

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1997-1998 8672

9145 HOUSE HEALTH EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

P.O. Box 211
Togiak, AK. 99678
March 18, 1998

Our Honorable Senators and Representatives.

I am writing with a concern that affects my children and my community.

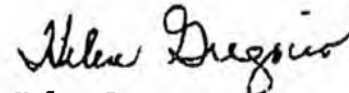
In rural villages, everything from actual learning to many other community activities, happen at the local school. In most villages the school is the largest building for community gatherings, such as the Family Wellness Conference held here in October, 1997. There are no other buildings in the community that would have housed over 300 people that came to attend the workshops and evening activities. The school provided classrooms that helped bring people together for a common good.

The school also supports and provides a well rounded education for our children. My children, a freshman and another a junior in high school, are doing very well. One very important incentive is extra curricular activities for which students have to be eligible to participate, such as basketball. These incentives help re-enforce what I'm teaching at home. For instance, there are certain activities and behaviors I do not want my children to be involved that I believe to be unhealthy and destructive. The school has rules and consequences for these activities that help re-enforce my teachings. The school works with me to help prevent what could be a community problem in the future.

Our ancestors traveled with the seasons and many of their children, our parents, never got to attend school. Today, we KNOW our children's education is very important and want to keep it a priority. Our school in Togiak allows our children to get an education and be able to learn and experience their Yupik culture, locally.

Please continue to fund public schools in rural villages. They are our life-line to the rest of the world.

Sincerely yours,



Helen Gregorio,
Concerned Parent

Post-It® Fax Note	7671	Date	3-18-98	# of pages	-1-
To	H HESS	From	Cillinehan LID		
Co/Dept	SB 36	Co			
Phone #		Phone #	842-5319		
Fax #	465-3891	Fax #			

TOTAL P.03

TOTAL P.03

Tax Authority

The second argument used by sponsors of the legislation to justify proposed Foundation Formula changes hinges on the perceived ability of the North Slope Borough to pay more for education.

To understand the fallacy of this argument, it is necessary to understand the limitations on taxing powers within the State of Alaska property tax laws.

Alaska Statutes limit the authority to collect taxes to a maximum levy not to exceed 3 percent (or 30 mills) of the full and true value of property in any one year for operations.

Because of the size of the Borough's tax base in relationship to its population, its authority to collect taxes for operations is further limited by Alaska Statutes 43.56 and 29.45, to one of two methods for calculating maximum property tax revenue to be used for its operating budget.

The first method sets the property-tax revenue ceiling at the Borough's population multiplied by \$1,500; the second method sets the ceiling at 3 percent (or 30 mills) times 225 percent of the average per capita assessed full and true value of property in the State multiplied by the Borough's population. *

For the North Slope Borough that amounts to a maximum mill levy allowable of 5.31 mills for FY97 for operations, including education.

It is necessary to separate any analysis of debt-service obligations and the associated revenue sources from an analysis of the Borough's financing of its annual "operating" budget.

Alaska Statutes directly address the issue of taxation limitations related to the repayment of bond obligations. AS 29.45.100 states there are no "limitations on taxes to pay bonds. The limitations provided for in AS 29.45.080-29.45.090 do not apply to taxes levied or pledged to pay or secure the payment of the principal and interest on bonds. ..."

By fax 3 pgs: 465-3871

To: Lyn - HESS Committee

from: Beeky Gay - NSB

Please distribute this to your Committee re: SB36.
Thanks for your time on the phone. Beeky.

NSB Tax Limit Calculations

Average Per Capita Full Value (\$72,080)

X 225% (2.25)

X NSB Population (13,243)

Assessed Value Limit for Operating Budget (\$2,147,749,740) - *statutorily set for NSB!*

Assessed Value Limit (\$2,147,749,740)

X 30 mill limit (.03)

Statutory Limit for Taxes for Operating Budget (\$64,432,492)

Statutory Limit for Taxes for Operating Budget (\$64,432,492)

/ Actual Assessed Value (\$12,130,115,480)

Maximum Mill Levy to Satisfy Operating Budget (5.31)

Stated another way, as a result of the Statutory formula, the 30 mill levy limit is computed to an actual mill levy of 5.31 which is the maximum allowed by Statute for operations.

This operations levy is then added to the debt service levy (necessary to repay bonded indebtedness) to arrive at the total millage rate for the North Slope Borough.

The 5.31 mill levy is equivalent to a 30 mill levy assessed against the maximum Per Capita Full Value allowed under the current Tax Statutes.

See Table 3 for a breakdown of the actual mill rate for the prior four years.

NSB Mill Rate Calculation and History

The following table shows the calculation of the maximum tax revenue that can be collected for NSB operations, and its relationship to the current 18.5 mill rate levied by the Borough.

The current Mill Rate Limit Calculation has the following main components:

Average Per Capita Full Value X 225% X Municipal Population =
Assessed Value Limit for Operating Budget

Assessed Value Limit X 30 mill limit (3%) =
Statutory Limit for Taxes for Operating Budget

Statutory Limit for Taxes for Operating Budget / Actual Assessed Value =
Maximum Mill Levy to Satisfy Operating Budget

Table 3. North Slope Borough Mill Levy FY93 - FY96

	<u>FY 1993</u>	<u>FY 1994</u>	<u>FY 1995</u>	<u>FY 1996</u>
General Government	3.06	3.48	3.77	3.67
Education	1.93	1.30	1.29	1.34
(Total Operations Levy)	(4.99)	(4.78)	(5.06)	(5.01)
Debt Service Levy	13.33	13.72	13.50	13.51
Total	18.42	18.50	18.56	18.52

Any adjustment to the Foundation Formula which reduces funding for the North Slope will have to be made up from the approximately 5 mills allowed for operations.

To even suggest, as SB 36 proposes, that the Borough allocate 4 or 4.5 mills to education, leaving only between .5 and 1 mill for operation of the rest of the government is incomprehensible.

Since the portion of the mill levy dedicated to repayment of bonded indebtedness cannot be used for operations (under AS 29.45.100), the Borough cannot use that portion to fund education.

LEGAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
STATE OF ALASKA

(907) 465-3867 or 465-2450
FAX (907) 465-2029
Mail Stop 3101


130 Seward Street, Suite 409
Juneau, Alaska 99801-2105

MEMORANDUM

March 25, 1998

SUBJECT: Public school funding - (CSSB 36(FIN) am)

TO: Representative Con Bunde
Attn: Lynne Smith

FROM: Michael F. Ford 
Legislative Counsel

You have asked me to review certain materials that cite case law to determine if CSSB 36(FIN) am raises any constitutional issues. I have reviewed those materials and, as explained in this memo, I believe that the bill would survive a court challenge based on constitutional grounds.

Under article VII, section 1, of the Alaska Constitution the legislature is required to "establish and maintain" a system of public schools. This provision imposes a constitutional mandate on the legislature to provide a system of public schools. Macauley v. Hildebrand, 491 P.2d 120, 122 (Alaska 1971). This provision also gives the children in Alaska a right to a public education. Breese v. Smith, 536 P.2d 793 (Alaska 1972). The means chosen by the legislature to carry out this mandate has been the subject of considerable litigation. A brief historical review of the state's public school system is helpful to understanding the constitutional requirements at issue.

When Alaska attained statehood a dual system of education existed. The Bureau of Indian Affairs operated schools for Alaska Natives and the territorial legislature provided schools for Alaska students living in urban areas. Efforts were made prior to statehood to unify the two systems, but failed largely due to the inability of the territory to assume financial responsibility for rural schools. In urban areas, both Native and nonnative students enrolled in local high schools. In rural areas, students who wanted to attend high school had to move to an urban area or, if a Native, had the right to attend boarding school at Mt. Edgecumbe.

Following statehood, the legislature established the Alaska State Operated School System (ASOSS). Under ASOSS the state opened three regional high schools, in Nome, Kodiak, and Bethel. However, as of 1973 there were no secondary schools or no daily transportation to such schools in 145 rural communities across the state. In Hootch v. Alaska State-Operated School System, 536 P.2d 793 (Alaska 1975), the Alaska Supreme Court addressed the question of the interpretation of the right to a public education granted under article VII, sec. 1, of the Alaska Constitution. Specifically, the lawsuit sought to compel the state to

provide secondary schools in rural communities in which the plaintiffs resided. The court examined the constitutional history of the provision and concluded that the phrase "a system of public schools open to all children of the state" does not require a uniform system of public education. The court also noted that under the Alaska Constitution different educational opportunities in some areas of the state were expected, given the vast expanses and diverse culture and heritage of its citizens. For example, boarding, correspondence, and other educational programs were acceptable options, however all options need not be available to all students. Hootch at 803. Therefore, the plaintiffs claim to a constitutional right to attend secondary school in their rural community was rejected by the court. Hootch, at 805.

Following the Hootch decision, the state settled another case, Tobeluk v. Lind, 589 P.2d 873 (Alaska 1979). This case also raised the constitutional issue of the provision of secondary schools in rural communities. The state settled this case by entering into a consent decree, whereby the state agreed to undertake a multi-million dollar construction program designed to build secondary schools in 126 rural communities. The consent decree, known as the Tobeluk consent decree, specified building and renovation plans for each community. As of 1989, the state had expended over 179 million dollars on new schools in rural communities under this decree.

In 1987, the legislature rewrote the formula that determines funding for public schools (AS 14.17). As a part of that rewrite, a local contribution was imposed on city or borough schools districts. The local contribution was the equivalent of a four mill levy on real and personal property or 35 percent of the district's basic need. No local contribution was imposed on R.E.A.A.s. Individuals living in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough brought suit claiming that the local contribution provision (AS 14.17.025) violated their rights to equal protection under article I, section 1 of the Alaska Constitution. Specifically, they alleged that because no local contribution was required in an R.E.A.A., that they were unfairly taxed for public schools. In Matanuska-Susitna Bor. v. State, 931 P.2d 391 (Alaska 1997), the court rejected the equal protection argument and held the formula was constitutional. In this decision the court described the authority of the legislature in creating a public school system. The court indicated that the legislature has wide latitude to fashion a public school system even when the "means chosen may happen to have severely disparate impacts on certain classes of taxpayers." Matanuska-Susitna Bor., at 402.

This view goes directly to another issue, that being the effect of CSSB 36(FIN) am on the North Slope Borough. Under CSSB 36(FIN) am the North Slope Borough would not be receiving state funding for public schools, because their four mill local contribution would exceed the amount that they would get (under AS 14.17) in state aid. This issue was also addressed in Matanuska-Susitna Bor. v. State. The court examined the existing local contribution requirement, that a district contribute the lesser of 4 mills or 35 percent of basic need. The court noted that while there were tax disparities between a district contributing 4 mills verses a district contributing 35 percent of basic need, that formula protected against

excessive contributions by some districts and furthers the statutory purpose of providing statewide educational opportunities. The court further stated that even "if a one hundred percent cap might have accomplished this goal in a manner that would have treated taxpayers more equitably, the thirty-five percent cap still furthers the purpose of the statute." In short, the court recognized exactly the type of local contribution requirement imposed under CSSB 36(FIN) am, as a more equitable taxing formula. Therefore, I do not think that the fact that the North Slope Borough gets no state dollars due to the local contribution requirement is, by itself, a constitutionally defective flaw.

It is also instructive to note that the concurring opinion of Justices Matthews and Rabinowitz indicated that claims of unequal state spending or of inter-jurisdictional tax inequality were not matters for judicial review. That these issues were exclusively political and legislative. Matanuska-Susitna Bor., at 406.

This gets to a broader question. What are the constitutional constraints applicable to the legislature's mandate to provide public schools? Under article VII, section 1, of the Alaska Constitution the legislature has a duty to provide a system of public schools. As seen from the prior cited opinions, the legislature has wide latitude to accomplish this duty. Could the legislature require all students to attend school only in Fairbanks? No, I think this would clearly violate article VII, section 1. I believe that some reasonable access to public education must be provided by the legislature in both urban and rural areas. This does not mean each community in the state must get the same or a uniform system of schools. The question of how to provide public education in the state is a complex one involving many policy issues. The Alaska Supreme Court has recognized this and ruled that so long as the means chosen bears a fair and substantial relationship to the goal of establishing and maintaining a system of public schools, it is constitutionally sufficient. Matanuska-Susitna Bor., at 399.

