16 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget

Abolish all tax incentives for oil and gas producers, no funding for mega projects, no funding for soon to be mothballed gas line, no community revenue sharing, reduce funding for University of Alaska. Do not touch Permanent Fund, or earnings. Keep dividends at present levels. Bring back the state income tax. Continue to cut the budget until it is balanced. We may go into a slight recession but we have all been there before so we will get over it.

Brian Hakkinen
24222 Kalifornsky Beach Road
Kasilof

Doniece Gott

From: richard carlson <richardcarlson1040@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 2:00 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FY 17 Budget

I would encourage the Senate Finance Committee to craft a reasonable budget that is sustainable and includes both cuts and adds revenues enhancement measures.

Doniece Gott

From: Laural Jackson <ljackson@dgsd.us>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 1:33 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget Testimony

While I applaud most of your efforts to reduce the State's budget, I am very concerned that the damage you do will be lethal for many programs. If these are truly expendable programs then perhaps they should be discontinued in one fell swoop rather than financially strangling them into a slow death. If they are programs that are valued by the State, then please be sure that they are funded to a level that provides for an appropriate program.

I am also concerned because I do not seem to be hearing much about how you are going to raise revenue. It has been stated over and over that Alaska cannot cut its way out of this budget crisis. Please do not delay on revenue raising actions. They are needed now, next year is too late.

Thank you.

Laural Jackson, Superintendent
Delta/Greely School District
907-895-4657 ex 24

This message is considered confidential and should not be shared without explicit permission of the sender.

Doniece Gott

From: fwaldron@acsalaska.net
Date: Monday, March 07, 2016 2:21 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Income taxes

I am writing in support of reinstating the State income tax. I never resented the tax. My parents voted for bonds to pay for the schools I attended in the fifties and sixties. It is appropriate for the citizens to help pay for the services we receive. Like many, I was shocked when our state budget exceeded one billion dollars. I believe it is backwards to cut first then tax. We need to do both now, immediately. Of course the income tax is only a partial solution, but with some skin in the game, maybe more will pay attention. Do away with the dividend. Schools and public safety are the top priority. Thank You to all of you folks down there in Juneau.

Franklin D Waldron
Ninilchik, AK 99639

I grew up listening to our local public radio station – KYUK – every morning before school. This was in the days before we had TV.

This is a habit I've carried on throughout my entire life. My wife and kids tease me for streaming KYUK over the Internet in the morning whenever I'm traveling outside of our region: Anchorage – Seattle – Hawaii – anywhere.

But this is how I stay in touch with what's going on at home while away.

In a region where wireless (cell & internet) communication is often unreliable or even non-existent KYUK public radio is still a critical information link throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Through KYUK nearly 20,000 residents of southwest Alaska have access to the latest news, weather, river reports, and countless other bits of information about our world, our country, our state, and our region.

I always tell people new to the region that one of the best ways to familiarize themselves is to listen to KYUK:

Listen to Birthday Line to see how connected we all are

Listen to the Tundra Drums to learn about local events that we attend

Listen to the local news to learn what's good and bad about our life here

Listen to Yuk to Yuk (Yupik Talk Show) to learn about what's important to the Real People and to understand their respectful communication style

Listen to Talk Line to learn about what's important to others – especially Bethel residents

Listen to Bethel Search River Reports to learn about travel conditions on our River and trails

Perhaps the most important service our public radio station provides is its tireless work to promote the Yupik culture and preservation of the Yupik language. There are many programs aired entirely in Yupik.

Throughout the decades KYUK has in fact, become a part of the region's culture.

Just look at the call sign letters.

I respectfully urge the Alaska State Legislature to continue funding public radio in our great state. It is still a critically needed service – even more so to Rural Alaska.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mark Leary
Director of Development & Operations
Native Village of Napaimute

In regards to Senate Bill 139: Operating Budget

I respectfully request the consideration of the Finance Committee on the topic of state funding for Public Radio. I understand that the State of Alaska faces a budget crisis. Yet I believe that eliminating funding for Public Radio will destroy an essential communications network here in rural Alaska.

I live in the island community of Petersburg, where the radio station provides many services, in terms of local, statewide, national and international news, community announcements and the airing of public meetings. KFSK is designated our local Emergency Broadcasting station for natural disasters and Amber Alerts.

A few weeks ago, the importance of KFSK's role in emergency broadcasting became very real when an inmate escaped from the downtown jail on a weekday morning, and remained at large as police pursued him through town. He remained at large for five hours. During that time the hospital and the school were both locked down.

I would not have wanted to wait for Channel 2 Evening news in Anchorage to report on the story. Nor would I want to wait 6 days for the weekly paper to tell me what was happening.

This is not the first lockdown here in town. I still remember the looks on the faces of the women I worked with when the school was locked down for the first time. It was good we had KFSK announcing the children were safe, and what was happening as police pursued another potentially dangerous individual.

KFSK also was instrumental in keeping the community and outlying areas informed when we had a tsunami warning in effect a few years ago.

In some places like Anchorage, there are other radio stations that can act as emergency broadcasters. That is not available here in many rural parts of the State. Public radio provides a literal lifeline in these places.

Some legislators have asked "what about cellphones and Smartphones and computers?"

I work at the local Clinic, and at the Courthouse. I have also worked at the Public Library. In my experience, there is a large percentage of people in our town and the outlying areas who cannot afford regular cellphone service, or a computer, or cable service. Often people have shared phones, short-term prepaid phones or use the computer at the Public Library. This does not afford ready access to information when there is an emergency.

I am asking you not to severely cut the funds to Public Broadcasting. Eliminating funding will cause public radio stations like KFSK to lose federal funding, and our budgets cannot sustain this hit. Public radio stations would close and an essential rural communication service would be lost.

I recognize the dire situation you face trying to come up with a state budget. I work three jobs trying to meet my budget. These are tough economic times. I do support a percentage income tax based on the amount of federal income tax a person pays. I also believe that perhaps receiving permanent fund could be based on income level as well. There are people in rural areas that have few other sources of income at all.

Thank you for your consideration.

Julie Hursey

PO Box 213

Petersburg, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Kay Clements <gm@khns.org>
Sent: Friday, March 04, 2016 12:03 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Public Broadcasting

Esteemed Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Hello, my name is Jeff Bochart and I am President of the Board of Directors for KHNS in Haines, AK. I have phoned some of you and so please forgive my redundancy in following with this letter. I am doing so because I cannot stress enough how important our seemingly small radio station is to us. KHNS (like many other community radio stations) is crucial to the lifeblood of this small town. Many Alaskans living in our larger bergs do not, perhaps, understand this. You see, because of our small numbers we are acquainted with nearly all of each other in our town/borough. So, this station does much to interconnect us.

Some folks live in isolated situations within the broadcast range of these stations, with no communications system other than local radio. And thus there have been emergency situations taken care of, if not lives saved, because of message services provided. Our local news is very important to us indeed as we're kept up to date locally. KHNS is indeed like a living member of our community.

In short, we need community radio *for our community*. In a larger town with much larger numbers, folks as a whole are more anonymous and more insulated from each other. There are other systems in place with which to stay in tune with events, opportunities, music, and the like. Out here is much different. We would lose more than a little lifeblood if our funding were to be drastically cut.

Thank you for your consideration. These situations are likely to recur for the next few years at least. I invite you to come visit us, or a station like us. I honestly believe that, if you give it your full attention, you will see what I am writing you about.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bochart

President Board of Directors

KHNS

Haines, AK



Lovalaska

Pick.Click.Give.



Petersburg Borough, Petersburg, Alaska
RESOLUTION #2016-04

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE CONSIDER LESS SEVERE CUTS TO THE ALASKA PUBLIC BROADCASTING COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska is facing another budget deficit for FY17, and likely additional fiscal years in the future; and

WHEREAS, a budget shortfall of this magnitude results in tough choices and difficult cuts in all facets of State Government all across Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Public Broadcasting service is a statewide essential service supported by the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, public broadcasting provides a wealth of civic, cultural, and education information to Alaska residents, public safety and emergency communication services, not to mention programming and entertainment; and

WHEREAS, the public broadcasting budget realized a cut in FY16 in the legislative process, and further significant reductions are expected in FY17; and

WHEREAS, cuts to all segments of government are expected for FY17 but the extent of the proposed reduction to public broadcasting seems disproportionate and will adversely affect the availability of service across Alaska, especially in rural Alaska where public broadcasting is often the primary means of entertainment and community and regional information sharing.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Petersburg Borough Assembly respectfully requests the Alaska Legislature consider less severe cuts to the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission in the FY17 budget.

Passed and Approved by the Petersburg Borough Assembly on February 1, 2016.


