

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1997-1998 8672

9151 HOUSE HEALTH EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Sharp
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

In Sitka, we are fed up with continual cutbacks in our schools. We have added more and more money locally to try to make up for inadequate state funding, but still have been forced to make annual budget cuts. Locally, we have done all that we can. Each year the quality of schools erodes further through the loss of programs, fewer staff and less money for textbooks and supplies. Our kids deserve and need our fair share of Alaska's education dollars.

The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

Robert J. [Signature]

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Sincerely,

Mary Beth Hunt

Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp - Co Chair
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp Co-Chair

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Sincerely,

Carolee Dr. Hammack

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Sincerely,

Pete Winney

Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

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Sincerely,

Brian J. Beggs

Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

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Senator Bert Sharp
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Anne Carlson

P.S. I've gone to school here for 12 years.

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

February 14, 1998

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State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Harvey Brands

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

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State Capitol
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Sincerely,

Mary T. Blusly

Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Beet Sharp Co-Chair Sen. Fin. Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

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Sincerely,

Adrian C Johnson

P.S.

This Funding is For ALASKA'S Future.

Sitkan's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp Co-Chair Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Robert J. Littlefield Sr.

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator But Aloip
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Aloip,

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years. We are underfunded!!

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

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Sincerely,

Diane V. Boehm
1815 EDGECUMBE DR.
SITKA, AK 99835

Sitkan's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp Co-Chair Senate Fin. Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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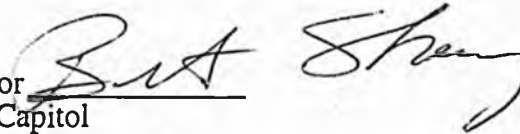
Sincerely,



Please help our community!
Our schools are our future!

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator 
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,



JOHN H. LITTLEFIELD
P.O. BOX 2212
4102 HALIBUT POINT ROAD
SITKA, ALASKA 99835

Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bob Sharp - Co-Chair Finance Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Bill Bellamy

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator BERT SHARP
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Eileen Johnson
P.O. Box 932
Sitka Ak. 99835

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Gray
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Mary Britting
POB 6226
Sitka AK 99835

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator BOB T. SHARP
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,



332 Linnich
Sitka AK

99835

907-747-3005

Karen L. F. Williams
PO Box 46
Sitka, Alaska 99835
(907) 747-3520

February 17, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp, Co-Chair
Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: Implementation of McDowell Group Study on School Funding

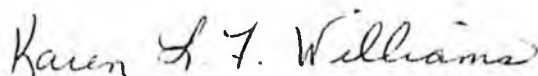
Senator Sharp:

I have been interested in the public schools for four years since my daughter entered the school system in Sitka. Each year, I have seen cuts made in our budget. These cuts have included our swim curriculum even though we live directly on the water and our children should have this program. Other cuts have included our nurses, bussing for Kindergartners, a decrease in paraprofessionals, threats of cutting music, P.E., etc.

In recent weeks, we, here in Sitka, have learned that through a study commissioned by the State of Alaska, it was discovered that Sitka has been, among other school districts, underfunded for many years. We've known this and *now you know it too.*

Funding should be made more equitable for those of us who have been underfunded. My daughter's class has had "higher than normal for Sitka" pupil/teacher ratios for most of her academic life. Another teacher cannot be hired for her grade because cuts have always been necessary. **I request you implement the recommendations in the McDowell report on school funding.** We need action now! A decision needs to be made and I request it be made to put some equity back into school funding.

Respectfully,



Karen L. F. Williams
Parent

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

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Senator Bert Sharp
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Drew Jones
P.O. Box 1565
Sitka AK 99835

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Burt Sharp
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

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Sincerely, Joel Risteen

I feel that the art dept. in Sitka high is severely under funded. It seems that there are never enough supplies, and when we have them they are low grade, while other depts. such as sports get more funding, and because there are a large number of students involved in art. I feel that this dept. should warrant more supplies, as well as better facilities, thank you,

Joel Risteen P.O. box 6195 Sitka,
AK 99835

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
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February 14, 1998

Senator _____
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Burt Sharp

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Sincerely,

Leland Faye

801 Lincoln Street
Sitka, Alaska 99835
February 17, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp, Co-Chair
Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

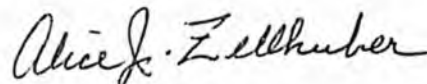
Dear Senator Sharp:

The study prepared by the McDowell Group, Inc., January 1998, provides statistical support to what Sitkans see as a dire need for increased funding for Sitka Borough School District. Comparatively, Sitka is at least \$21,000,000 low.