One issue repeatedly focused on by the courts in upholding or striking down public school funding programs is the existence of evidence showing a significant and overall disparity in benefits and burdens. See Matanuska-Susitna Bor., at 398. Under the existing education formula, AS 14.17, the disparity between the wealthiest and poorest school district is 23 percent. Under CSSB 36(FIN) am, the disparity is 19 percent. While this factor is not determinative of constitutionality, it does indicate that CSSB 36(FIN) am falls within constitutionally acceptable boundaries and the issues contained in the bill are political questions, not legal ones.

For the above reasons, I believe that CSSB 36(FIN) am would survive a constitutional challenge.

Please contact me if you have further questions.

MFF:jdr:glc
98-193.jdr

KASAYULWE
V. STATE

1997

CSSB 36(FIN) -- CONSTITUTIONAL CONCERNS

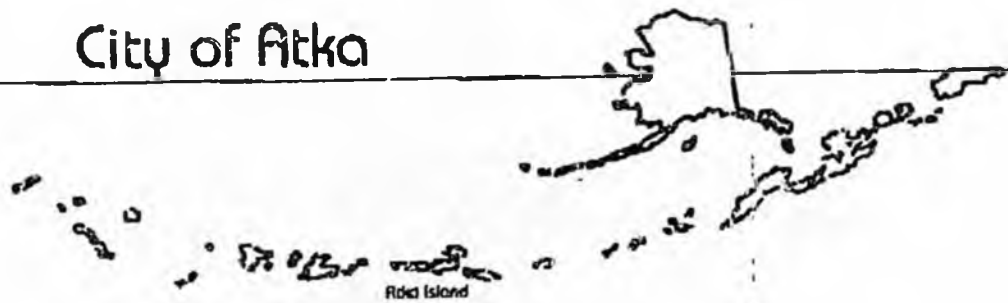
The Alaska Constitutional duty to "maintain a system of public schools open to all"

- Under the Alaska Constitution the legislature is required "by general law" to "... maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the state." No other unit of government shares that responsibility or authority. Alaska Constitution, Art. VII, Sec. 1; Macaulay v. Hildebrand, 491 P.2d 793 (Alaska 1975).
- The legislature's constitutional duty to "maintain a system of public schools open to all" suggests that a lawsuit against the legislature might be maintained if funds available to an Alaska school district are insufficient to pay for a level of education that meets standards of minimal adequacy. Matanuska-Susitna Bor. School Dist. v. State, 931 P.2d 391 (Alaska 1997).
- The Molly Hootch decision did not require that the legislature establish the comprehensive community-based system it has, in fact, established. Now that the initial requirement to "establish" a system of public schools has been met and the pattern of that system has been set, the constitutional focus may now be whether the legislature has a duty to "maintain" that system. A trademark of the system is to reach for statewide equality of educational opportunity, which the legislature may not be able to achieve without unequal educational funding. Butt v. State, 842 P.2d 1240 (Cal. 1992).
- Although the Alaska Supreme Court has not determined that education is a "fundamental right" in Alaska under the state Constitution, educational opportunity should not be controlled by "the fortuitous circumstance of residence." A system for financing schools must have some rational relationship to the educational needs of children. Tennessee Small School Sys. v. McWhorter, 831 S.W.2d 139 (Tenn. 1993).
- Although the constitution does not require absolute equality of funding among districts and absolutely equal expenditures per pupil are not constitutionally required, the legislature's duty to maintain a system of public schools may imply that students in poorer districts ought not to be unreasonably deprived of educational opportunity, that educational opportunities ought to be substantially equal from one district to another, and that districts ought to have the capacity to raise revenue per pupil in amounts similar to other districts. Edgewood Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Kirby, 777 S.W.2d 391, 397 (Tex. 1989); Horton v. Meskill, 486 A.2d 1099 (Conn. 1985).

Equal protection issues

- The disparate treatment of public school students in one region of the State (the unorganized borough), as caused by the drastic cuts in funding to Regional Educational Attendance Areas under this bill, which are imposed for the stated purpose of conferring an economic benefit on similarly situated students in

City of Atka



March 20, 1998

House HESS Committee
Capital Building
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representatives:

I am writing on behalf of the City Council and community of Atka to express our strong opposition to SB 36 in its present format. This bill will have a serious negative impact on the Aleutian Region School District and other rural districts around the state. The current version of the bill would reduce State aid to our district by 5.5% or \$65,394. A reduction of this magnitude combined with past funding deficiencies would seriously impair our district's ability to provide a quality education to our children.

We also oppose any limits on non-instructional activities. While such limitations may be appropriate for school districts with large student bodies, it is totally unrealistic for small rural districts with higher per student non-instructional costs.

The cumulative effect of these Draconian measures may result in the closure of the Atka school. We are struggling now to stay afloat--additional cuts may destroy us. Do you seriously suggest that we home school our 25 students?

In conclusion, I would strongly urge the committee to reconsider this legislation. It is time to increase state funding for education, not decrease it. Time to think about the future of Alaska children throughout the State.

Sincerely yours,

Sally A. Swetzof
Sally A. Swetzof, Mayor

1600 A St. #103 · Anchorage, AK 99501 · Ph: (907) 272 - 5969 · Fax: (907) 272 - 9850
P.O. Box 47070 · Atka, AK 99547 · Ph: (907) 839 - 2233 · Fax: (907) 839 - 2234

CORRECTION

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT(S)
HAVE BEEN REFILMED TO
ASSURE LEGIBILITY OR PAGINATION



Rev. 6/98

Central Microfilm Services
Department of Education
State of Alaska

KASAYUWE
V. STATE

1997

CSSB 36(FIN) -- CONSTITUTIONAL CONCERNS

The Alaska Constitutional duty to "maintain a system of public schools open to all"

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- Although the constitution does not require absolute equality of funding among districts and absolutely equal expenditures per pupil are not constitutionally required, the legislature's duty to maintain a system of public schools may imply that students in poorer districts ought not to be unreasonably deprived of educational opportunity, that educational opportunities ought to be substantially equal from one district to another, and that districts ought to have the capacity to raise revenue per pupil in amounts similar to other districts. Edgewood Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Kirby, 777 S.W.2d 391, 397 (Tex. 1989); Horton v. Meskill, 486 A.2d 1099 (Conn. 1985).

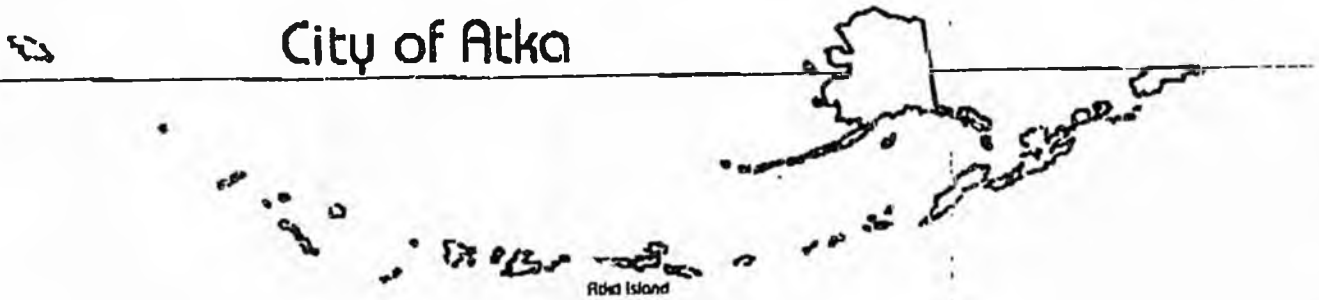
Equal protection issues

- The disparate treatment of public school students in one region of the State (the unorganized borough), as caused by the drastic cuts in funding to Regional Educational Attendance Areas under this bill, which are imposed for the stated purpose of conferring an economic benefit on similarly situated students in

another region of the State (municipal districts), may violate the REAA student's right to equal protection under art. I, sec. 1 of the Alaska Constitution. State v. Enserch Alaska Const. Inc., 787 P.2d 624, 634 (Alaska 1989); Lynden Transport, Inc. v. State, 532 P.2d 700, 710 (Alaska 1975).

- The disparate impact on the state funding of public education which results from this bill's redistribution of school funds away from schools with predominately Alaska Native students to schools with predominantly white students may be a prohibited discriminatory practice under the State Human Rights Act, and specifically may be a violation AS 18.80.255 as an unlawful allocation of state funds for public education based upon race. Thomas v. Anchorage Telephone Utility, 741 P.2d 618, 628-629 (Alaska 1987).
- The fact that the amendments to the foundation program accomplish a fundamental redistribution of state public school funds away from districts with predominantly Alaska Native students to districts with predominantly white students may be a violation of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 in its application to programs receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education, (34 CFR Part 100). Campaign for Fiscal Equity v. State, 616 N.Y.S. 851 (Sup. 1994).

City of Atka



March 20, 1998

House HESS Committee
Capital Building
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representatives:

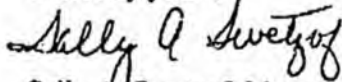
I am writing on behalf of the City Council and community of Atka to express our strong opposition to SB 36 in its present format. This bill will have a serious negative impact on the Aleutian Region School District and other rural districts around the state. The current version of the bill would reduce State aid to our district by 5.5% or \$65,394. A reduction of this magnitude combined with past funding deficiencies would seriously impair our district's ability to provide a quality education to our children.

We also oppose any limits on non-instructional activities. While such limitations may be appropriate for school districts with large student bodies, it is totally unrealistic for small rural districts with higher per student non-instructional costs.

The cumulative effect of these Draconian measures may result in the closure of the Atka school. We are struggling now to stay afloat--additional cuts may destroy us. Do you seriously suggest that we home school our 25 students?

In conclusion, I would strongly urge the committee to reconsider this legislation. It is time to increase state funding for education, not decrease it. Time to think about the future of Alaska children throughout the State.

Sincerely yours,


Sally A. Swetsof, Mayor

March 25, 1998

Dear Legislators,

On Saturday, I heard one of the Senators say, "Tell us how to fix the foundation formula." I have also heard the remarks that this new formula is based on the Alaska School Operating Cost Study. Apparently, my reading of this study is different from that of the legislators because I see some glaring differences between the new formula and the recommendations of the McDowell Group.

First, SB36 does not allow for the Location Multiplier. I understand that you want to get rid of the Area Cost Differential because it is used to justify higher teacher pay. However, it does cost more to run a school in Eagle than it does to run a school of the same size in Anchorage, assuming that such an anomaly as a small school in Anchorage was allowed to exist. Assuming that we use Anchorage as the base, then some should be added to our cost of doing business. For example, along the Railbelt the cost of a kWh is \$.09. In the rural areas, we pay over \$.40 and we will lose all our subsidies if Sen. Murkowski has his way. We have to pay shipping costs which significantly increase the cost of the same textbook if it were purchased by the Anchorage School District. I could go on, but suffice it to say that it costs a lot more for operating and maintenance than in Anchorage. You can correct this oversight by adding a nonpersonal services multiplier of at least 2.00 for schools that are in areas without road access during the school months.

Second, since you have put us in the same funding situation as a charter school, I suggest you allow the rural schools to assume more of the responsibility for how our funding is spent. Let us buy back some of the services offered by the central office in our district. I would buy more than our share of the technical expert's (John Rusyniak) time, because he has been so valuable to our school, but I would buy back none of the maintenance administrator's time since we get practically no services from him and I would pay our local custodian more. I would pay for the services of the bookkeeper, but not much for the special programs administrator. Give us more direct control of our funds at the local level.

Third, why are the base student allocation on page 8, line 14, and page 28, lines 25 & 26 different? We need more money per student, not less, whether we are in Anchorage, or Fairbanks, or Eagle.

Finally, your estimate of what you think the local communities can contribute is completely unreasonable. They can't and won't if they could pay more property tax. I have several suggestions, but the school bus is arriving since it is 7:45 and I am out of time. I don't get another time without students until 3:00, so you will just have to do the rest of the job yourself.