Mark Jensen, Mayor

ATTEST:


Melinda Swihart, Deputy Clerk



Senator Bert Stedman
State Capitol, Room 30
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
State Capitol, Room 426
Juneau, Alaska 99801

February 10, 2016

Senator Stedman and Representative Kreiss-Tomkins:

The Local Emergency Planning Committee for the Petersburg Borough assists in preparing for emergencies by maintaining an Emergency Operations Plan.

The committee is made up of local officials; police, fire, public health professionals; and representatives from the community and the media.

KFSK public radio is the only 24-hour media service in the Petersburg Borough and its signal reaches the entire population. In the event of an emergency, KFSK plays a vital role in the dissemination of information from first responders and officials involved in the management of the emergency response.

As we are all aware, the State of Alaska is facing a fiscal crisis resulting in difficult budget decisions. KFSK expected, and indeed realized, a deep cut to its state operating grant in FY16.

The Petersburg Local Emergency Planning Committee needs KFSK to remain strong in order to continue to serve its mission to keep Borough residents informed. In the event of an emergency, it is the only media source that citizens can rely upon to receive life-saving and time-sensitive information that is a necessity in emergency situations.

We urge you to support public broadcasting by keeping the reduction of state funding for public radio stations to a minimum. Large cuts to small radio stations could dismantle the emergency response network that is vital to keeping Alaskans safe during emergencies.

Sincerely,

Sandra K. Dixon

Petersburg Fire/EMS Director
Local Emergency Planning Committee Chair

Petersburg Borough

PO Box 329 PETERSBURG, AK 99833 PHONE (907)772-3355 FAX (907)772-3599

Doniece Gott

m: Dan Dunaway <dlgdunaway@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 04, 2016 2:10 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: please Dillingham DA & public radio

I know times are beyond lean for the state budget.

DA

We have a heroin epidemic in the Bristol Bay area. Maintaining office facilities AND a DA is essential to the area.

WE have 2 unsolved murders, several overdoses and other crimes related to drugs.

In addition since our DA resigned and the Anchorage office has taken responsibility for cases we have had FAR TOO MANY dismissals - as if the Anchorage office doesn't care and just dumps our cases no matter how good a job the police did to investigate a case and conduct it at the highest standards.

The most recent big heroin bust occurred in my neighborhood; there are a lot of kids ages from a few months to 18 yrs here, including 2 of my own. I am daily concerned for my boys and the safety of law abiding residents.

Ask our Police Chief how many criminal cases have been dropped (that is criminal in itself).

Our communities are going to unravel from drugs, alcohol, domestic abuse if these dismissals continue and if we don't have a locally aware DA.

Public Radio:

Please, I hope you can find some crumbs to share with public broadcasting; any of us would greatly appreciate it.

In much of the Bush, public radio broadcasting is the only news source, fishery and hunting season information, public safety announcements etc.

For many small stations, cutting the state funds amounts to cutting the federal funds as well and likely will cause stations to close.

I am a member of Friends of KDLG and we work hard to obtain other donations and funds where ever possible but the state funds are critical.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dan Dunaway
PO Box 1490
Dillingham, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Kenley Jackson <kenley.jackson@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 04, 2016 2:37 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Proposed 100% cut for Public Broadcasting

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to consider my thoughts, especially in this time of difficult financial circumstances and hard decisions facing the legislature.

I rely on public radio in Sitka for news coverage and emergency alerts. The proposed 100% cut to public broadcasting will cause a loss of essential daily coverage for news locally, regionally, and statewide, a loss of essential capacity to transmit emergency and public safety information, layoffs for public broadcasting staff who provide these services, as well as the sense of community health and vitality created by public media.

This cut will jeopardize federal operating grants and federal matching dollars coming into Alaska. Commercial broadcasters will not replace the services we are losing. KCAW already maximizes listener membership revenue. State funding is critical to maintain vital news and emergency services.

Do you support the 100% cut?

Please consider a smaller percentage cut for public broadcasting.
Thank you.

Sincerely,
Kenley Jackson
Sitka

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
COMMENDING RESOLUTION**

**A RESOLUTION COMMENDING KACHEMAK BAY BROADCASTING, INC.
AND PICKLE HILL PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS
OF SERVICE TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE KENAI PENINSULA
AND WEST SIDE OF COOK INLET**

- WHEREAS,** Kachemak Bay Broadcasting, Inc. (KBBI) and Pickle Hill Broadcasting, Inc. (KDLL) have provided local, state, national and international news and entertainment program services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to Kenai Peninsula residents from Cooper Landing to Nanwalek, and Tyonek to the west side of Kodiak Island.; and
- WHEREAS,** Peninsula-wide live broadcasts of Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly meetings are possible through this collaboration that includes Seward on meeting nights; and
- WHEREAS,** KBBI and KDLL have presented local information for many life threatening disaster situations, including the recent January 24, 2016 earthquake; the Funny River fire in 2014, the Caribou Hills fire (2007) and Tracy Avenue (2004); as well as the St. Augustine volcano (2006) and Redoubt volcano (2009) eruptions; and
- WHEREAS,** KBBI's ability to simulcast broadcasts to KDLL listeners has been an important information avenue for a number of emergency situations; and
- WHEREAS,** KBBI and KDLL services also include local news and information programs, and local and marine weather; and
- WHEREAS,** Local volunteer DJs share their love of music throughout the week; over 800 local residents from ages 16 to over 70 have hosted live music shows on KBBI and KDLL; and
- WHEREAS,** Through the Bush Lines and Information lines, KBBI brings vital personal and practical information to residents on and off the road system; and
- WHEREAS,** KBBI and KDLL also air international and national news and entertainment programs from National Public Radio, Public Radio International, American Public Media, and the BBC; and
- WHEREAS,** Alaska news is represented by Alaska News Nightly, Alaska Morning Report, Alaska Economic Report, and Talk of Alaska, provided via satellite from the Alaska Public Radio Network;


**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF
THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH:**


SECTION 1. The 2016 Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly commends the quality of service and community involvement of KBBI and KDLL, and thanks them for enriching the lives of Kenai Peninsula residents living along the shores, mountains, and bays of Cook Inlet for over 30 years.

SECTION 2. This resolution become effective immediately upon adoption.

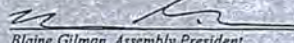
**ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
THIS 23RD DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2016**




Kelly Cooper, Assembly Member, Co-Sponsor


Willy Dunne, Assembly Member, Co-Sponsor


Mike Navarre, Mayor, Co-Sponsor


Blaine Gilman, Assembly President


John Blankenship, Borough Clerk



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
Office of Emergency Management

253 Wilson Lane, Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Office: (907) 262-4910

Direct: (907) 262-2095

Fax: (907) 714-2395

bhanson@borough.kenai.ak.us

MIKE NAVARRE
BOROUGH MAYOR

March 2, 2016

Dave Anderson, General Manager
Kachemack Bay Broadcasting
Homer, AK 99635

RE: Support for Continued Funding of KBBI and KDLL Public Radio

I am providing this letter in support of efforts by KBBI and KDLL to obtain continued funding support from the State of Alaska.

The proposed cuts of up to 100% to Alaska public broadcasting will cause irreparable harm to the services these stations and other Alaska stations provide to communities of all sizes.

My support is in recognition of how seriously KBBI considers their service during emergencies and natural disasters. Residents in every corner of the Kenai Peninsula Borough including the Kachemak Bay area, communities on both sides of Cook Inlet and the west side of Kodiak Island benefit from broadcasts of emergency messages and critical information in times of disaster. The stations have assisted in providing vital information during wildfire, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, flooding, and tsunami emergencies, including the January 2016 earthquake, Funny River fire (2014), Caribou Hills fire (2007) Tracy Avenue fire (2004), the St. Augustine volcano (2006) and Redoubt volcano (2009) eruptions, with regular reports on wind direction and ash fall and steps to protect homes and businesses.

KBBI's ability to simulcast broadcasts to KDLL listeners has been an important information avenue for a number of emergency situations.

KBBI is a participant in broadcasting Emergency Alert System information, which is critical to our Coastal communities, often the only way some citizens can get critical disaster or emergency information.

Respectfully,

Scott Walden, Director
Kenai Peninsula Borough
Office of Emergency Management

Doniece Gott

From: Lauren Bell <lbell@sitkascience.org>
Sent: Friday, March 04, 2016 3:56 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Re: proposed public broadcasting funding cuts

To the Senate Finance Committee:

I'm writing to express my concern over the recently proposed 100% budget cut to public broadcasting in our state. I have lived in Alaska since birth, and during my lifetime I have relied almost exclusively on Alaska's exceptional public broadcasting stations for my local, state, and national news. The various small communities I have lived in across Alaska have more often than not been out-of-range for both internet access and reliable cell phone coverage, so that tuning in to public radio broadcasting has been my only means of staying informed of health, safety, and emergency alerts. Where internet access is possible in our state, it does not provide the same consistent and timely, community-level information that our local public broadcasting stations are able to afford, such as local marine forecasts, school lunch menus, community calendars and announcements, and updates during disaster responses. Commercial broadcasters and media will not invest in such local services if public broadcasting is removed.