Sincerely,

Ann Alley Millard

WHEREAS, Passage of Senate Bill 36 will cripple villages who are already experiencing and economic disaster from recent fishery industry failure and lack of job opportunities; and

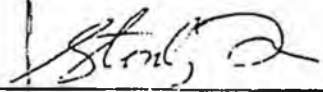
WHEREAS, The passage of this bill will certainly have long and drastic effects on the operation of Rural School Districts and the support and assistance in all areas of education provided for the children of Village Alaska and worst yet, it will also halt the enormous academic progress of the children living in REAA regions in areas of mathematics, reading, and writing halt the advancement of knowledge's, skills and abilities of children and their future contribution to the general well-being and economy of Village Alaska; and

WHEREAS, The REAA School Districts are working together diligently and successfully to support and assist in the process.

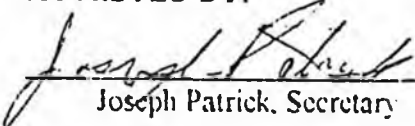
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Tribal Council of the Native Village of Newtok respectfully implores and requests the Alaska State Legislatures to reconsider its position and action toward the children of Village Alaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Tribal Council of the Native Villages of Newtok goes on the record to oppose the passage of Alaska State Senate Bill No. 36 by the Alaska State Legislatures.

ADOPTED AND SIGNED this 25th day of March, 1998 by the Newtok Traditional Council at the duly called meeting where quorum was present with 8 voting in favor and 0 against the measure.


Stanely Tom, President

ATTESTED BY:


Joseph Patrick, Secretary





TELECOPY COVER SHEET

Fairbanks Legislative Information Office

Office - (907) 452-4448

Fax - (907) 456-3346

TO: LINDA HESS FAX: _____ PHONE: _____

FROM: FBX LIO PHONE: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Written testimony for SB36 teleconference
o.k. 3/26/98

RECEIVED: Date _____ Time _____

SENT: Date _____ Time _____

DISPOSAL OF ORIGINAL: Discard _____ Hold for Pickup _____

NUMBER OF PAGES: 2 (Not counting cover sheet)

SENT BY: Fran



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HESS

Committee on CSSB 36(FIN)am Committee Name
Dated 3-10-98
Bill / Subject

Good afternoon, My name is Kathy Sikorski, I was born, raised, and schooled in Fort Yukon, and was fortunate enough to have escaped being sent away to be schooled elsewhere -- somewhere I could have been exposed to abuse or some other horror... horror stories I have heard from those who had been sent away.

I don't agree with this bill because of the many negative impacts it could pose on the rural schools. My ancestors come from Arctic Village ^(AV) -- a very small school but with a strong bilingual program, utilizing community support. If these students had to be sent to someplace like Fort Yukon, where the bilingual program is floundering, I believe the AV students would lose their language and culture. As you know, language and culture can not be separated. This bill seems like another way of trying to assimilate rural with city (Native vs. white) without taking into account the potential consequences.

SIGNED: Kathy Sikorski
Testifier

Representing
4081 Stillwater Ct, Fox 4747875
Address / Phone Number



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Health, Education, and SS
 Committee on Senate Bill #36 Committee Name
Dated 3-25-98
 Bill / Subject

I oppose Senate Bill #36. It is a blatant grab at funding that results in an unfair and racist reallocation of school funding. This bill will have the result of robbing rural (= Native) districts of millions of dollars of needed funds. I honestly can not understand why this legislature believes it is legitimate to remove funding from districts already struggling to provide a meaningful education to our children.

SIGNED:

Patrick E. Marlow

Testifier

Representing

Box 83683 Fairbanks 99708 458-0913
 Address / Phone Number



VALDEZ CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
RESOLUTION 98-02

The Valdez Chamber of Commerce, representing 230 members doing business in Valdez, Prince William Sound and in part the Greater Copper Basin are concerned for the quality and cost of education of students;

WHEREAS; the leaders of our communities, states and our nation are the youth of today and,

WHEREAS; the primary resource for our youth is the quality of the education and,

WHEREAS; the rural communities of the State of Alaska have a greater volume of obstacles to overcome to provide education and,

WHEREAS; the reallocation of dollars as presented in HB36 redirect the majority of state funded education dollars to urban areas and,

WHEREAS; this reallocation is representative of a decrease of 1.8 million dollars annually or 28% of the current dollars received by Valdez from state funded education dollars and,

WHEREAS; the City of Valdez currently pay 50% of the cost of education of its students (second highest in the state) and,

WHEREAS; we recognize the efforts to put an equal percentage of dollars in locations with like percentage of students and,

WHEREAS; we recognize the areas with a higher percentage of students also have a broader base to derive alternative funding sources than most rural areas and,

WHEREAS; all areas of the State of Alaska have value and should have equal opportunity to provide quality education to the youth of our state and,

WHEREAS; the burden of replacing lost state funding for Valdez will be borne in majority by the businesses of this community and,

WHEREAS; these businesses have experienced a steady decline in the economy for the last three years and will find it difficult to meet the financial requirements to fund the 1.8 million dollars needed annually;

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, the Valdez Chamber of Commerce strongly opposes this bill and request a more equitable funding base for education for all the youth of Alaska.

Signed and dated at Valdez, Alaska this 19th day of March, 1998.

Rich Nielsen
Rich Nielsen, Chairman VCC
Manager for BP Shipping, USA

Sandra Bittner
Sandra Bittner, Director VCC
Owner Sandra's Gold & Silvermithing

Michael E. Easley
Michael E. Easley, Vice Chairman VCC
Manager Engineering Services
Copper Valley Electric Assoc.

Kurt Hallier
Kurt Hallier, Director VCC
Port Operations Manager,
ARCO

Randy Maag
Randy Maag, Past Chairman VCC
General Manager Petro Star Valdez

Stacey Mitchell
Stacey Mitchell, Secretary VCC
Owner Aurora Charters

Connie L. Stephens
Connie Stephens, Treasurer VCC
Manager Beaver Sports

Dave Beck
Dave Beck, Director VCC
Manager Ketchum Air Services

Douglas Desorcie
Douglas Desorcie, Director VCC
Dean of Instruction, Prince William
Sound Community College

Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

March 27, 1998

Representative Con Bunde, Chair
Health, Education & Social Services Committee
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol - MS 3100
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: Senate Bill No. 36

Dear Chairman Bunde:

The Rural Alaska Community Action Program (Rural CAP) is a statewide organization whose Board of Directors is comprised of representatives from each of the regional Native non-profit corporations and members from Alaska's public and private sectors. The purpose of this letter is to place the Board's position on Senate Bill 36 on the public record. As you know, Senate Bill 36 addresses the funding of Alaska's public schools.

Senator Randy Phillips has said that the bill will achieve "simplicity, equity and accountability." We believe the real issue is that urban schools are demanding more money for their operations and administration, while rural schools are saying that current funding from the Legislature is inadequate to cover their needs. At the same time, the legislative majority is in the middle of its five-year plan to cut the State's operating budget.

We believe Senate Bill 36's true goal is not "simplicity, equity and accountability." If it were, the Legislature would approve an *increase* in funding of education in *both* the rural and urban areas of the State. Instead, the Legislature is proposing to take money from one area of the State and give it to another area. In short, the proposed changes to the education foundation formula are nothing more than a redistribution of existing dollars in a fashion that is rapidly creating divisiveness among all of Alaska's citizens.

We live in one of the richest states in the nation with among the lowest of resident populations. We are the only state that does not impose an income tax. We are a state that has over \$23 billion dollars in savings. It is therefore stunning to see the Legislature proposing to cut funding for our children's future in a manner that, if it is carried out as proposed, will have the effect of undermining our education systems in drastic ways. This is not right, it is not simple, it is not equitable and it shows that the Legislature does *not* feel any need to be accountable to rural residents who have children in school.

The assets that need protection are our children. They are Alaska's greatest assets -- yet this Legislature proposes to treat them as troublesome liabilities. The impacts of Senate Bill 36

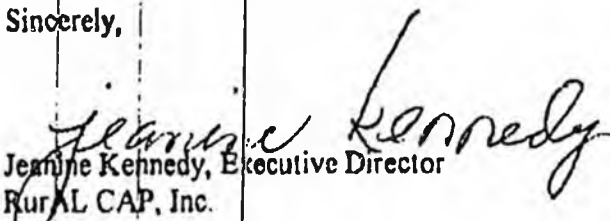
Rep. Con Bunde
March 27, 1998
Page 2

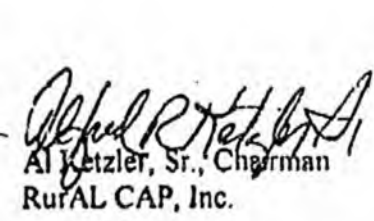
would be devastating. Teacher/student ratios would rise if the proposed 1.5 positions are cut from small rural schools. If 1.5 positions were cut from East Anchorage High School, for example, it would mean the redistribution of students among dozens of classes. When you cut 1.5 positions in a village school, it could mean one teacher, instead of two, would be responsible for teaching 43 students in one class that included children from Grades 1 through 12.

We view the proposals contained within Senate Bill 36 as examples of poor public policy. This bill would make the poorest of Alaska's poor pay for education in communities that contain people with greater advantages in the way of infrastructure that ultimately benefits local schools. Is it "fair" or "equitable" that the children who need the most help, who have the lowest test scores, who live in the most poverty, are the ones who would lose the most? Is it fair to take opportunities from one child in order to provide an even greater advantage to another child?


We hereby request and urge that the Legislature consider carefully the impacts of what you are doing on the whole state. What may serve in the short term politically is short-sighted socially. Thank you for this opportunity to share the views of the Board of Directors of the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

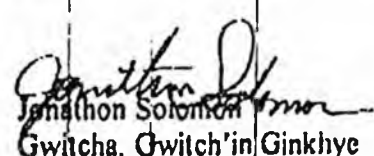
Sincerely,

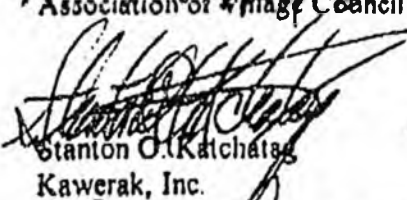

Jeanine Kennedy, Executive Director
Rural CAP, Inc.


Al Metzler, Sr., Chairman
Rural CAP, Inc.

Andrew Etonga
Alaska Native Brotherhood


David O. David
Association of Village Council Presidents


Jonathon Solomon
Gwitcha, Gwitch'in Ginkhye


Stanton O. Katchatag
Kawerak, Inc.

David Eluska
Kodiak Area Native Association


Percy Ballot, Sr.
Maniilaq, Inc.

Representative Con Bunde
March 27, 1998
Page 2

Ted Angasan
Ted Angasan
Bristol Bay Native Association

Thelma Christofferson
Thelma Christofferson
Chugachmiut

Robert Marshall
Robert Marshall
Copper River Native Association

Donne Fleagle
Donne Fleagle
Tanana Chiefs Conference

Dewey Skan, Jr.
Tlingit-Haida Central Council

Grace Wells
Grace Wells
Child Development Policy Council

David K. Fison
Rev. David Fison
Alaska Christian Conference

Anthony Nakazawa
Anthony Nakazawa
Alaska Cooperative Extension Service

Alaska State Legislature



Official Business
Fax: (907) 465-3472

State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
(907) 465-3720
(907) 465-2689

Speaker of the House of Representatives

March 18, 1998

«NAME»

Dear «SALUTATION»:

Thank you for your letter pointing out the possible negative effects of the current version of SB 36. As you may know, CS SB 36 (FIN) am passed the Senate a few days ago and is now in the House where it received referrals to the House HESS and Finance Committees. An initial hearing on SB 36 is scheduled for March 21 at 1:00 p.m. Although that hearing will be teleconferenced, it will be for listening only. However, a teleconference to hear public testimony will be scheduled in the not too distant future, and I hope you will take the opportunity to testify. You can keep abreast of the scheduled hearings for SB 36 by checking with your Legislative Information Office. In the meantime, I will forward a copy of your message to the House HESS Committee with a request that they include it in the committee members' SB 36 bill files.

Again, I appreciate hearing from you and hope you will continue to share with me those issues of concern to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gail Phillips".

Gail Phillips
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

GP:jmj

cc w enc: Rep. Con Bunde, Chair, House HESS Committee

NAME	SALUTATION
Ms. Pamela Van Wechel Superintendent Lower Yukon School District PO Box 32089 Mountain Village, AK 99632	Ms. Wechel
Ms. Tina Flynn PO Box 115 Tununak, AK 99681	Ms. Flynn
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Angaiak PO Box 11 Tununak, AK 99681	Mr. and Mrs. Angaiak
Mr. Charlie Patrick PO Box 61 Tununak, AK 99681	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Michael M. Ripke PO Box 65 Chefornak, AK 99561	Mr. Ripke
Mr. Jerry Vantrease FAX 2350560	Mr. Vantrease
Mr. Roger Liebner 207 Corral Avenue Soldotna, AK 99669	Mr. Liebner

**Ms. Milary Matthews
PO Box 69
Kasilof, AK 99610**

**Mr. John Wachmann
Cheformak Schools
PO Box 50
Cheformak, AK 99561**

**Mr. Bill Wilkinson
Kwigilingok, AK**

**Ms. Paula Rak
PO Box 1852
Wrangell, AK 99929**

**Ms. Lynne Campbell
PO Box 123
Wrangell, AK 99929**

**Ms. Mary Giles
PO Box 1350**

**Soldotna, AK 99669
Mr. Joshua D. Andrews
PO Box 114**

**Tununak, AK 99681
Ms. Gloria Kanrilak
PO Box 15**

Tununak, AK 99681

Ms. Matthews

Mr. Wachmann

Mr. Wilkinson

Ms. Rak

Ms. Campbell

Ms. Giles

Mr. Andrews

Ms. Kanrilak

Ms. Joanne Walter
PO Box 63
Tununak, AK 99681
Mr. Jonathan Hooper
PO Box 88
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Ms. Marlene Flynn
PO Box 61
Tununak, AK 99681
Ms. Anna Kailukiak
PO Box 14
Tununak, AK 99681
Ms. Lucy Whitman
PO Box 31
Tununak, AK 99681
Ms. Nina Menegak
PO Box 51
Tununak, AK 99681
Mr. Steven P. Wright
PO Box 4645
Soldotna, Ak 99669
Ms. Kathy Gensel
Box 3398
Soldotna, Ak 99669

Ms. Walter

Mr. Hooper

Ms. Flynn

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Mr. Charlie Patrick PO Box 61 Tununak, AK 99681	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Michael M. Ripke PO Box 65 Chefornak, AK 99561	Mr. Ripke
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Chefornak Schools**

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Ms. Walter

Mr. Hooper

Ms. Flynn

Ms. Kailukiak

Ms. Whitman

Ms. Menegak

Mr. Wright

Ms. Gensel

Mr. Eldon Brothen
257 Stacy Drive
Soldotna, AK 99669

Kathleen Holt
Route 2, Box 715
Kasilof, AK 99610
Ms. Karen S. DeVaney
Box 2686
Homer, AK 99603

Mr. Jack Castimore
1533 CoHoe Circle
Kenai, AK 99611

Ms. Kim Avera
Box 1654
Homer, AK 99603

Ms. Esther Eagle Richeson
44436 Golden Eagle
Avenue
Kenai, Ak 99611

Mr. Brothen

Ms. Holt

Ms. DeVaney

Mr. Castimore

Ms. Avera

Ms. Richeson

P.O. Box 115
Tununak, Alaska 99681-0115
March 13, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
House Of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

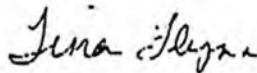
To the Honorable Gail Phillips:

My name is Tina Flynn and I am a Junior at Paul T. Albert Memorial School. I would like to voice my concern about Senate Bill 36.

The bill poses a serious threat to the quality education currently available in rural Alaskan communities. I wholeheartedly support the goals put forth in Alaska Educational Standards and am worried that the cuts attached to SB36 will drastically affect their regulation.

Thank you for your time in reading this letter.

Sincerely,



Tina Flynn

P.O. Box 61
Tununak, Alaska 99681
March 13, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

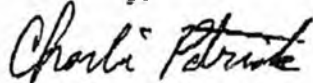
To the Honorable Gail Phillips:

My name is Charlie Patrick and I am a Senior in the Paul T. Albert Memorial School. I am concerned about Senate Bill 36.

This bill poses a serious threat to the quality education currently available in rural Alaskan communities. I wholeheartedly support the goals put forth in the Alaska educational standard and am worried that the cuts attached to Senate Bill 36 will drastically affect their realization.

Thank you for reading this letter

Sincerely,



Charlie Patrick

3/13/98

To: Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capital, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801

From: Michael M. Ripke
P.O. Box 65
Chefornak, AK 99561

Dear Ms. Phillips:

I am writing a letter to ask for your support in voting against Senate Bill 36. First of all I'm concerned about the loss of Federal aid that will result with the passage of this bill. Has it really been looked at what the loss of aid will entail if SB 36 is passed?

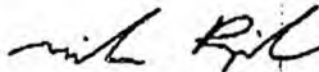
Most of Rural Alaska's municipal governments have no existing laws that relate to the disposal, acquisition or taxation of municipal property. Where there is no existing tax base, I feel that taxation among REAA residents and employees discriminates against a minority of the rural sector.

At least half of the state's population resides in urban areas. Allocating aid to school districts on a per child basis will affect rural districts where the number of students is disproportionate. There should be an equitable way to fund both rural and urban school districts.

Also I feel that the quality of rural education will decrease if school districts are forced to eliminate essential personnel in small schools that have a teacher : student ratio that is equivalent or greater to urban schools.

Again I strongly urge a bipartisan vote that opposes SB 36. This is not a rural or urban issue, this is an Alaskan issue that will affect the quality of education for years to come. Yes, there has to be an equitable way to fund our educational system. SB 36 does not address this. Perhaps it is time to consider an education fund that will provide future funding for our children's education.

Sincerely,



Michael M. Ripke

Representative Gail Phillips
Alaska State House of Representatives

3/6/98

Dear Representative Phillips:

I am a resident of Homer, AK and an independent business owner. Neither I nor any of my family members are employed by the Alaska public school system, but my daughter is in elementary school here and my other two children will be soon. I am writing to you out of concern for the state of school funding here on the Kenai Peninsula. It seems to me, from what I know, that there are grave deficiencies in the funding levels for our local schools -- and this in spite of what are some of the highest local taxes in Alaska.

Homer High is currently funded at the same level as ten years ago, but currently enrolls 175 more students. At McNiel Canyon Elementary, attended by my daughter, the smallest class size next year will be 26 students due to reductions in the budget. I know that the teacher salaries are currently lower, relative to the rest of the US, than they were ten years ago, and now rank as mediocre in comparison to the other states. I am told that the Kenai School District administrative costs are in the low-average range, so the money does not appear to be wasted there.

This leaves me to think that the problem here on the Kenai is under-funding, which I believe is brought about by inequities in the distribution of education funds. Be that as it may, what I want right now is for schools in my town and my area to be adequately funded. I know that there is legislation under consideration to bring that about, specifically HB 294, and I expect to hear that you have worked to support my concerns.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jerry Vantrease

The following parent organizations have reviewed this position statement and have given their endorsement as of March 3, 1998.

Homer Association of Site Councils
Homer High, Homer Middle, Homer West Elementary
Paul Banks Elementary , McNeil Canyon

Homer Community in Action
(group of local representatives from a wide range of organizations that is working to prevent drug and alcohol use by youth)

Homer Middle School Parents Advisory Organization (PAO)

Sears Elementary School PTA

Homer High School Band Booster Club

Homer High Steering Committee

Soldotna High School PTA

NorthStar Elementary School PTA

Veznesenka Parent Advisory Committee

Redoubt Elementary Site Council

Soldotna Elementary Site Based Council

Skyview Site Based Council

Cooper Landing School Council

Seward PTSA

Seward-Bayview Charter School Academic Policy committee.

Soldotna Middle School PTA

Sterling School PTSA

Nikiski Elementary PTSA

*Roger Lieber Solti PTSA President 262-1339
277 Central Ave, Soldotna, AK 99669*

Parent Organizations in Support of Increased Educational Funding

The parent teacher organizations on the Kenai Peninsula have been seriously concerned for years about the problems of educational funding in Alaska. Each year a new legislature convenes with promises of increased funding, correcting disparities and raising standards of performance. This year we expect to hold our legislators on the peninsula accountable for their voting records on educational funding for the peninsula.

Throughout the last decade, our schools have been faced with:

- increased enrollment
- raising pupil/teacher ratios
- increased costs for textbooks and supplies
- elimination or reduction of school nurses
- increased facility maintenance and utility costs and an extensive

increase in parent/pupil fund raising to maintain sports, music and arts programs just to name a few. During this time there was little increase in the school foundation funding formula. This clearly impacts and runs contrary to the objectives of parent organizations and more importantly the education system as a whole.

The parent organizations of the Kenai Peninsula strongly support increases in funding either through the Foundation Formula or any other program which meets current and future needs. We do not believe reallocation in itself is the appropriate remedy. We do believe all Alaskan's should contribute to supporting public education. We believe in local control and oppose primary "dedicated funding", as it conflicts with local requirements.

It is imperative the state recognize their responsibility in funding education. Article IV, Section 1 of the Alaska State Constitution states: The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State.

It has been suggested by leaders of the legislature that funding for all programs be performance based. Increased performance and standards of achievement in education of Alaska's children should be stable and not based on the daily fluctuating price of oil.

In the recent past our legislature had determined that the investment in future dollars is more important than the investment in Alaska's future through our children.

The Kenai Peninsula parents intend to closely monitor legislation and voting records on issues relating to education, and intend to support those Representatives and Senators who strive toward an improvement in Alaska's education.

P.O. Box 69
Kasilof, AK 99610

February 26, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Phillips:

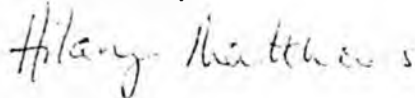
Last November, I went to visit a friend in Long Beach, Washington who had recently moved down there after more than twenty years of teaching in Alaska. She took me round the school in which she is now teaching. Most classrooms had broken windows, paint was peeling from the walls, a layer of grime permeated the whole building, student desks were dilapidated and most of the supplies she had in her room she had bought herself. The school only has one custodian for a building of 500 students. There's much more I could tell you about this school, but I'm sure I have said enough to make my point.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District will be in this same dire condition within a few years unless the funding situation improves. Already, the deterioration in equipment and buildings is very noticeable. Already, classes are larger than they should be. Already, teachers are demoralized with the unconscionable two tier salary scale.

Various suggestions have been made about ways to increase funding. Unfortunately the most promising possibilities would require a political will that will be hard to find in an election year. Using some of the Permanent Fund earnings in the form of an endowment, or raising the tax cap are two of these. Who among you is willing to stand up for education and take the heat in an election year?

I urge you to put the importance of education above your political aspirations and find the money to fund our schools adequately.

Yours sincerely,



Hilary Matthews

cc: Representative Gary Davies
Representative Mark Hodgins
Senator Jerry Ward
Senator John Torgerson

FAX*Pat School Letters***Date** 03/14/98**Number of pages including cover sheet**

TO: Gail Phillips
 State Capitol, Room 208
 Juneau, AK 99801-1182

FROM: John Wachmann, Site
 Administrator
 Chefornak Schools
 PO Box 50
 Chefornak, AK 99561

Phone 907-465-2689
Fax Phone 907-465-3472

Phone 907-867-8700
Fax Phone 907-867-8429

CC:

REMARKS: Urgent For your review Reply ASAP Please Comment

RE: SCSB36

As a school administrator in the Lower Kuskokwim School District I should have a certain bias against the kind of cuts that my district would suffer if this bill passes. However, please understand that I work daily with the students, staff and parents who would be drastically effected by these kind of cuts. I now have to make difficult judgments as to how dollars are allocated and choicas have to be made. SCSB36 would mean budget cuts so severe that educational programs deemed necessary for the survival of the Yup'ik language and culture would be eliminated. Please do appreciate the gravity of this situation and work with your fellow members of the Senate and House to revise or vote against SCSB36 so that these First Nation peoples may retain and continue their language and culture. Qu yana (Yup'ik for thank you.)

From: Bill Wilkins
Kwigillingok, AK

Phone # 588-8529

588-8629 WK

This is what we
think and will do
if SB-36 Passes!!!