I understand the current financial crisis within our state, and the tough decisions that the Alaska legislature currently faces. I don't believe that sweeping elimination of the public broadcasting budget is the answer to our state's fiscal imbalance. I am very concerned that choosing to cut state funding to public broadcasting will significantly undermine the strength and resilience of our communities as well as weaken the vital connections of Alaskans to one another across the immense expanse of our state.

I urge the Senate Finance Committee to not support this proposed reduction.

Thank you for your time,

Lauren Bell

Member, Board of Directors – Raven Radio, KCAW

Sitka, Alaska

Cell: (650) 804-6023

Doniece Gott

m: John <jsandr@matnet.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2016 12:02 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: public comment budget

March 4, 2016

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am commenting on the budget.

First, I want you to fund Public Broadcasting at the current year's level. I live in Talkeetna, and our public radio station is not a luxury; it is an necessity. It lets us know what is going on in our community so we can participate in our community; it gives us local (especially important), state and national news, and it keeps us informed and warned in emergencies (e.g., floods which are becoming more frequent in recent years, and wildfires such as last summer's Sockeye fire in nearby Willow). KTNA has many volunteers and enjoys strong and broad financial support from the community. But we can't do it all... we need your help. Please restore funding.

Second, you, the legislature, are cutting or talk about cutting in all the wrong places: the Nome Youth Facility, Senior Benefits Program, UAF, closing rural schools, and you have ADOT so tight that it is refusing to fund maintenance on a planned construction of an underpass near the intersection of the Parks Highway and Talkeetna Spur Road, so Susitna Valley High students can safely cross the Parks Highway... even though the underpass would be a state facility in a state right of way. You, the legislature are bit by bit cutting off our future and dismantling the fabric of our society.

Third, stop throwing money down the drain by continuing to fund the mega projects, like Susitna-Watana Dam, Juneau Road, Road to Ambler, Knik Crossing... four that are the most egregious waste of money. If you are going to cut, cut these mega-projects.

Fourth, you focus almost entirely on cuts. I and everybody else have had a free ride for 36 years, since the state income tax was abolished. It is about time for the people of this state to start paying for the services they consume. I urge you to consider reestablishing an income tax. And other taxes... motor fuels, fishing, mining, and especially get rid of the oil tax giveaway. I'd say cap the dividend at \$1000 or one-half (of what it would normally be) if it weren't regressive.

I urge you to put an end to your cut-cut-cut mantra. You are hurting a lot of people, with a disproportionate burden on those least able to manage the loss.

I hope you get serious about addressing our budget problems in a comprehensive way.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

John Strassenburgh
PO Box 766
Talkeetna, AK 99676
jsandr@matnet.com
907-733-6874

Doniece Gott

From: Christie Jamieson <bcjamieson@gci.net>
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2016 1:42 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman; Rep. Daniel Ortiz; Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Cindy Sweat; Cyni Waddington
Subject: Public Broadcasting Proposed Budget Cuts

Importance: High

Good afternoon Alaska State Legislators:

On behalf of the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to all of you today to ask that you please consider not reducing the funding for public broadcasting.

If the state cuts 100% of funding to public broadcasting, at least seven (7) stations will not qualify for federal funding from the CPB. These stations include: **KSTK Wrangell**, KFSK Petersburg, KHNS Haines, KCUH Valdez, KDLL Kenai, KYUK Bethel and KYUK Bethel TV. As a result, an additional \$1,527,000 in federal operating dollars will be lost!

If KSTK Wrangell loses all state funding and federal funding, all we are left with is local contributions. A town the size of Wrangell, population 2,400, cannot support 100% of the cost of running this station. If KSTK Wrangell turns off it's signal, Wrangell is left without the statewide Emergency Alert System and we will have no source for daily local, regional or statewide news and no daily source for community announcements that keep all of us connected.

Again, please consider not reducing the funding for public broadcasting!

Sincerely yours, Christie Jamieson, President

(c) 907-305-0117

(h) 907-874-2839

Chamber Office: 907-874-3901



My name is Stephen Todd and I have lived in Wrangell for 17 years. I understand the difficult financial situation that the legislature is facing and I know that all of us in Alaska face difficult decisions regarding cuts that must be made. I would like to speak in favor of sustainable funding to public broadcasting in Alaska. I understand that some funding cuts may need to be made. I am asking that the legislature not make the 100% cut to public broadcasting that some have suggested.

Our local public radio station in Wrangell is KSTK. A 100% cut in State funding to KSTK would potentially cause our station to be shut down. This 100% cut in funding would cause KSTK to fail to meet the minimum for non-federal funding, and thus would make KSTK ineligible for funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. This crescendo of a lack of funds could mean the end of our station here in Wrangell - as well as possibly shutting down 6 other public stations across the state.

KSTK is a crucial part of the fabric of this community. When folks from Wrangell want to know what events are happening in the legislature and across the state, we turn to KSTK. When there are emergencies that endanger us, KSTK lets us know. When our kids play sports in a distant community, Wrangell can be there because our public radio station takes us there. When our borough government meets, KSTK allows us to be in on the conversation. When there is news that is specific to Wrangell, that has a direct effect on us, our public radio station explains it. When a neighbor needs a hand, KSTK lets us know. KSTK helps hold the community of Wrangell together. Without it we would have no daily, local source of radio which helps keep this community informed, safe and whole.

A 100% cut in funding to public radio would be disastrous for KSTK - it would be disastrous for Wrangell - and it would hurt Alaskans across the state that depend on their public radio stations as we do here. Small villages and towns like Wrangell do not have the community resources to recoup the losses of a 100% cut.

If you must make further cuts to funding public broadcasting – please consider making these cuts much less drastic. Please consider a budget that funds public broadcasting at a sustainable level. Wrangell counts on our public radio stations to be there for us. Please fund public broadcasting at a level that will allow it to continue to serve these essential services to communities across Alaska. Thank you for considering this testimony.

Stephen Todd
PO Box 1844
Wrangell, AK 99929

Doniece Gott

From: Ann Millard <amillard@aptalaska.net>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 11:07 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Keith Martin; Yukon Ron's; mike macedougall; jan dave; Jeanne Tatangelo; Etta Mail; Steve Hamlin
Subject: Need for continued support of KUAC-FM & ARCS

This is my testimony to the Senate Finance Committee:

I have lived in Alaska and been a teacher here since 1986. When I first moved to Alaska, I lived in Eagle River and taught kindergarten in Anchorage and then moved to Fairbanks in 1988. I immediately discovered KUAC-FM and have been a supporter ever since. In 1996, I moved to Eagle (on the Yukon) to become Principal/Teacher of Eagle Community School. When I moved to Eagle, the only television we got was RATNET and there were no radio stations at all. I contacted KUAC and began the process of building a translator station for KUAC-FM here in Eagle. I retired in 2003 and again in 2013 and am now on a fixed income. Eagle is a very small community and most people have incomes below the poverty level. In spite of that, every year the people of Eagle show their support for KUAC-FM by contributing to the pledge drive. Although I am retired, I am a sustaining member, contributing \$110 per month. Elisabeth Sager loves opera and supports that programming with regular donations. Sonja Sager and Mike MacDougal and their 6 children contribute every year to support the news and educational programming. Betty & John Borg, retired Postmaster, support the programming with regular contributions. Steve and Kristy Robbins, current Principal of Eagle Community School, get no TV reception because they live on the hill and KUAC-FM is their only source of local news (thank you Dan Bross). Often, I hear townspeople say "I heard it on NPR". That source of information is ONLY available on KUAC-FM in Eagle. Other contributors include Mary Morris and Ron West, Jan & Dave Roy, Jeanne Tatangelo and Dana Ulvi and these are just the ones I know about. Native residents in Eagle Village get no ARCS reception, but can get KUAC-FM. The most popular programming on ARCS is Alaska Weather, again the ONLY source of local weather information. There are several pilots in town and because our mail and freight delivery are weather dependent, Alaska Weather is vital to our community's commerce and transportation. KUAC-FM is a big supporter of the Yukon Quest which passes through Eagle in February. This event is not only our main cultural event in Eagle (there are many mushers in Eagle), it is also a source of revenue for the school and community.