Rural Boycott

As a reaction to the republican controlled senate and house attacks upon rural education. Rural people are considering to organize a rural boycott of major anchorage area businesses. All rural areas of the state will be contacted and asked to use less and put off major purchases a year or so. If possible rural residents will be asked to order as much as possible from catalogs or lower 48 vendors.

In order to offset millions of dollars in educational revenue cuts from rural areas just to put the money into urban areas this is our only logical recourse. This is the only way to fight back. Attempting to ward off these devastating attacks upon our educational system, we will, react towards major businesses with the hopes that they may have better luck knocking heads with a few republications that are bent on dividing Alaska.

Many rural people feel that no group in Alaska should be educationally under financed. Not urban or rural, and would like to see improved funding for both.

With the interest of clarity we would like to put the focus on Randy Phillips, John Torgueson, Bert Sharp, Drue Pearce, Sean Parnell, and Gary Wilken as legislative embarrassments because any Alaska legislators that wants to gut one state area to benefit another isn't thinking very hard. With all the money in this state they should be able to come up with a plan to make things better for all Alaskans.

For example we can collectively stop use of or use less by:

- cutting back on airlines travel
- cutting back on long distance calls
- cutting back on air freight
- cutting back on snowmachine orders
- cutting back on anchorage based bush food orders
- cutting back on individual builders supply
- cutting back on anchorage based vendors for all rural schools
- cutting back on all unnecessary holiday orders
- cutting back on permanent fund spending in anchorage

If any of these vendors care about bush business talk to Randy Phillips, John Torgueson, Bert Sharp, Drue Pearce, Sean Parnell, and Gary Wilkins these legislators ill represent their districts by coming up with poor ideas that make one group of Alaskans better off at the demise of another group. Stop the madness of SB-36 and prevent the state as a whole from looking down upon these urban districts constituents as dividing urban and rural Alaska just because their elected senators and representatives lack enough creativity to find a penny in a bank vault.

P.S. We are considering a national "TV"
+ Radio plea to tourist visiting Alaska to
put off your travel to protest
the state of Alaska's legislative
^{educational} injustice to its mostly native
remote rural economically disadvantaged.

This is just the beginning.

Paula Rak
PO Box 1852
Wrangell, Alaska 99929
(907) 874-3824

March 8, 1998

Dear Representative Phillips:

Our education system is in trouble. In the last ten years, there has been virtually no increase in funding. Inflation has eroded the value of the funds by 33%. Our children are suffering because of it. "Our children are our future." You have heard that many times because it is true. Students in elementary school today will be expected to keep this country running while my generation retires. Let's plan now that they will be up to the task.

As a volunteer in grades K-3, I have seen many children struggle with reading. These children will struggle all their lives if they do not pick up the necessary reading skills early. A child's success in school (and thus in life) has been shown to be directly proportional to class size in the early grades. Class sizes have been growing due to budget shortfalls. General teacher aides have disappeared from the classroom. The municipalities are contributing more and more to the schools' budgets, but still not keeping pace. Wrangell has a shrinking tax base and is not able to fill in the gaps. The "frills" part of the school's budget (foreign language classes, music, art, athletic travel, etc.) has been cut years ago. We are now losing teachers. Children like my son will do well no matter what, but there are many borderline children that will slip through the cracks due to large class size.

It is the state's responsibility to fund education. SB 36 is being debated now. This bill does not increase state funding. It merely reallocates the same money. There are only two districts that can afford to do with fewer dollars - North Slope and Valdez. According to our superintendent Wrangell would stand to lose \$168,854. This, he said, was because of the way our accounting has been done through the years. A lot of things that are not necessarily administrative have been listed as such because it made no difference. Now it would hurt us severely. **SB 36 is not good for Wrangell.**

Wrangell has been hurt severely with the mill closure, loss of sales taxes (even though it has the highest rate in the state) and decline of timber dollars. A bill that reallocates the same pie does nothing to address the problem. The problem is that all schools have had a 1% increase in state funding in the last 10 years. There is not business that can survive that and still put out quality products. We need to do more than divide the pie differently. **Vote for an increase in overall funds, not just a reallocation.**

We are asking for a cost of living adjustment to be built into the formula. It is vital. If children slip through the cracks now, we will pay for it later with social problems.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Paula Rak



LOWER YUKON SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 32089
Mountain Village, Alaska 99632
Phone: (907) 591-2411
Fax: (907) 591-2449

PAMELA S. VANWECHEL
Superintendent

March 11, 1998

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Alaska House of Representatives:

The purpose of this letter is to respectfully request that you take whatever action you can to stop the merciless, short-sighted and unnecessary assault on the Children of Alaska. I am confident that you know what legislation could be helpful to Alaskan children, and you know how hurtful some of the current proposals will be for our most defenseless citizens.

Please apply your knowledge, along with a generous portion of good judgment, and make the right decisions to help us take responsibility for the children and strengthen the educational programs for Alaskan students.

I have visited your office and talked with you before, so a review of the priorities that I think the legislature should have is redundant. Even so, here they are:

1. All of the Alaskan children belong to all Alaskans. I have worked from Nome to Ketchikan, in Mat-Su and in Nenana, in Hydaburg, Kotzebue and Ambler. Now I live at Mountain Village, and represent the children of the Lower Yukon. However, I still consider that I am responsible to represent all of the Children of Alaska (rural and urban) because they cannot speak for themselves. Alaskan Legislatures, no matter what region you represent, are responsible for the welfare of all Alaskan children.
2. Education represents a bright future for the poor children of our State. All children need and deserves an education, but poor children have only one hope, and that is that they will receive the appropriate education which give the options for the future. In my 20 years in Alaska, I've seen many children grow up to be productive, responsible citizens. This is possible for poor children and for minorities only if they have equal access to education and opportunity.
3. Alaska can and must invest significant funds and more funds into our greatest resource -the Children of Alaska. Excuses are no remedy for the short-term or the long-term need to fully fund educational programs and to provide improved opportunities for our young people.

Alaska House of Representatives
March 11, 1998
page 2

4. While reviewing the TOTAL problem for the Children of Alaska, please carefully observe the unpleasant facts relative to deferred school maintenance and the lack of interest by some legislators to build adequate schools for the children. For at least the past 5 years, there has been no funding to build schools for our growing school population in rural Alaska.
5. Operating costs for substandard school facilities are unfairly eroding the education dollars in our State. All of the children of Alaska need your help - your attention - your votes to ensure that the needs of the children are met.

Please, accept no more excuses. We Alaskans live in the richest State in the nation. America is the most prosperous country in the world. We must reinvest our vast resources in the Children of Alaska.

Sincerely,



Pamela VanWechel
Superintendent

enclosures: newspaper articles and editorials

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES MAY
NOT FILM LEGIBLY BECAUSE OF
THE POOR QUALITY OF THE ORIGINAL**

Lynne Campbell
P. O. Box 123
Wrangell, AK 99929

Representative Gail Phillips
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Phillips:

I am writing you on behalf of the children of Alaska and most especially those of Wrangell. I strongly urge you to support an increase in the state funding formula to local school districts. Educational costs funding has not kept up with inflation. School districts across the state need an increase in funding. Districts everywhere should have equal opportunities for their students. Communities, such as Wrangell, have been hard hit by the recession. Not only have local business' felt the trickle down effect but our school enrollment decreases thus decreasing our tax base but not our need for programs. As a former school board member in 1983 I am sure that funding was an issue then and it has not been resolved to date. I would like to see funding reform a priority during this legislative session.

Lynne Campbell

P.O. Box 1350
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

March 4, 1998

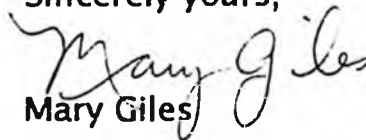
Representative Gail Phillips
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Phillips:

Please see that funding is increased to our school district.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,


Mary Giles

P.O. Box 114
Tununak, AK 99681
13 March, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

To the Honorable Gail Phillips:

I am writing this letter to express my concern over Senate Bill 36. This measure, if passed, will drastically affect rural communities throughout the state.

Alaska has a unique position in the Union. Its communities have varied economic standings, yet schools have always been treated fairly and have been supported with equal access to state funds. The legislation before you now would change this egalitarian dispersal; routing money away from rural schools towards urban centers.

New York, Chicago, cities in Texas, and various other inner-city schools face the problem of too little funding every day. Because the tax bases of inner-city schools are so small, their areas simply do not generate enough money to operate effective educational programs. States in the lower 48 are trying to brainstorm ways to reduce this school funding disparity and would do well to look to Alaska for leadership. However, if Alaska was to pass this legislation, the state would join others with disparate, biased funding plans.

SB 36 is not the answer to any problems which may now exist. A solution needs to be sought which ultimately reflects goals of providing a quality education to all of Alaska's children.

Please do not pass legislation that pits one group against another. We have a small population and it is crucial that we present a united front when faced with problems such as this. Do not improve the quality of one life at the expense of another. None of us has the right to decide which individuals will benefit and which will suffer.

I implore you to reflect upon what I ask. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Joshua D. Andrews

P.O Box 15
Tununak Alaska 99681
March 13, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representnatives
State Capital, Room 208
Juneau Ak 99801-1182

To the Honorable Gail Phillips:

My name is Gloria Kanrilak and I am in 8th grade and i'm 14 years old. I am concerned about Senate Bill 36.

If SB36 passes, the stutents of Rural Alaska communities will suffer. The overall quality of education in Alaska will decline without the proper funding. I Beleve that this result is contradictory to Alaska's committment to quality education as defined by the Alaskan Educational Standards.

Well funded school in rural settings are part of what makes Alaska a cutting-edge state. Please do not vote for this legislation or abandon you commitment to a lartge portion of Alaska's future.

Thank you for taking you time to read this letter.

Sincerely,



Gloria Kanrilak

P.O. Box 63
Tununak, Alaska 99681
March 13, 1998

Representatives Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capital, Room #208
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

To the Honorable Gail Phillips:

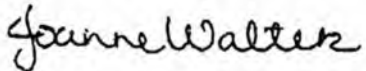
My name is Joanne Walter and I am in 9th grade. I go to school in Paul. T. Albert. Memorial. School. I am writing because I am concerned about the S. B. 36.

If S.B. 36 passes, the students of rural Alaskan communities will suffer. The overall quality of education in Alaska will decline without the proper funding. I believe that this result is contradictory to Alaska's commitment to quality education as defined by the Alaskan Educational Standards.

Well Funded schools in rural settings are part of what makes Alaska a cutting-edge State. Please do not vote for this legislation or abandon your commitment to a large portion of Alaska's Future.

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely,



Joanne Walter

P.O.Box 88
Tununak, Ak 99681

Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

To the Honorable Gail Phillips:

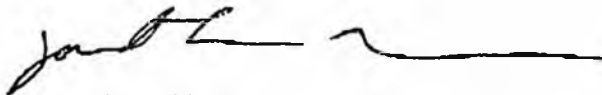
My name is Jonathan Hooper and I am a student at the Paul. T. Albert Memorial High School in Tununak, AK. I am writing this because I am concerned with Senate Bill 36.

If SB 36 passes, the students of rural Alaskan communities will suffer. The overall quality of education in Alaska will decline without the proper funding. I believe that this result is contradictory to Alaska's commitment to quality education as defined by the Alaskan Educational Standards.

Well-funded schools in rural settings are part of what makes Alaska a cutting-edge state. Please do not vote for this legislation or abandon your commitment to a large portion of Alaska's future.

Thank you for your time reading this letter.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Hooper

P.O. Box 61
Tununak, Ak 99681-0061
March 13, 1998

Representative Gail Philips
House of Representative
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, Ak 99801-1182

To the Honorable Gail Philips:

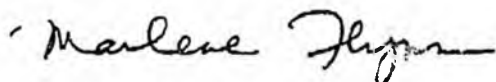
My name is Marlene Flynn and I am a student at Paul T. Albert Memorial School in Tununak, Ak. I am writing this because I am concerned with Senate Bill 36.

If SB 36 passes, the students of rural Alaskan communities will suffer. The overall quality of education in Alaska will decline without the proper funding. I believe that this result is contradictory to Alaska's commitment to quality education as defined by the Alaskan Educational Standards.