Eagle residents have only two choices for TV reception. The first is to get a DishNetwork or Direct TV satellite dish, which is costly and out of reach for many residents, and presents low-quality programming compared to KUAC or AKPB. Only this year were we able to convert from an analog to digital signal increasing our choice of channels from 1 (ARCS) to 4 (ARCS (Anchorage based), AKPB (Anchorage based), FNX (from KUAC) and 360 North (from UATV)). 360 North is our only access to Gavel to Gavel. We would never have been able to afford the conversion without government support. In fact, we did a special pledge drive in Eagle to support this conversion and received \$350 from local residents. Although that may not sound like much, it is a lot in Eagle for a local fund-raiser. UATV is also a source of educational programming for some of our students. Since there is no option for streaming KUAC-FM or TV, Eagle residents depend heavily on the publicly funded, non-commercial TV available only on the ARCS suite of programming. The signal reaches around Eagle City, but since the flood, when Eagle Village was destroyed, the residents of the Native Village of Eagle have been without access to ARCS. We are working on getting a permit to relocate Channel 5 (already held by the State of Alaska) but without support from the State, this conversion wouldn't be possible.

Eagle has no cell phone service. The only choices for Internet access are dial-up from APT (too slow for most purposes), HughesNet (which is capped at 350MB per day for almost \$100 per month), and the free public

access at the library. Unfortunately, the library is only open 3 days a week and sitting outside during the winter is not a pleasant option. Without the OWL program and the subsidy for the internet at the school, Eagle would be even more isolated from news and educational programming than it is now.

We realize that there are hard choices to make when the price of oil is so low. Gasoline, propane and fuel oil have remained at \$5.00 per gal in Eagle since 2009. We pay almost \$1 per pound to ship groceries and freight in on Everts. Even so, many people are more willing to give up part of the PFD, get reduced services from DOT (the road is only open from Apr.1-Oct. 1), find other funding for the school, or even pay an income tax rather than lose the funding for KUAC-TV. When I was Principal in the 1990's and gas was \$18 a barrel, we were able to maintain the ARCS and KUAC-FM funding. The equipment is housed at the school and doesn't cost the State of Alaska for the electricity to run the station. The school also maintains the equipment and pays a portion of the cost when equipment has to be replaced.

Finally, last winter, I was in Colorado visiting my family. From what I observed, I am convinced that when marijuana taxes are put in place, you will discover that they will generate enough money to keep the funding for schools and public broadcasting at or above current levels.

Thank you for your attention to Eagle's needs and we hope you will consider other alternatives for cutting spending rather than eliminating or reducing our access to Public Broadcasting.

Sincerely,
Ann Riley Millard

Ann Millard
millard@aptalaska.net
POB 124
Eagle, AK 99738
907-547-2321

Doniece Gott

m: Marilyn Menish Meucci <meucci1086@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 1:50 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 139 FY17

I am opposed to eliminating funding for public radio. In rural communities across Alaska public radio provides many public safety services that cannot be replaced. By eliminating all state funding for public radio will also eliminate federal funding. We know in the financial crisis we are in that everyone needs to take a cut. I request that you follow Gov. Walker proposed budget for FY17. The majority of Alaskans are ready to step up and help pay our way. I support a percentage income tax based on the amount of federal income tax a person pays. I do not support a state wide sales tax as many small communities already have that and Anchorage does not. I support putting a cap on our PFD at \$1000.00.

Remember half of the state lives where we depend on public Radio.

Thank you,

Marilyn Menish-Meucci
Petersburg, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Sarah Cummings <scummings@aebbsd.org>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 1:38 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: In Support of Public Broadcasting

Committee Members,

My name is Sarah Cummings and I am the Preschool Instructor in Sand Point, Alaska, an island in the Aleutian Chain. I am writing in support of Public Broadcasting and our local radio station 830 AM KSDP.

Public Broadcasting is an integral part of our community of 1,000 people. While convenient at times, out here the internet connection, phone service, and television clarity leave much to be desired. Our radio station, however, provides us with consistent local news, Emergency Alert Readiness, educational opportunities, and entertainment.

This year, a high school english class wrote their own local news stories about the latest salmon fishing season. The class then recorded the story to be played on the radio. It was a fantastic opportunity for students to write about a subject that matters to them and have the community hear it. Further, someone from the radio station often comes to the high school basketball games and broadcasts the game for those who could not physically make it, allowing all members of the community to participate in the fun and excitement.

To cut funding for Public Broadcasting would eliminate a huge part of how our community shares information. The radio station is an integral part of our community and we depend on it and cherish it. Thank you.

Best,

Sarah Cummings



Senator Bert Stedman
State Capitol, Room 30
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
State Capitol, Room 426
Juneau, Alaska 99801

February 10, 2016

Senator Stedman and Representative Kreiss-Tomkins:

The Local Emergency Planning Committee for the Petersburg Borough assists in preparing for emergencies by maintaining an Emergency Operations Plan.

The committee is made up of local officials; police, fire, public health professionals; and representatives from the community and the media.

KFSK public radio is the only 24-hour media service in the Petersburg Borough and its signal reaches the entire population. In the event of an emergency, KFSK plays a vital role in the dissemination of information from first responders and officials involved in the management of the emergency response.

As we are all aware, the State of Alaska is facing a fiscal crisis resulting in difficult budget decisions. KFSK expected, and indeed realized, a deep cut to its state operating grant in FY16.

The Petersburg Local Emergency Planning Committee needs KFSK to remain strong in order to continue to serve its mission to keep Borough residents informed. In the event of an emergency, it is the only media source that citizens can rely upon to receive life-saving and time-sensitive information that is a necessity in emergency situations.

We urge you to support public broadcasting by keeping the reduction of state funding for public radio stations to a minimum. Large cuts to small radio stations could dismantle the emergency response network that is vital to keeping Alaskans safe during emergencies.

Sincerely,

Sandra K. Dixson

Petersburg Fire/EMS Director
Local Emergency Planning Committee Chair

Petersburg Borough

PO Box 329 PETERSBURG, AK 99833 PHONE (907)772-3355 FAX (907)772-3599

Petersburg Borough, Petersburg, Alaska
RESOLUTION #2016-04

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE CONSIDER LESS SEVERE CUTS TO THE ALASKA PUBLIC BROADCASTING COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska is facing another budget deficit for FY17, and likely additional fiscal years in the future; and

WHEREAS, a budget shortfall of this magnitude results in tough choices and difficult cuts in all facets of State Government all across Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Public Broadcasting service is a statewide essential service supported by the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, public broadcasting provides a wealth of civic, cultural, and education information to Alaska residents, public safety and emergency communication services, not to mention programming and entertainment; and

WHEREAS, the public broadcasting budget realized a cut in FY16 in the legislative process, and further significant reductions are expected in FY17; and


WHEREAS, cuts to all segments of government are expected for FY17 but the extent of the proposed reduction to public broadcasting seems disproportionate and will adversely affect the availability of service across Alaska, especially in rural Alaska where public broadcasting is often the primary means of entertainment and community and regional information sharing.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Petersburg Borough Assembly respectfully requests the Alaska Legislature consider less severe cuts to the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission in the FY17 budget.

Passed and Approved by the Petersburg Borough Assembly on February 1, 2016.


Mark Jensen, Mayor

ATTEST:


Melinda Swihart, Deputy Clerk

Doniece Gott

From: K. Heather Sinclair <sinclair.heather.k@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 26, 2016 9:55 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Please support UA funding

Dear Senate Finance Committee

I support the higher education opportunities in this state and ask that you, as my representatives in the Senate, vote against the proposed budget cuts for University of Alaska.

The University of Alaska has played an important role in my life and remains a critical component to this day.

I am a current UA student, working on my Masters in Arts of Teaching so that I may become a certified teacher to work in rural Alaska. I live and work in Unalakleet, Alaska and take my courses online through UAS. Additionally, I graduated with my undergraduate degree in 2010 from UAF. Finally, I took coursework at Kenai Peninsula College while I was attending high school in Soldotna. I intend to use the education that I have gained through the University of Alaska to give back to Alaskans as a elementary school teacher in the state. I speak fondly of my experiences at UAF and UAS to the those I encounter, including the K-12 students I see everyday while interning at Unalakleet Schools. Additionally, I draw upon the incredible opportunities and experiences I had (and continue to have) as a UA student to perform well at my job and serve my community and family.

Alaska's future is at stake with this vote. Please consider the repercussions of these budget cuts and the effect it will have on higher education, employment, and economic opportunities in this state.

We need to invest in Alaska's future by supporting UA funding. Please vote against the proposed budget cuts.

Sincerely,

Heather Sinclair

--

K. Heather Sinclair
BSSD Intern
Unalakleet Schools

Doniece Gott

m: Cecilia Rendon <crendon@eehoa.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2016 6:48 PM
To: House Legislators; Senate Legislators; Senate Finance Committee; House Finance
Subject: I'm a business owner attending UAS, got potential revenue solutions for UAS.

Dear Senators and Legislators,

Thanks for providing business owners and students like me with a forum to voice our learning experiences at UAS, proposed budget solutions and opportunities for revenue.

Like you, I'm a busy entrepreneur enrolled in online Management Information Systems (MIS) course. I find my MIS course challenging and engaging with civil discussions applicable solutions and debate forums.

Previous engagement is a requirement to make weekly grades along with quizzes, essays, etc. Course material is on the most updated industry standards, case problems and examination of relevant and efficient solutions, and best practices in the implementation of software application, development, management and infrastructure.

I would like to reiterate that engaged professors at UAS have ample professional experience in the real world and advanced degrees, are the driving force for quality online courses. And UAS will benefit from marketing such courses to lower 48, neglected, working adults who will gladly pay UAS tuition fees vs. the prospect of having to pay \$10,000 for a certificate course (i.e. at the University of Cincinnati) that falls - way short - in translating "educational" content to real life project management job descriptions that require the knowledge and experience of ERP, HANA, SAP, and other - on demand - applications and programs.

- The UAS School of Management will also benefit introducing more on demand certifications for Project Management, Black Belt, Scrum Master and Agile.
- One more potential solution to increase revenue

Building further on the Innovation Summit, UAS could respond to the need expressed at summit by local small hotel owners, who would like to have an organized, localized initiative or institution put together meaningful and safe excursions with learning experiences to remote areas of beautiful Alaska.

UAS Juneau campus could maximize and capitalize in this market by building a small size hotel at the end of the parking lot. A background check might be required from excursionist if students and remote areas are to be packaged. Also, a vetted and responsible UAS chaperon is to accompany all excursions as well.

Hope previous proposals are feasible among other great ideas and solutions that are being examined. As there only so many budget cuts UAS should implement before it cannibalizes itself from within.

You have a difficult road ahead, but you have our support and admiration. We know that you and your professional staff, professors and deans will come out triumphant and greatly improved and competitive as a whole.

Sincerely,

Cecilia Rendon

UAS Student # 31167817

Doniece Gott

From: Melissa Arnold <pandamonkey2@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2016 4:56 PM
To: House Legislators
Subject: UA funding -Student Perspective

Legislators,

I'm a student at the University of Alaska Southeast. I'm studying Environmental Science with an emphasis in climate change. Real stuff that is effecting Alaska right now.

Do I support UA funding? I think we need to figure out a way to reducing spending as an entire state.

If you feel that you need to cut the UA budget, go ahead, but be prepared for the repercussions.

There has been a big movement in recent times to keep Alaskan students in Alaska. That's why I'm here, school is cheap and I wanted to stay in my home state.

If you cut school funding, they are going to have to cut programs and teachers. The very thing that keeps students here.

So goodbye students, good bye young people trying to make a difference for their home.

You could say I support UA funding, but if everything else is so terribly important, go ahead, take money away for our future generations.

Thanks for your time,

A concerned student

February 2016

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for all your hard work in trying to deal with the budget crisis. After spending the last several days listening to the budget hearings and reading public testimony regarding the current budget bills and options, I am left with more questions than answers.

What I support:

- Further budget cuts- (esp. to Health and Human Services and DOC)
- Trying to stabilize the State's revenue by using some part of the earnings reserve (Sen. McGuire's plan seems the most feasible as a starting point.)
- Guaranteed cap on spending (perhaps something like Sen. McGuire's 125% from the previous year's budget.)

What I have not heard the legislature address:

Before we Alaskans trust State government with our PFD, how will the State show clear public accountability for all money spent by State agencies?

To date the questions legislators have focused on two primary questions –

- 1) How to stabilize State revenue and close the budget deficit?*
- 2) How to put forward a plan that will get past the voters?*

The (3) question they should ask is "How can we make State government more accountable to the people?"

Alaska government has been notoriously unresponsive to public outcries of corruption within the last few years. The National Guard scandal, the DOC investigation, and myriads of personal testimonies show a clear track record of the State bullying its citizens into silence and protecting corrupt employees. (David Haeg is another case most recently in the news, but I personally know of multiple others. You can't keep stuff like this quiet in a small state.) Citizens have repeatedly tried to get the attention of lawmakers and the governor to investigate these issues, but to no avail for many years. Now the State wants our support for the budget.

Why should Alaskans give the State any more of their money when it has a track record of protecting itself at the expense of its people?

That there is a severe State corruption problem is clear by Governor Walker's proposal of a Public Integrity Unit to investigate cases of corruption. While I applaud any attempt to hold State officials accountable, establishing a unit to investigate state corruption under the Department of Law makes me suspicious of a further attempt by the State to have the tax payers pay for another State department to protect itself.

Before I support any changes to the Permanent Fund, I want to hear legislators address the corruption problem and what they can do about it. I have heard legislators say they don't know what they can do about these situations.

It seems to me they can follow the money trail and hold State agencies more accountable. More specifically, aren't these steps the legislature can take?

- 1) Create a Public Integrity Task Force - as part of any new budget proposal - to study ways to make State agencies transparent and accountable to the public.
- 2) Each state agency already reports to a special Finance Sub-committee. Do these legislators actually hold the agencies accountable for the money they spend? Are these records made public?
- 3) Couldn't each State agency have an independent audit every four years and the results made public?
- 4) Why don't we give the Ombudsman Office more investigative and enforcement power instead of creating and paying for another office, "Public Integrity Unity," within the Department of Law?

I am sure there are many other changes the legislature could initiate that would change how State agencies conduct their business, in order to ferret out corruption. With the massive budget crisis looming over us, now is the perfect time to hear serious discussion from our legislators about how to effectively deal with State corruption.

Sincerely,

Noël Maxwell
Palmer, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: Jared Weems <jaredweems@hotmail.com>
To: Friday, February 26, 2016 2:03 PM
Subject: House Finance; House Legislators; Senate Legislators; Senate Finance Committee
UA Public Testimony for House Finance Committee Consideration

Dear House Legislators,

Name: Jared Weems

Affiliation: University of Alaska Fairbanks, School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, Juneau, Alaska

Title: Ph.D. Student in Fisheries and Research Professional I

Legislative District: 33, Rep. Sam Kito

All Alaskans are under intense pressure to help solve the State's apparent fiscal crisis, however you are our elected officials sent to represent our integrated interests. We charge you with common sense and the common interests inherent in our strong and caring populace.

Current proposed action to severely cut the coming UA budget is being done without introspection of our common goals, seemingly haphazardly, and without consultation from our own professionals whom know the facts and role of higher educational institutions.

The attempt to subvert two main pillars of any university's core functions by legislation while under political stress shows a lack of wisdom and sense in a time when it is most needed. Research and public services and outreach are indispensable and cannot be separated from higher education both financially and socially. These two specific aspects of University function are the whole point of higher education and student instruction. A single student given knowledge has no purpose if they cannot push knowledge forward or apply it to our communities and citizens. Learning for the sake of learning benefits very few and will likely lead to migration of those young people we do educate to more supportive, forward thinking states.

Personally, I am both student and staff within the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences and would be directly impacted by such severe cuts to research and public service funds at UA. To conduct novel research in Alaska requires integration with locals on the ground across the state. Removing both funds and positions would essentially create a severe public knowledge gap in nearly every sector of the State's economy. Fisheries would be less informed and at risk, mining and resource extraction would be driven by outside, profit driven interests alone, and public voices and health would be strained to the point of non-participation or collapse, to name a few. I have been in Alaska for 10 years now and have never once considered permanently leaving for outside opportunities. Do not force educated, responsible, aspiring life-long Alaskans to leave the state they love just to satisfy a few million dollars savings near term. Our benefits through productive careers and socially aware families will in the long run be far more lucrative.

Overall, our brightest economic, scientific, and social minds have recently given a great deal of public testimony and editorials issuing the importance of always striving for a better higher education system, and the proposed cuts will prove detrimental to maintaining or growing our UA System and will prove to be economic 'peanuts' in terms of closing the State's large fiscal gap.

Acting drastically to UA and State budgets at a time of low oil revenues and decreasing interest in resource extraction could only lead to an all out collapse of Alaska's economy. It's time to bring sense and professionalism back into this process, at a time it is so drastically needed. Please use the wisdom of

professional individuals to which we all hold in high esteem, including President Jim Johnson and his evolving "Strategic Pathways", Dr. Gunnar Knapp and his sensibility and expertise on Alaska's economic past and future, and our elected Gov. Bill Walker whom has done an appreciable job of constructing a FY17 budget that is responsible and sensibly aggressive.