Well-funded schools in rural settings are part of what makes Alaska a cutting-edge state. Please do not vote for this legislation or abandon your commitment to a large portion of Alaska's future.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter.

Sincerely,



Marlene Flynn

P.O. Box 14
Tununak, AK 99681
March 13, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capital, Room #208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

To the Honorable Gail Phillips:

My name is Anna Kailukiak and I am a tenth grade student in the Paul T. Albert Memorial school. I am writing because I am concerned about SB 36.

If SB 36 passes, the students of rural Alaskan communities will suffer. The overall quality of education in Alaska will decline without the proper funding. I believe that this result is contradictory to Alaska's commitment to quality education as defined by the Alaskan Educational Standards.

Well funded schools in rural settings are part of what makes Alaska a cutting-edge state. Please do not vote for this legislation or abandon your commitment to a large portion of Alaska's Future.

Thank you for taking the time reading this.

Sincerely,



Anna Kailukiak

P.O. Box 31
Tununak, Alaska 99681-0031
March 13, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

To the Honorable Gail Phillips,

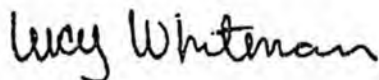
My name is Lucy Whitman. I am an eighth grader at Paul T. Albert Memorial High School. I am concerned with Senate Bill 36.

If Senate Bill 36 passes, rural Alaskan students, teachers and families will suffer. Students' futures will also be ruined. The overall quality of education in Alaska will decline without the proper funding. I believe that this result is contradictory to Alaska's commitment to quality education as defined by the Alaskan educational Standards.

Well-funded schools in rural settings are part of what makes Alaska a cutting-edge state. Please do not vote for this legislation or abandon your commitment to a large portion of Alaska's future.

Thank you for taking your time reading this. I just hope that you don't vote for this legislation.

Sincerely,



Lucy Whitman

P.O. Box 11
Tununak, Alaska 99681
March 13, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

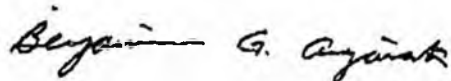
To the Honorable Gail Phillips,

My name is Benjamin Angaiak and I am a senior in Tununak, Alaska. I am concerned about Senate Bill 36.

The bill poses a serious threat to the quality education currently available in rural Alaskan communities. I wholeheartedly support the goals put forth in the Alaskan Educational Standards and am worried that the cuts attached to Senate Bill 36 will drastically affect their regulation.

Thank you for reading this letter.

Sincerely,



Benjamin Angalak

P. O. Box 11
Tununak, AK 99681-0011
March 13, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

To the Honorable Gail Phillips:

Hello, my name is Josephine Angaiak and I am from Tununak. I am an 8th grader of Paul T. Albert Memorial High School. I am writing to you because I am concerned with Senate Bill 36.

If Senate Bill 36 passes, the students of rural Alaskan communities will suffer. The overall quality of education in Alaska will decline without the proper funding. I believe that this result is contradictory to Alaska's commitment to quality educating as defined by the Alaskan Educational Standards.

Well-funded schools in rural settings are part of what makes Alaska a cutting-edge state. Please do not vote for this legislation or abandon your commitment to a large portion of Alaska's future.

Thank you for taking your time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Josephine Angaiak
Josephine Angaiak

P.O. Box 51
Tununak, AK 99681
March 13, 1998

Representative Gail Phillips
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

To the Honorable Gail Phillips:

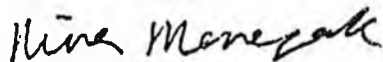
My name is Nina Menegak from Tununak. I am an 8th grader of Paul T. Albert Memorial School. I am writing because I am concerned with Senate Bill 36.

If Senate Bill 36 passes, the students of rural Alaskan communities will suffer. The overall quality of education in Alaska will decline without the proper funding. I believe that this result is contradictory to Alaska's commitment to quality educating as defined by the Alaskan Educational Standards.

Well-funded schools in rural settings are part of what makes Alaska a cutting-edge state. Please do not vote for this legislation or abandon your commitment to a large portion of Alaska's future.

Thank you for taking your time to read this letter.

Sincerely,



Nina Menegak

02-05-98 10:13 AM

Mrs. GAIL PHILLIPS
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
RM. 208 STATE CAPITOL
JUNEAU, AK 99801-1182

KENAI PENINSULA BORO/SCHOOL DIST IN CRISIS

DURING THE PAST WEEK, JANUARY 26TH THUR JANUARY 30TH 1998 THE PENINSULA CLARION NEWSPAPER HAS PUBLISHED A SPECIAL SERIES OF ARTICLES WRITTEN BY SHANA LOSHBAUGH. THESE ARTICLES EXPLAIN IN DETAIL THE EFFECTS OF CUMULATIVE BUDGET CUTS OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS. SHANA DID A EXCELLENT JOB OF BRINGING THESE FACTS TO THE FOREFRONT OF PUBLIC ATTENTION.

KPBSD EMPLOYEES, STUDENTS & PARENTS ENDURE THESE FACTS EVERY DAY. FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS TO THE PART TIME SUBS & EVERYONE IN BETWEEN HAS FOR YEARS TRIED TO COMMUNICATE THESE CONCERNS TO THE PUBLIC & OUR LEGISLATURE. NOW IT IS FRONT PAGE NEWS.

THE FOLLOWING IS MY PERSONAL OPINION. I'M SURE THAT IT WON'T WIN FRIENDS OR INFLUENCE PEOPLE BUT I BELIEVE IT NEEDS TO BE SAID.

OUR LEGISLATIVE MAJORITY HAS A AGENDA OF CUTTING THE BUDGET & DOWNSIZING THE GOVERNMENT. THIS AGENDA HAS A DIRECT NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THOUSANDS OF ALASKA RESIDENTS & CHILDREN. WE ARE TOLD BY THE MAJORITY THAT "WE MUST TIGHTEN OUR BELTS & MAKE SACRIFICES." MEAN WHILE THEY VOTE THEMSELVES A PAY RAISE & REQUEST ADDITIONAL STAFF.

THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION FUNDING FORMULA & THE DISPARITY OF FUNDING SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAS BEEN A ONGOING SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR OVER 10 YEARS.

IN MY MIND THESE ELECTED OFFICIALS ARE PAID PROFESSIONAL NEGOTIATORS. IT IS THEIR JOB TO LISTEN, RESEARCH, SOLVE PROBLEMS & MAKE DECISIONS. YET THIS PROBLEM HAS CONTINUED FOR OVER 10 YEARS. YEARS OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS COSTLY STUDIES & RESEARCH, REAMS OF REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS ON & ON & ON.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 SUNDAY FEBRUARY 1990

THE KENAI PENINSULA BORO/SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS TAKEN THE CUTS, WE HAVE MADE THE SACRIFICES. THE REMAINING EMPLOYEES HAVE DOUBLED & TRIPLED THEIR WORK LOADS. ALL EMPLOYEES STRUGGLE EACH DAY TO PRODUCE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. THE PARENTS & STUDENTS ARE PAYING FEES FOR EVERYTHING. THEY DONATE MANY HOURS OF THEIR PERSONAL TIME TO HELP THE SCHOOL DISTRICT. ALL OF THIS IS DOCUMENTED IN THE "SCHOOLS IN A SQUEEZE" NEWSPAPER SERIES. I'M CERTAIN MUCH MORE WAS REPORTED TO SHANA CONCERNING OUR DISTRICT BUT HAD TO BE EDITED BECAUSE OF SPACE RESTRICTIONS.

OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT IS HANGING ON BY ITS FINGERNAILS AND OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS W/IN THE STATE STILL HAVE THE BEST OF EVERYTHING. THOSE DISTRICTS ARE FUNDED 100% BY THE STATE W/OUT ANY LOCAL TAX OR FEES. I KNOW THAT THE "BUSH CAUCUS" & RURAL DISTRICTS ARE VERY POWERFUL INFLUENCE IN OUR CONGRESS BUT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!! IT'S TIME FOR THEM TO PAY THEIR SHARE.

IT'S TIME TO DISTRIBUTE THE EDUCATION FUNDING EQUALLY & FAIRLY. IT'S TIME FOR THE EDUCATION DEPT TO WAKE UP TO THE FACT THAT OUR SCHOOL DIST. IS BOTH URBAN & "BUSH SCHOOLS" & TO ALLOCATE OUR FUNDING W/ THAT IN MIND. ANCHORAGE DOES NOT HAVE "ACROSS THE WATER SCHOOLS." WE ARE FUNDED AS IF OUR DIST. WAS ENTIRELY URBAN.

OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS DONE MUCH MORE THAN IT'S FAIR SHARE, IT'S TIME FOR OUR LEGISLATORS TO HELP!!!!

I SUGGEST THAT YOU READ THE "SCHOOLS IN A SQUEEZE" SERIES. "BOTTOM LINE" IS ANYONE LISTENING???

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME,
Steven P. Wright
STEVEN P. WRIGHT
PO BOX 4645
SOLDOTNA, AK 99669

Author: richeson@ptialaska.net at CC2MHS1

Date: 1/3/98 3:08 PM

Priority: Normal

TO: Representative Pete Kott at LAA_HKOT, Representative Gene Kubina at LAA_CAP,
 Representative Terry Martin at LAA_TRANS, Representative Beverly Masek at LAA_TRANS,
 Representative Carl Moses at LAA_TRANS, Representative Eldon Mulder at LAA_TRANS,
 Representative Irene Nicholia at LAA_CAP, Representative Scott Ogan at LAA_TRANS,
 Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP,
 Representative_Brian_Porter@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Norman_Rokeberg@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Joe_Ryan@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Jerry_Sanders@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Gene_Therriault@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Al_Vezey@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Bill_Williams@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Alán_Austerman@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Ramona_Barnes@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Ethan_Berkowitz@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Tom_Brice@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Con_Bunde@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_John_Cowdery@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Eric_Croft@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_John_Davies@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Gary_Davis@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Kim_Elton@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Richard_Foster@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Joe_Green@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Ben_Grussendorf@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Mark_Hanley@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Mark_Hodgins@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Bill_Hudson@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Ivan_Ivan@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Jeanette_James@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Reggie_Joule@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Pete_Kelly@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Allen_Kempen@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Vic_Kohring@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1,
 Representative_Al_Kookesh@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1

*3/14 -
 BR - Ck to see
 if we sent her a
 response yet?*

Subject: School Nurse Funding

*** NOTE: This message was sent empty of any text. It appears only to be a container for the one attachment.

*BR - This needs
 a response*

*also, put in file
 for the Lenin delegation
 mtg next week - done
 Thanks*

MAR 18 1998

<FIXED>Dear Representative:

I am writing to you as both a frustrated school nurse and as a mother of two teenage sons who attend Soldotna Middle & Soldotna High Schools here in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD). This is my 8th year as a school nurse here in the Kenai area, and I have witnessed the decline of health services in our schools as a result of inadequate & unfair educational funding. The KPBSD has repeatedly requested fairer funding but has repeatedly been denied. Historically, we have the same funding formula as Anchorage School District, yet the size of our district and the fact that some of our schools are accessible only by plane demands higher costs to operate. As a result of the inadequate distribution of funding, many fine programs have been cut or are being eliminated. School health services is one of those casualties.

This past school-year, we eliminated at least three nursing positions which has occurred at the high & middle school levels, so that most larger high schools in our district receive health services only 2 days/week. When KPBSD is compared to other districts near our size (i.e. Anchorage, Mat-Su, etc.), those districts still have one school nurse per larger building while one secondary nurse in ours must serve 2-3 or more schools. Also, the nurses in those districts are on "certified status" where we are "classified". For us, it means lower pay and different benefits even though we must have a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing, must maintain a current Registered Nurse License, & must keep current CPR & Medic First-Aide cards—much different qualifications than the "classified employees" who must only have a high school diploma as a job qualification. As you can see, there is quite a bit of discrepancy between what the KPBSD can fund & what other similar districts are funding their nurses. And, as a mother of two secondary students, I am upset that my sons do not have access to a professional nurse's assessment & evaluation daily as the other districts mentioned above do.