And don't forget to listen to your everyday Alaskans to whom you represent. All understand that a university's prime directive is to create and disseminate knowledge that is unbiased and trustworthy, represented in the products, documents, and students it creates and values. This encompasses all functions of which Rep. Wilson has identified as essentially non-important through lack of support proposed in these budget negotiations.

Thank you for your time and please take my testimony into consideration.

Sincerely for a strong Alaska and UA,

Jared Weems

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
From: Sen. Pete Kelly
To: Doniece Gott
Subject: FW: Senate Finance Committee

From: Cheryl Stewart [mailto:cturletes@gci.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 02, 2016 6:33 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly <Sen.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov>
Subject: Senate Finance Committee

Operating Budget Testimony

Thanks for this Opportunity to testify, I am Chris Turletes, I live in Anchorage, I am a retired Army Officer and now work at the University of Alaska Anchorage. I encourage you to support the Governor's budget and the re-plumbing that he proposes to fund government this year and into the future. It is important that we get to a sustainable budget without destroying our economy and the future of Alaskans. Additional surgical cuts to government are likely needed, a modest income tax levied on residents and non-residents is needed, I think it's a good tool to have in our tool box (again); a reduction in and capping of the PFD is needed; and a reduction to our Oil Tax Credits will be needed; and use of some of our reserves.

I am concerned that if we cut too deep we lose jobs, families; health and education and make the tough rural living near impossible. We need to want industry and people to come and work in Alaska. We need to be an inviting environment with a certain amount of physical, social and economic infrastructure. We have a Permanent Fund with lots of earnings. Shouldn't we use some of the earnings to create an environment that is inviting, safe and comfortable for Alaskans today and in the future?

I think it's critical that we support education from K on up to our University. I think key to a great state is a great university. Please continue to support the University at the Governor's proposed level of funding. The University is vital to Alaska's future. The University provides programs that meet our state's needs, that meet our global needs, that provides vital knowledge about the Arctic, that supplies our workforce with locally trained engineers, teachers, nurses, miners, artists and technicians. The University is an integral part of diversifying our economy through commercializing the intellectual property developed through research, through education, and by providing quality human talent. A healthy university has health enrollment and provides jobs to faculty and staff and the contractors and suppliers that meet the needs of the University. I firmly believe that the role of our University is to transform lives and serve our society and citizens by educating and providing experiences; enabling graduates to put that knowledge to work right here at home.

I have been able to participate in a couple of sessions with Cliff Groh and Gunnar Knapp using their budget model. It's a daunting task what you have to do. You have to look beyond the next few year's; look way

down the road. The big oil days are gone. The time is now to change the momentum of declining oil and economy; Fix our budget model to address the future Alaska. We should be grateful for the fore thought of the Permanent Fund creators and all of it's earning and growth. We've gone too long without owning our government, it's time to get some skin in the game. For me that skin is: a smaller government, a smaller depend, a personal income tax, and strong education, health and infrastructure.

Thanks for all you do. Seize this opportunity to invest in the next year and re-plumb to allow us all to invest in Alaska's future.

Chris Turletes

3010 Admiralty Bay Dr

Anchorage, AK 99515

Sent from my iPad

Feb 29/16



goodday state -

i'm a 40 year fbks resident - i never went to the "u", nor have i worked there -

however the "u" is an almost daily part of my life - friends who work there share their knowledge and expertise - the science, the art, the music, its FBks!

the salaries, both big and small, from the "u" are reinvested in the fbks economy - without the "u" fbks would be an economic cripple -

research is a vibrant and important part of the "u" - a world with no research is a dead world - we move forward via research -

the state should borrow money from the permanent fund to keep the "u" afloat until we can get our feet back under us!

the "u" is the university!

211 Kittredge
605 front st.
Fbks, 99701

Thank
B.D.



Doniece Gott

From: Michelle Renfrew <mrenfrew@ak.net>
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: ACT NOW: ensure a sustainable future for Alaska

Dear House Finance Committee members:

As a lifelong resident of Alaska and employee of the University of Alaska Fairbanks , I respectfully request you remedy Alaska's fiscal crisis NOW by using the Permanent Fund Dividend, responsible cuts and new taxes. We all know that none of these things will solve the budget crisis on their own. The PFD must be part of the solution. I have enjoyed the PFD my entire life and my children do too I would give up every penny of the PFD if it meant my children had quality K-12 schools, good roads and community infrastructure, and a vibrant university system.

The proposed \$50 million cut to the University of Alaska as recommended by the House Finance University of Alaska Subcommittee will cripple our University and cause long-term damage to our state. The university's mission and responsibility to Alaskans is to provide teaching, research and service-- you can't separate them. It is an economic engine for the state.

Please only pass SB 174, "An Act relating to the regulation of firearms and knives by the University of Alaska," if you are willing to also introduce a bill that allows Alaskans to carry concealed weapons into the Alaska State Capitol Building and legislative information offices. Please do not ask your constituents to put their own personal safety at risk unless you are willing to do the same yourself. As an employee of the University, this bill greatly concerns me, my co-workers and many students.

In closing, I want to thank you for your service to Alaska. It is not an easy job and I can appreciate the tough decisions that must be made ahead. Please don't wait to solve our budget crisis, we can't afford to wait another year.

Sincerely,

Michelle Renfrew
Life-long Alaskan

Doniece Gott

From: Jessica Larsen <jflarsen.ak@gmail.com>
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: testimony in support of UA funds

Dear Committee,

For public testimony:

I am a professor at UAF, I have been with UAF for almost 19 years, and I study active volcanoes in Alaska, of which we have 52. Alaska has more active volcanoes by far than any other state in the US. Alaska sees an eruption on average 1 to 3 times per year. Our volcanoes pose threats to people living in the Anchorage and Kenai Peninsula region, as well as in the highly lucrative Dutch Harbor/Unalaska and Akutan fishing communities. They also directly threaten the ~50,000 people per day flying in commercial jets on routes traversing from North America to Asia, estimated by the USGS and ICAO. My research benefits the state of Alaska by seeking to understand what happens within our volcanoes that cause their widely ranging eruption styles; primarily the explosive eruptions that pose hazards to people.

The US Geological Survey sponsored AVO supports only a small fraction of my yearly salary (16%). By cost sharing between federal (USGS and NSF) and UA resources, my colleagues and I have built and maintained an internationally recognized research program in volcanology at the UAF.

It is *illegal* for us to write grant proposals while supported on federal money. *I cannot legally write a grant proposal while supported by federal grant money.* Loss of state research money will mean I cannot seek the additional grant money that helps fuel the UA research engine, and helps make UAF an internationally recognized US institution for volcano research.

I have a joint teaching appointment at UAF. I transform my research activities directly into learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. I teach part of the GEOS 120 course (Earthquakes, Glaciers, and Volcanoes) for non-majors, AA degree seekers, and a whole host of non-traditional as well as traditional college students. I also teach undergraduate and graduate courses in volcanology and an online course in geological hazards. Students enrolled in the hazards course come from a variety of majors, from Geosciences and Education to Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

Even though I teach at UAF, my online hazards course (GEOS 380) enrolls students from all campuses in the UA system. I love teaching UA students at all levels and I am continually excited to share my new research insights to make my courses, fresh, lively, and cutting edge. Without my direct and continuous involvement in research, those courses would just be empty shells of what they are and I would not be able to directly use my research to benefit Alaska's wonderful student body.

I have fully supported and successfully trained 11 graduate students (MS and PhD recipients) in my 18.5 years here. They have all gone on to lead successful careers in the geosciences and help uphold the prestige of UAF in the international volcanology community.

The diversity of funds I receive from federal and state sources enable me to participate in Alaska Volcano Observatory monitoring and research activities and transform my research into excellent learning opportunities for Alaska's college students. The research funds UA receives from the state of Alaska are critical in how well this system functions. I am just one example of the many excellent faculty who share a similar situation, and who transform their research into many benefits to the state.

Although I am employed by UA, I am writing to you as a constituent in this letter and all views are my own. I wrote this on a Sunday, at home, on my own time, using my personal email address.


Jessica Larsen

Po box 85071

Fairbanks, AK 99708

907-479-7994

jflarsen.ak@gmail.com

Doniece Gott

From: Betsy Dorn on behalf of LIO Juneau
t: Monday, March 07, 2016 11:31 AM
To: House Finance; Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FW: Primary, Secondary and UA education budget cuts

From: Maggie Matheson [mailto:mbmatheson@alaska.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 11:28 AM
To: LIO Juneau <LIO.Juneau@akleg.gov>
Subject: Primary, Secondary and UA education budget cuts

Dear Alaska Legislature,

I recently found out that the state is considering moving the School of Management (SOM) from UAF to UAA and making it a distance college. This news came as a shock to me. UAF SOM is I'd like to know why lawmakers think education is a budget we can destroy.

SOM provides so many clubs and organizations for the students. Associated Students of Business (ASB), Students Offering Leadership Development (SOLD), Students Who Enjoy Economic Thinking (SWEET), Native Alaskan Business Leaders (NABL), to name a few. SOM puts together Business Leader of the Year (BLOY) every year. This teaches students about planning, developing and networking relationships. SOM has developed the Arctic Innovation where we bring the community together to bring a concept to life. This teaches students to plan, the steps to conceptualize ideas, bringing the idea to life and seeing it through to enrich American lives and maybe even international lives. These can't be done online.

Through informal polls, I have come to find out that the SOM is an important asset to the UA system. Kids from around the state, around the country and around the world come to UAF in order to have a "real college experience" and the state wants to shut that down? It makes little sense to me. SOM is the college that graduates employable, young adults in Alaska.

I was also told that Economics 100 is being taken out as a prerequisite for the undergraduate program. More people need to understand economics, so we don't make the same mistakes we have in the past. Educating people on economic functions is the only way I can see of not making the same mistakes from our past. This is probably why our lawmakers are trying to slash education budgets.

I wrote to our legislators about the proposed budget cuts for our elementary and secondary schools. I have a big problem with cutting back on education. We don't get that money back when we are out of the red. Instead, we find other ways to waste our money. It's discouraging that our lawmakers and budgeters don't think education is something we should invest in.

For those of you that don't know what SOM is, UAF has different colleges. SOM is the college that teaches business: Accounting, Business Administration, Economics, Homeland Security & Emergency Management, Master in Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science (MS) in Resource and Applied Economics, Master of Security and Disaster Management (MSDM), Ph.D. in Natural Resources and Sustainability, etc.

Now, I know some of the state officials are not educated. I understand that for some people, education is not a priority. I understand that some people don't think education is important. I would like to address state officials who are currently slashing education budgets (for the UA system and for our primary and secondary school systems). There are numerous reasons why education is important. I will list them for your convenience.

Economic growth of the nation; when the people of a nation are educated, they'd definitely carve ways to be self-sufficient. An economically independent society is the stepping stone to combined productivity that leads to an economic growth of the nation on a whole.

Equality; if we want to see the world as a just and fair place where everyone is given equal opportunities, education is where we acquire it. Education is a must if we want to do away with the existing differences between different social classes and genders. It opens a whole world of opportunities for the poor so that they may have an equal shot at being well-paid. Education also plays a major role in women empowerment.

Makes you self-dependent; Education is very important if you want to be an independent person. It helps you become financially independent. Education also makes you astute so that you can make your own decisions.

Saves you from being fooled/cheated; Education saves you from being exploited and fooled. We live in a country where we enjoy a number of rights and freedom. It is easier to take advantage of innocent and illiterate people.

Makes you creative; Education is not only about mugging up facts, learning to read and write. That is literacy. Education goes beyond that as it includes an overall development of an individual. It makes you think out of the box. The creative wheels of your mind are set into motion which surely gives one an edge over the others.

More opportunities; Proper education opens a world of opportunities in every sector. You will have more life chances, more job positions in various companies, greater chances of getting a job and more flexibility when choosing a career.



Innovation; every discovery in the history of mankind, which has made our lives so much easier, would have been impossible without education. Education is simply a requirement for innovation.

Economic prosperity; countries like United States, Japan, Australia and Finland with a high literacy rate, are some of the world's richest countries. These countries have a high per capita income and enjoy high life standards. Education importance is huge because, without proper education, it is not possible for a country to develop or prosper.

Now, I ask those of you in favor of cutting our education budgets if this is something we want to take away from our Alaska youth? Do we want them seeking education outside of Alaska?

I appreciate your time and consideration.



Thank you,

Maggie Matheson, MBA

UAF Alumnus

Concerned Parent and Patriot



Maggie Matheson, MBA
(907) 978-5012

My name is Gordon Kruse. I am the Director of the Fisheries Division of the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. I am located at the Juneau Center and I am a 31-year resident of Douglas, Alaska, in Senate district Q.

While I agree that the university should receive its fair share of cuts, ***I remain very concerned that even the proposed cuts by the Senate could risk serious, long-term damage to the university.***

I offer some examples from the perspective of our Fisheries Division:

- 1) ***We have an outstanding fisheries program.*** Our Undergraduate Fisheries Program is one of the Nation's largest and has the highest retention rate of any undergraduate program at UAF. Our Graduate Fisheries Program is often ranked in the top three in the country. ***I fear that deep cuts will result in faculty layoffs, a major decline in student enrollment, and will seriously degrade our ability to meet Alaska's fisheries needs.***
- 2) ***We train Alaska's professional fisheries workforce – 65% of all our fisheries graduates are employed in Alaska.***
- 3) ***State-funded research is an excellent investment.*** University-wide, for each \$1 million in state-funded research, we receive an additional \$4 million in outside grants. ***Moreover, we conduct research into issues that matter to Alaskans.*** We're studying sharp declines in Western Alaskan salmon, which threaten the very way of life in impoverished subsistence communities. We're investigating causes of stunted halibut, which results in low halibut catches. These are just two examples.
- 4) ***We provide outstanding service to Alaska.*** For instance, 25% of the science advisors to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council are UA faculty. ***If we lose these faculty, which outsiders would you rather have set catch limits for our multi-billion dollar fisheries?***

Finally, it is critically important to diversify state revenues ***now***. I personally support:

- 1) A sustainable plan to use Permanent Fund earnings in perpetuity,
- 2) A modest income tax that includes the large non-resident workforce in Alaska,
- 3) A revision to oil tax credit structure.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to speak to you. I urge your continued support for the university, which has huge impacts on the Alaskan economy in so many ways.

Doniece Gott

From: Sen. Pete Kelly
At: Monday, March 07, 2016 3:03 PM
To: Doniece Gott
Subject: FW: A letter of testimony from UAF's RISE Board

From: Taylor Stinchcomb [mailto:tstinch32@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 2:48 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly <Sen.Pete.Kelly@akleg.gov>; Sen. Anna MacKinnon <Sen.Anna.MacKinnon@akleg.gov>; Sen. Peter Micciche <Sen.Peter.Micciche@akleg.gov>; Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Dunleavy <Sen.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>
Subject: A letter of testimony from UAF's RISE Board

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

As members of UAF's RISE (Review of Infrastructure, Sustainability, and Energy) Board, we are writing to you regarding the proposed cuts to the budget for the UA system. We are a student-led organization that advises UAF's Office of Sustainability. Our goal is to help UAF invest in projects and programs that have demonstrable social, environmental, and financial returns on investment. We also encourage the responsible use of existing resources so that we can reduce non-renewable energy consumption on campus.

Since our inception, RISE has used the student sustainability fee—combined with the Chancellor's matching funds—to fund over ninety projects. We have saved over \$520,000, and we have helped to make UAF a nationwide leader in sustainability.

Below, we have listed some of our projects and the savings they generate for the university.

- The Computer Shutdown Program reduces electricity costs on campus by \$77,000 annually.
- The implementation of LED lighting across campus has saved \$43,000 annually.
- The MACS Bus U-pass provides more than 135,000 rides to students annually.
- The Green Bikes Program has provided bicycles to more than 1,000 students to date.
- The six solar panel installations—SRC, Sustainable Village, CTC Process Technology, Engineering Building, Fire Station, Power Plant—currently save \$15,000 annually.

Significantly, our accomplishments extend beyond UAF, impacting the entire Fairbanks community. Our recycling program was so successful that it inspired the North Star Borough to renew its recycling program. Our involvement with Green Bikes and FMATS has improved cycling conditions for riders across the community.

Importantly, our work is not complete. Guided by our Sustainability Plan—now a part of UAF’s Master Plan—we have many future projects in mind, including several that address water and electricity consumption on campus. The former are especially important as UAF transitions to using water from College Utilities. If the proposed budget cuts are enacted, we will not be able to complete very many of these projects. As a result, the university will lose money, rather than save money.