KPBSD has done everything we can think of to "cut the fat", in fact, our own legislators report that KPBSD is an "exemplary model" state-wide for making responsible changes. Now we are asked to "cut the bone" and I am appalled that our legislators don't even care enough about our children to adequately & fairly fund for their education. If you cannot bring yourselves to provide more funds for education of Alaska's children, perhaps you can look at ways to make the funding for each district fairer, or to decrease the number of districts state-wide. Or, perhaps you could fund school nurses & health services outside of the education funding formula. Often the school nurse is the "prevention advocate specialist" in each school. At a time when drugs & alcohol are once again on the increase for young people, doesn't it make sense to keep the prevention programs intact in the schools? To quote a slide which Fran Uimer showed us at a community forum held at the Kenai Visitor's Center a year or so ago: "You can pay a little now, or you can pay a lot later". She was referring to crime prevention.

PLEASE reevaluate & assess how our current districts are funded and at least make it fairer. We desperately need some changes made or our school district will go from one of the best to one of the worst. Also, please do not rob from one group of kids to help fund another group of kids. I am referring to \$400,000 being shifted from school health services to adoption services. That is outrageous! School health services need more funding, not less!

Thank you for your time and effort regarding this request. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Esther Eagle Richeson, RN, BSN

KCHS School Nurse & Mother

44436 Golden Eagle Ave.

Kenai, AK 99611

(907)283-7378

P.S. I was raised in Kenai and returned here after graduating from University of Washington to start & raise a family because of our fine educational system, please don't make me regret it. (I had to go out-of-state in 1970 to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree because it was not offered here--another funding problem at a different level?). Think about it.

</FIXED>

Author: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP
Date: 2/27/98 1:10 PM
Priority: Normal
TO: Pat Springer at LAA_HPHG
Subject: School Funding
Representative Phillips:

I support an increase to the school funding formula. This district as done nothing but cut for the past several years. Programs are beginning to suffer. It is time for this legislature to step forward and do something positive for education.

Eldon Brothen
257 Stacy Dr.
Soldotna, Ak.

MAR 18 1998

Author: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP

Date: 3/9/98 7:38 AM

Priority: Normal

TO: Pat Springer at LAA_HPHG

Subject: ed funding

This message is to encourage you to realize the severe needs our schools have. Schools do not merely need to have the funding distribution system overhauled. They need more money, plain and simple.

Because of more budget cuts (how many years in a row?),

Soldotna High School is scheduled to lose 3.5 teachers for the school year 1998-1999. That means they must cut 18 courses! SoHi is projected to have more students next year than they have this year. Also, because graduation requirements have been changed, the incoming freshmen will be required to complete 3 math and 3 science courses to graduate. This is up from the current requirement of 2 math and 2 science courses required. Just adding these new requirements increases the number of required courses by 10. The results this scenario brings are extremely severe for the Soldotna High School students.

A redistribution of state funding probably sounds good to a lot of us on the Kenai Peninsula and I agree that it is not being done fairly now. The current system does need to be re-evaluated and designed to be more equal across the state, but taking from some students to give to others should not be the way to solve our all of our financial problems. Besides, the amount of money the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District would gain in the proposed bill will not be even enough to cover the amount of money the district must cut this year! More funding from the state is mandatory. Please allow an increase in this year's budget for educational funding.

Thank-you, Kathleen Holt, Kasilof

Rt 2 - Box 715

Kasilof, AK 99610

MAR 18 1998

Author: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP

Date: 3/6/98 11:12 AM

Priority: Normal

TO: Pat Springer at LAA_HPHG

Subject: School Funding

Dear Representative Phillips,

I am very concerned with the school funding. Paul Banks Elementary is facing more cuts that will force the school to cut the librarian position. This is not acceptable. Each and every one of our children deserve basic instruction and the librarian position, especially at the early primary level, is vital. Please find some way to help our kids.

Sincerely,

Karen S. DeVaney

Box 2686

Homer, OK 99603-2686

MAR 18 1998

Author: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP

Date: 3/2/98 9:38 AM

Priority: Normal

TO: Pat Springer a LAA_HPHG

Subject: Info you can use.

Dear Representative_Gail_Phillips;

I feel you should know the following information when considering new legislation on education matters in Alaska.

The following information was prepared by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, under the auspices of the Carnegie Corporation and the Rockefeller Foundation, and is entitled What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future. The Commission is chaired by Governor Jim Hunt of North Carolina

The Hunt Commission Report offers what the commissioners believe is the single most important strategy for achieving America's educational goals: A blueprint and contains the following information:

" Number of Teachers Has Declined While Non-Teaching Staff Has Risen.

* The proportion of school staff classified as classroom teachers has fallen from 70% in 1950 to 52% in 1993 -- while the number of non teaching staff increased by over 40%.

* For every four classroom teachers, there are nearly six other school employees in the United States, indicating that teachers make up only 43% of total school employment. Conversely, teaching staff in other countries comprise 60% to 80% of school employment.

* A recent eight-nation study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development revealed that the U.S. has by far the lowest ratio of core teaching staff to non-teaching staff (less than 1:1), well behind the leaders, Belgium (4:1), Italy (3,5:1), and Japan (3,4:1). "

I thought you would want this information, especially when considering a CAP on the amount of public funds that are used on Administration costs in local school districts. Hawaii has a CAP on administrative costs of just 5 per cent.

signed Jack Castimore, 1533 Cohoe Circle, Kenai, Ak 99611

MAR 18 1998

Author: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP
Date: 3/13/98 8:14 AM
Priority: Normal
TO: Pat Springer at LAA_HPHG
Subject: Senate bill 36.

Dear Representative Phillips, As a long time supporter of yours and homeschooling mother of four, I am urging you to vote to oppose or ammend senate bill 36. As you know, this bill offers only 65% funding of the IDEA program to which my children are enrolled. It offers 100% funding to students enrolled in their own district .I feel that this will be a gross inequity if allowed to pass or remain unammended. The IDEA program has provided more support than that which is available in my district..Not only has the quality of my children's education been improved, but I have recieved immeasurable amounts of support for my specific needs as educator through workshops ,consultation ,and technological training. This very day, I recieved instructional information via the Internet from my appointed certified teacher on how to best teach penmanship to my left-handed first grader! It really does not get any quicker or better than that! Local correspondence programs DO NOT provide this level of service. I feel that my children should be allowed to have the same resources as other correspondance students :egardless of the location of enrollment. IDEA is a model program, and if allowed to contine, will lead the standard in judicious use of resources and superior service, thus benefitting ALL correspondence programs state -wide. Please vcte to keep IDEA at 100% funding! My sincere thanks to you...Kim Avera

Box 1654
Homer, OK 99613

MAR 18 1998

Author: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP

Date: 2/27/98 1:10 PM

Priority: Normal

TO: Pat Springer at LAA_HPHG

Subject: KPBSD schools funding

Dear Rep. Phillips,

I recently attended a budget overview for our area and it was apparent to me that our Borough schools are going to rapidly degrade due to funding shortfalls. This is not the direction we should be going in today's increasingly competitive world economy.

I browsed the Legislative proposals for this session and found nothing to address the gross inequities in State education funding formulas as they relate to our district. I won't go into details as I am assuming you are well aware of the issues involved. I'm also assuming that your position as majority leader would enable you to provide some impetus towards funding reforms. The current arrangement is particularly unfair for our Borough.

Do you have a plan or proposal to address this crisis? We would appreciate hearing back from you, not only on your plans, but also what we can do as individuals to help rectify the situation.

Bob & Diane Penland
PO Box 2019, Soldotna
262-9266
rapp@corecom.net



Author: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP

Date: 3/9/99 7:37 AM

Priority: Normal

TO: Pat Springer at LAA_HPHG

Subject: SB 36

Dear Congressman,

This letter is in regards to the piece of legislation meant to equalize funding between the more populated areas of Alaska (i.e. the road system) and rural Alaska (i.e. native villages). I have been living working in the small western Alaska village of Akiak for the past year. I realize the road system schools may have a legitimate gripe about not receiving the larger piece of the funding pie, but I have also seen how much time, effort, and personal attention each student needs here in the bush. It simply costs more to educate a child in the rural Alaskan settings. As educators we are dealing with a large number of students who are mentally delayed, emotionally disturbed or qualified for special education. These students need more time and attention - which means more money because they need the special education teachers, the aides, psychologists, speech and hearing pathologists. and counselors.


The district I work for is the Yupiit School District. We are one of the smaller districts in the state, serving three villages. Even with state moneys, we are not able to address all of the problems or meet the cultural needs at a satisfactory level. As a result, a lot of the funds we have been using in the past year have come from private grants we have been fortunate enough to receive.

So what would this piece of legislation do to our schools? Our district would be swallowed up by the larger Lower Kuskokwim School District. The principal at each site would be replaced by a teaching principal. Our special education teachers would be either replaced by one teacher to serve all three sites or be eliminated altogether (we currently have five special education teachers carrying an unreal load). Counselor positions would also be reduced or eliminated. Special services such as psychologist's and speech pathologist's quarterly visits to our sites would be reduced or eliminated. Aide and teacher positions would be reduced. Overall service to our children would be greatly damaged and this in a district that is already struggling to improve the quality of education. Having had the opportunity to visit other village schools in other districts, I know our district would not be alone.

I urge you to carefully consider the ramifications this piece of legislation could have on rural communities. Education is the best chance many of the native children have to improve their lot in life - please don't make it any harder for them then it already is.

Thank you,
Sally J. Karr

jskarr@msn.com



Author: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP
Date: 3/12/98 8:39 AM
Priority: Normal
TO: Pat Springer at LAA_HPHG
Subject: SB 36

I am writing a letter to ask for your support to not vote for Senate Bill 36. First of all I'm concerned about the loss of Federal aid that will result with the passage of this bill. Has it really been looked at what the loss of aid will entail if SB 36 is passed?

Most of Rural Alaska's municipal governments have no existing laws that relate to the disposal, acquisition or taxation of municipal property. Where there is no existing tax base, I feel that taxation among REAA residents and employees discriminates against a minority of the rural sector.

At least half of the state's population resides in urban areas. Allocating aid to school districts on a per child basis will affect rural districts where the number of students is disproportional. There should be an equitable way to fund both rural and urban school districts.

Also I feel that the quality of rural education will decrease if school districts are forced to eliminate essential personnel in small schools that have a student : teacher ratio that is equivalent or greater to urban schools.

Again I strongly urge a bipartisan vote that opposes SB 36. This is not a rural or urban issue, this is an Alaskan issue that will affect the quality of education for years to come. Yes, there has to be an equitable way to fund our educational system. SB 36 does not address this. Perhaps it is time to consider an education fund that will provide future funding for our children's education. Thank you.

mripke@chefonak.lksd.schoolzone.
net

Mike Pipke

(sent to all legis)



Author: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP

Date: 3/18/98 12:22 PM

Priority: Normal

TO: mripke@chefornak.lksd.schoolzone.net at CC2MHS1, jskarr@msn.com at CC2MHS1, rapp@corecom.net at CC2MHS1, knox@alaska.net at CC2MHS1, dbuckwalter@galenaalaska.org at CC2MHS1, nharvest@alaska.net at CC2MHS1, pturner@alaska.net at CC2MHS1, fisher@xyz.net at CC2MHS1, mcullen@galenaalaska.org at CC2MHS1, deruwe@arctic.net at CC2MHS1, lkincaid@galenaalaska.org at CC2MHS1, lcobb@galenaalaska.org at CC2MHS1, ericmary@galenaalaska.org at CC2MHS1, hofseth@supersshadow.net at CC2MHS1, rhandley@galenaalaska.org at CC2MHS1

Subject: SB 36 hearing scheduled

Thank you for your messages pointing out the possible negative effects of the current version of SB 36. As many of you may know, CS SB 36 (FIN) am passed the Senate a few days ago and is now in the House where it received referrals to the House HESS and Finance Committees. An initial hearing on SB 36 is scheduled for March 21 at 1:00 p.m. Although that hearing will be teleconferenced, it will be for listening only. However, a teleconference to hear public testimony will be scheduled in the not too distant future, and I hope you will take the opportunity to testify. You can keep abreast of the scheduled hearings for SB 36 by checking with your Legislative Information Office. In the meantime, I will forward a copy of your message to the House HESS Committee with a request that they include it in the committee members' SB 36 bill files.

Again, I appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Gail Phillips
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

GP:jmj

cc w enc: Rep. Con Bunde, Chair, House HESS Committee

Author: dbuckwalter@galenaalaska.org (Daniel & Helen Buckwalter) at CC2MHS1
Date: 3/18/98 9:36 AM
Priority: Normal
TO: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP
CC: carlk@arctic.net at CC2MHS1
Subject: SB 36--and IDEA funding

Dear Representative Phillips,

I am very disappointed that the SB 36 passed the Senate without full funding for the IDEA correspondence school that the Galena School District has developed. I have been in home education for almost 20 years and this program is by far the best thing that has happened for homeschooling parents in this state. I hope you will correct the inequity in this bill while it is in the House or see to it that in it's present form it is defeated.

I applaud the innovative and friendly approach the IDEA people have toward those who educate their children at home, and I hope you will use your influence to give IDEA the same funding that other schools in the state have been given. I feel they have used money wisely, and are making an all out effort to provide not only a service but one of excellence and their efforts and accomplishments should be recognized and rewarded. It seems unreasonable that those who are demonstrating significant progress in home education improvement should be forced to operate at 65% funding while other districts who have less to offer are operating with full funding.

I hope you will take time to become familiar with IDEA . They are a wonderful, friendly, and supportive group of people who are providing the kind of quality service that home educators are looking for.

Sincerely Yours for the Best in Home education,

Helen Buckwalter

Author: knox@alaska.net (jim knox) at CC2MHS1
Date: 3/16/98 10:07 PM
Priority: Normal
TO: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP
Subject: Senate Bill 36

I'm writing concerning the Senate Bill 36 which was recently passed, and will be soon voted on in the house. We're asking that you vote to either ammend the bill to restore full funding to correspondence students out of district or defeat it. We've been homeschooling for 14 years and this was the first year we were able to get any help for educational materials of our choice. We really appreciate not only this help in enhancing our curriculum, but also the other benefits the program offers. It doesn't seem right that a program that is doing so well should be cut in their funding, while other programs which don't offer as much are getting full funding.

Thank you for listening, Mrs. Knox

HC 47 Box 135
Ami home parent 99554

Author: nharvest@alaska.net (natasha johnson) at CC2MHS1
Date: 3/13/98 8:57 PM
Priority: Normal
TO: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CA'
Subject: PUT MORE MONEY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION THIS SESSION!!!

Dear Gail Phillips,

As a parent I strongly urge you to put more money into our public schools here on the Peninsula!! My daughter attends Mrs. Brysons Kindergarten class at Sears Elementry in Kenai; which by the way is an excellent school!! The staff have learned to make-do with very little resources.

What is completely unacceptable, however, is the fact that they ARE FORCED to overload the classes. My daughter has 26 students in her class!!! This is a discrease to our state!!! We can do better then this!! About 40% of class time Mrs. Bryson spends on crowd control. If you think class size doesn't matter why don't you spend some time observing what goes on in the class room! I strongly believe we have some of the best teachers in the nation; they deserve more respect!

I urge you to put more money into our schools!!
AND YES I WOULD PAY HIGHER TAXES !!!!!

Sincerly,
Natasha Ala Johnson
Box 1224
Kenai, AK 99611
283-0878
email: nharvest@alaska.net

Author: pturner@alaska.net (Paul E. Turner; Ph.D.) at CC2MHS1
Date: 3/15/98 7:36 AM
Priority: Normal
TO: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP
Subject: Rural School Funding

Mr. Phillip's 30-40 idea for school funding is ludicrous. If the Federal government applied that to Alaska on a per capita basis what would our roads, ferry system, airports look like today. Please fight for school funding.

Paul E. Turner, Ph.D.

Box 270

Kenai, AK 99611

Author: fisher@xyz.net at CC2MHS1

Date: 3/13/98 9:48 AM

Priority: Normal

TO: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP

CC: carlk@arctic.net at CC2MHS1, governor@gov.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1

Subject: school funding bill

Representative Phillips:

You will soon be voting on Senate Bill 36 regarding school funding. We agree that the state needs an overhaul in this area to make distribution of funds more fair. We disagree with a section of the bill that would fund correspondence students 100% in their own district, but only 65% outside their district. This discriminates against the IDEA program of Galena which offers far more than the program in our own district, including internet access, valuable workshops, and individualized curriculum. This is a very innovative program that creatively supports home-educating parents and continually comes up with new ways of using technology/internet in the education of Alaska's children. Is this inequity in funding designed to lure students back to their own district? This for the most part will never happen. The vast majority of these children, if excluded from IDEA, will return to being disconnected from all state programs because other programs aren't offering the individualized education these families want to give their children. IDEA is the only program in the state that offers this; why penalize a program that meets a need and will produce results (watch for test scores of IDEA students).

Please address the inequity of correspondence funding by funding them all at 100%, or if cuts are essential, by cutting them all equally.

Sincerely,
Ken and Sally Fisher
Homer, Alaska

Author: mcullen@galenaalaska.org (Mark & Rebecca Cullenberg) at CC2MHS1
Date: 3/14/98 11:03 AM
Priority: Normal
TO: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP
CC: governor@gov.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1, carlk@arctic.net at CC2MHS1
Subject: Senate Bill 36

Dear Gail,

We are very disappointed with the senates decision concerning SB36. We urge you to ammend this bill to continue to fund I.D.E.A at 100% or to defeat this bill when it comes to the Alaska House for a vote.

We have enrolled 3 of our children in this program because it offers more help and services than the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Correspondence program.

I.D.E.A offers workshops. help by certified teachers, internet connectivity is

provided along with an IBM compatible computer. Many district correspondence courses do not provide the means for students to have access to the latest technology. We have appreciated this I.D.E.A program tremendously. Please ammend this SB36 to fully fund the I.D.E.A program.

Sincerely, Mark and Rebecca Cullenberg
Homer, AK.

Author: deruwe@arctic.net (Dave Deruwe) at CC2MHS1
Date: 3/13/98 3:13 PM
Priority: Normal
TO: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP
Subject: education funding

*PO BOX 62
Summit
9-7-98*

Every year citizens watch as the legislature refuses to properly fund public education. We write this type of letter or e-mail, feeling impotent to have any influence. The legislature seems hell-bent on making our children's educations inferior to those of their older siblings--all the while building tunnels to Whittier or multimillion dollar trails to Cordova. Our children need education now and they are not getting it.

In the current legislature there are several bills that reallocate public funds while trying to tax the rural areas--These bills are stupid--they add no new funds to education and our kids need new funds!

Here's the scenario in our local high school. Next year's projections call for a two teacher cut (equivalent to 14 class offerings per year) from a staff of 27. As two teachers coincidentally are planning retirement, this means no loss of jobs. What it does mean is some non-art certified teacher will try to teach my children art next year and some non-home economics teacher will try to teach my children home ec. next year. It also means the librarian who has no English certification may be teaching English next year, while the already overworked school counselor tries to fill in to help keep the library open part time. It also means that the 11th grade English and History sections will likely have seven or more extra students next year compared to this year when my daughter's English class already has thirty students in a room built for twenty. Meanwhile, should the school have any teacher openings, they will be harder to fill because the lower wage standards of past years have lowered the applicant pools and the quality of the applicant pools. The best teachers that used to want to teach here now often go elsewhere where salaries and teaching conditions are better.

We are watching the dismantling of our schools. The bleeding must stop. My children and your children, if you have them, deserve a better system. We can't keep cutting and taking away. Although it's doom and

Author: lkincaid@galenaalaska.org at CC2MHS1

Date: 3/15/98 10:41 PM

Priority: Normal

TO: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP

CC: garydavis@legis.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1, governor@gov.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1

Subject: Senate Bill 36

Dear Gail, (Gary)

I was extremely disappointed to see that this bill passed the senate. It is my hope that with your help it will be ammended from its present form in the House. Bill 36 in it's present form would reduce its funding for out of District corresponding students. I currently have 4 kids enrolled in the I.D.E.A. program because the program offers more help and services than any other home district program in the Nation! It provides certified teachers, workshops, internet use, computer, enabling the World to be their classroom. I.D.E.A. also has regional parent advisory Committees who provide recommendations to administration regarding needs and wishes in the program and it also offers a wide choice of curricular material for the parent to choose what is suited best for their indivdual childrens' learning. I'm counting on you Gail, and you Gary, to change this Bill in its current form.

Respectfully,
Byron Kincaid

Author: lcobb@galenaalaska.org (Larry & Suzan Cobb) at CC2MHS1

Date: 3/15/98 4:35 PM

Priority: Normal

TO: Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP

Subject: HB 36

The Cobb Family

P.O. Box 39082

Ninilchik, Ak 99639

Phone 907-567-3373

Fax 907-567-7381

Dear Gail,

It has been brought to my attention that there is an effort to cut the Galena I.D.E.A.'s program to 65% funding. I think that this is an outrage and a slap in the face to the tax payers. Why would someone's agenda want to disrupt the fine opportunity that the Galena I.D.E.A.'s program has provided for our family? I don't understand how rational people could support HB 36. Galena has provided an excellent opportunity for us to educate our children in the nurturing environment of our home with professional education assistance when we feel it is necessary.

They have supplied our family with learning tools that we were able to glean from this year that tremendously enhanced our learning environment for our children. Our own school district has had the same opportunity to reach out to the home schoolers in their area but for whatever reason did not have the vision that Galena's I.D.E.A. program has. This is America, land of the free, why would you support to penalize hard working tax payers that have benefited from Galena's foresight and Galena for reaching out to us? I just don't understand. Please don't support the 65% funding and do support education at it's finest and freedom and liberty to educate our children as we the parents see fit. Thank you for listening

Sincerely,

Larry and Suzan Cobb

Author: ericmary@galenaalaska.org (Eric & Mary Marchegiani) at CC2MHS1

Date: 3/15/98 11:44 AM

Priority: Normal

TO: Senator Randy Phillips at LAA_TRANS, Representative Gail Phillips at LAA_CAP,
Representative Eldon Mulder at LAA_TRANS, governor@gov.state.ak.us at CC2MHS1
Subject: Senate Bill No. 36

Dear Governor Knowles, Senator Phillips, Representative Phillips, and Representative Mulder:

Please note that it is my understanding that Senate Bill #36 has passed the Senate. This means that the IDEA program that provides funding to Home Schoolers throughout the state is looking at a 35% cut in funding.

Now I know you folks are looking at ways to balance the budget but it does not make any sense to do so on the backs of the Children of Alaska. Additionally you normally look at cuts in the 5%-10% range. Are you cutting the Anchorage, Fairbanks, Sitka, Juneau etc. education budgets by 35%???? I seriously doubt it.

What is good for Metropolitan Anchorage and associated school districts should be the same for our Home Schoolers. Consequently, I am very disappointed in the Senate passing this bill (Randy how did you vote on this?). Secondly Representative Phillips and Representative Mulder you have an opportunity to reinstate 100% funding in this bill for the IDEA Program and others. If you are not going to fund the IDEA program at 100%, then I am recommending that you defeat this bill in its entirety.

You may wish to consider the following as some of the things that the IDEA program has provided to Home Schoolers in the past year. It has been a breath of fresh air and has provided assistance to those who have received nearly no assistance from the State or their respective Municipalities ---- yet continue to pay their property tax which pay for a large portion of the local educational system ---- for which they receive no educational benefit other than the recent IDEA program.

- 1) The majority of families enrolling in IDEA have done so because the program offers more help and services than the home district program.
- 2) Valuable workshops such as Excellence in Writing, Project-Based Education, Internet Use, etc. are provided to our families.
- 3) IDEA provides help as needed by certified teachers.
- 4) Internet connectivity is provided along with the use of an IBM compatible computer, enabling the world to be our "classroom". Many district correspondence courses do not provide the means for students to have access to the latest technology.
- 5) Regional Parent Advisory Committees provide recommendations to administration regarding needs and wishes in the program.
- 6) IDEA offers a wide choice of curricular material.
- 7) School-to-Work opportunities are provided. (IDEA currently has one of the highest placement percentages in the state)

There are many other factors that contribute to the IDEA program's success but there is not enough time and space to express that. Once again I urge you to Amend Senate Bill No. 36 in order to fund the IDEA program at 100% or defeat Senate Bill No. 36 in its entirety. Thanks for your attention.