We know that these are difficult times for Alaska, and we are aware you have a difficult task before you. Nevertheless, we urge you to consider revenue generating options instead of deep cuts to the UA system so that we can continue our efforts to promote sustainability on the UAF campus and in the Fairbanks community. Sometimes, it is necessary to invest money in order to save money.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

The UAF RISE Board:

Wyatt Hurlbutt, RISE Board Chair

Taylor R. Stinchcomb, Student Representative

Stephan Tangen, Student Representative

Lori Beraha, Student Representative

Elizabeth Hanson, Student Representative

Zoe Marshall, Student Representative

Dan Wright, Student Representative

Mackenzie Stamey, Associated Students of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (ASUAF) Representative

Jennifer Schell, Faculty Representative

Jason McNeely, Alternate Faculty Representative

 Olson, Staff Council Appointee

Ben LaRue, Chancellor's Industry Appointee, Siemens Alaska

Michele Mouton, Director, UAF Office of Sustainability

Doniece Gott

From: Jason Russell <jason.russell@tuzzy.org>
At: Friday, March 04, 2016 2:14 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Alaska State Library Budget -- Please only reduce funding by 4% not 19%

To whom it may concern,

Living and working in Barrow Alaska at the Tuzzy Consortium Library, I know intimately how much my patrons in Barrow, Atqasuk, and elsewhere, benefit from the support and programming that is directly supported via the Alaska State Library. The Alaska State Library plays a key role in leading Alaska's Libraries into the future, and helping to ensure that the current, and future needs of Alaska's citizens are met, while helping to preserve our past through preservation efforts. This unfair reduction will greatly hinder the Alaska State Library, and in turn all Alaskan libraries to fulfill their mandates to support Alaskans.

Coupled with this, the Online With Libraries (OWL) program was not supported at all. This program has played a critical part in building broadband infrastructure throughout Alaska, but most especially in rural Alaska. Not funding this program will hurt rural Alaska the most as many communities lack, or will lack should this program be stopped, adequate broadband coverage. Our library increasingly has utilized videoconferencing to meet the educational needs of residents in communities across the North Slope, and OWL is tied intimately with our ability to provide these services.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email.

Sincerely,

Jason Russell

Technical Services Library Technician

Tuzzy Consortium Library

jason.russell@tuzzy.org

(907)852-4050

Doniece Gott

From: Joyce McCombs <deltalibrary@wildak.net>
Date: Friday, March 04, 2016 2:12 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Restore funding to the OWL program, please!

Dear Finance Committee Members:

I have just received notice that the Senate Finance Committee version of the 2017 state operating budget does not include funding for the OWL program.

I am shocked and outraged that this program, which provides broadband service to public libraries all over the state at for the cost of about \$1.00 per Alaskan resident, is in jeopardy.

Are you aware that for each dollar spent by Alaska on the program, the Federal match is \$4.00? Where else can such a return on investment be found?

Here in Delta Junction, the public library provides a vital link to the Internet for our entire community. Support through the OWL program for our broadband connection means residents can apply for their Permanent Fund Dividends, seek employment, keep up with Legislative news, start and maintain a personal business, and file Income Taxes, among other things.

In fact, as I type this, all 8 of our Internet stations are occupied with patrons doing their taxes, and we have a dozen top users on our WiFi doing everything from taking distance education classes to studying maps of the upcoming land sales in the Interior to downloading music for a church choir. Users in the parking lot stop in all through the day, as well and in the afternoon, students from the nearby schools arrive to stay until closing time to get homework and other projects completed. We average more than 150 users per day in the winter and more than 200 in the summer.

Every function of the library, for both patrons and staff, is tied to quality internet service, which we have been so grateful to receive through the OWL program.

You must restore funding for OWL. It's not only an investment in the future of libraries and learning, it's an investment in our great state of Alaska and the generations that follow.

Thank you,

Joyce McCombs, Director
Delta Community Library
Box 229 2291 Deborah Street
Delta Junction, AK 99737
Phone: 907.895.4102 Fax: 907. 895. 4457

~ If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.
Marcus Tullius Cicero

Doniece Gott

From: Jonas Lamb <jonaslamb@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 04, 2016 7:02 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Restore funding to Online With Libraries (OWL)

I hope you will find these two brief highlights of the impact of the OWL program enough to vote to restore the governor's funding of \$761,800 to this vital program.

1) **OWL (Online With Libraries)**, which was included in Governor's budget, is being cut entirely by finance education subcommittee. The governor's funding of **\$761,800** should be restored. OWL internet funding leverages federal dollars in E-rate subsidy so is a good investment. **For every \$1 spent by the state on internet services, the federal match is \$4.**

2) Like many state agencies, the **Alaska State library budget** was going to be reduced by about 4%. The finance education subcommittee increased this reduction to 19% (reduced by \$500,000)!!! **The governor's original allocation should be restored. The Alaska State Library provides library services to state agencies; provides continuing education and online services to all libraries in the state; and collects, preserves and shares historical documents about Alaska.**

Public Libraries provide essential services like internet access, safe spaces for kids and free literacy (print and digital) to the entire state of Alaska. In many communities the public library can only afford the exorbitant cost of internet service due to subsidies made available through participation in OWL. The OWL program also connects rural residents with cultural, economic and educational programs and services not available in their communities via video conference.

I appreciate continued support for the Live Homework Help service provided through the Alaska State Library/SLED program and urge you to not lose sight of your constituents and other residents across the state in small communities who need the enhanced broadband support provided by the Alaska State Library to access this excellent and cost-effective service.

Thank You-

 n (Jonas) Lamb

Juneau

Doniece Gott

From: Jessie Morgan <education@haineslibrary.org>
Date: Friday, March 04, 2016 4:57 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support Online With Libraries (OWL)

Good afternoon,

I am e-mailing to encourage the Senate Finance Committee to continue supporting Online With Libraries (OWL). OWL provides broadband subsidies for Alaska's small and remote public libraries, a videoconferencing network for all Alaskans, and leveraged e-rate subsidies.

OWL (Online With Libraries), which was included in Governor's budget, is being cut entirely by finance education subcommittee. The governor's funding of **\$761,800** should be restored. OWL internet funding leverages federal dollars in E-rate subsidy so is a good investment. **For every \$1 spent by the state on internet services, the federal match is \$4.**

Without OWL, Alaskan libraries will lose:

- Affordable and high speed Internet connections necessary for 21st century tasks and competencies.
- Videoconferencing capabilities which has allowed for student participation in classes not available in their own communities, local Board trainings, personal legal advice, healthcare advocacy, and shared programs and trainings between libraries.
- Access to information and resources and online library catalogs available only through consistent and high speed internet connections.

Cutting the OWL program will not only create hardship for libraries and communities across the state but will jeopardize federal E-rate funding that pays for 79% of Alaska's high broadband costs to rural and remote libraries. In Haines alone, we stand to lose \$28,000 in federal e-rate funding. OWL is a critical program that enables libraries to provide basic internet service to all Alaska residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jessie

Jessie Morgan

Education/Cultural Coordinator

Haines Borough Public Library

907.766.3830

Doniece Gott

From: James Alborough <james@bearstar.net>
Date: Saturday, March 05, 2016 9:20 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: OWL Funding Appeal

Dear Sentate Finance Committee,

I am writing to you to voice my support for the OWL program and to request that OWL funding be re-instated into the budget. The relatively small expenditure on this program yields exceptionally high value. Cutting the OWL program will not only create great expense and hardship to libraries across the state, but will also jeopardize federal E-rate funding that pays for the 60-90% of Alaska's high broadband costs to rural and remote libraries.

OWL is a critical program that enables us to provide basic internet service to Alaska residents.

Sincerely,
James Alborough
Chair, Haines Borough Public Library Advisory Board

PS. Here are some additional facts about what OWL means to the citizens of Alaska:

OWL (Online With Libraries) provides broadband subsidies for Alaska's small and remote public libraries, a videoconferencing network for all Alaskans, and leveraged e-rate subsidies.

OWL internet funding leverages federal dollars in E-rate subsidy so is a good investment. **For every \$1 spent by the state on internet services, the federal match is \$4.**

Without OWL, Alaskan libraries will lose:

- Affordable and high speed Internet connections necessary for 21st century tasks and competencies.
- Videoconferencing capabilities which has allowed for student participation in classes not available in their own communities, local Board trainings, personal legal advice, healthcare advocacy, and shared programs and trainings between libraries.
- Access to information and resources and online library catalogs available only through consistent and high speed internet connections.

Cutting the OWL program will not only create hardship for libraries and communities across the state but will jeopardize federal E-rate funding that pays for 79% of Alaska's high broadband costs to rural and remote libraries.

OWL is a critical program that enables libraries to provide basic internet service to all Alaska residents.

James Alborough
907-766-2082

Doniece Gott

From: Sigrud Brudie <sigrid.brudie@acsalaska.net>
cc: Sunday, March 06, 2016 11:55 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: OWL funding

Senators,

Please restore OWL Internet funding to the 2017 state operating budget, as put forth in the Governor's budget. I regularly travel to many of Alaska's remote communities, where Internet connections can be frustratingly spotty, and the OWL service in public libraries is really a lifeline for students and other community members needing to connect to the outside world. We take the Internet for granted in larger cities such as Anchorage and Juneau, but in many of the smaller communities Internet connections are nearly impossible without OWL broadband support.

Thank you.

Sigrud Brudie, Anchorage