Sitka school programs and staff have been whittled to the bone. This year, Sitka's economy has suffered from the repercussions of the pulp mill closure, fewer cruise ships, and curtailed fishing; in August, some eighty homes were on the market. With dwindling local funds, as student numbers decrease, the quality of education in the school district is very much at risk if the legislature does not provide the appropriate relief.

Please provide that relief without further delay.

Very sincerely,



Alice J. Zellhuber
and family

P.O. Box 1673
Sitka, AK 99835
February 16, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp
State Capital
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp:

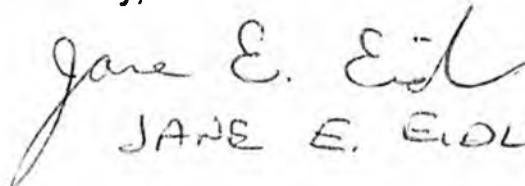
I am writing to ask you to be fair to Sitka, one of the most beautiful places on earth. We have a wonderful school district and we have worked hard on our budget to be fair to our students. However, the funding formula has never been fair to Sitka and with the mill closure, we are feeling desperate.

The legislature commissioned the McDowell group and they agree, that Sitka doesn't have the money they do have in the North. I am asking that you support your study and give more money to Sitka or change the funding formula.

We have a bare bones budget. We have cut our swim program and yet drowning remains a high statistic in Alaska. We have almost no para professionals in the classrooms and the PTRs in seventh grade were 27 students to one teacher. We feel in today's world, lower PTRs are important.

Again I ask that you remember Sitka and correct the inadequacies in the funding formula. Thank you.

Sincerely,


JANE E. EIDER

Sitka's for **FAIRNESS** School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp - Co-Chair Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

The Alaska School Operating Cost Study by the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee documents a substantial shortfall in state funding for Sitka's schools relative to the rest of the State of Alaska. These impartial findings confirm what people in Sitka have been saying for years.

Please act on the findings of this study and adjust the foundation formula so that Sitka's students receive their fair share of state education funding. This means increasing the state funding to Sitka by 13%.

In Sitka, we are fed up with continual cutbacks in our schools. We have added more and more money locally to try to make up for inadequate state funding, but still have been forced to make annual budget cuts. Locally, we have done all that we can. Each year the quality of schools erodes further through the loss of programs, fewer staff and less money for textbooks and supplies. Our kids deserve and need our fair share of Alaska's education dollars.

The Operating Cost Study identifies those districts across the state that receive less than their fair share. I urge you to follow the findings of the legislature's study and add \$21 million to state educational dollars in order to restore fairness in school funding. I am counting on you to help our children.

Sincerely,

Becky Charlton

Sitkans' for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator BERT SHARP
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Jean Fager

Just "do it"!

Sitka's for **FAIRNESS**
School Funding

February 14, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp - Co-Chair Sen. Fin Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

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Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Astover

P.S. Our school system really needs your support.

TOPOGRAPHY:

Rivers: There are small, marshy streams throughout the island, and low mountain lakes.

Mountain Ranges: The Coast Range runs through Southeast Alaska. The mountains on the island are steep-sided and average between 2,000 and 2,500 feet in elevation. Tamgass Mountain is the highest mountain on the island and rises to 3,591 feet.

Other: The Island is covered with muskeg-covered gentle hills and flats dotted with small ponds. There are glacial carved valleys that are U-shaped and contain lakes up to several miles long.

ALL IS RELATIVE:

The last frontier begins with Metlakatla at the southeastern tip of Alaska and ends beyond the Arctic Circle. It extends east to west, with the Eagle River on the Yukon Territory border to Little Diomedea an island on the Russian border in the West.

In perspective, if Alaska were silhouetted on the Continental United States it would reach from Northern Minnesota to the Florida Keys and east from New York City and West to San Francisco.

All is relative in Alaska [i.e., -60° in Barrow to +40° in Metlakatla for a low; Maktak [Whale blubber] in Barrow to ooligan grease [fish oil] in Metlakatla. In the winter you can walk to Russia on the ice pack in the North, but have to fly from Metlakatla to Ketchikan in the South; Adak on the Aleutian Chain is further West than most of New Zealand; often you fly over the Aleutian Chain on your way from San Francisco to Tokyo, etc. etc. Alaska is an unique experience

CONTACTS:

Dr. Robert J. Pratt,
Superintendent of Schools
Annette Islands School District
P. O. Box 7
Metlakatla, Alaska 99926
Phone: 1-907/886-6332
Fax: 1-907/886-5130
e-mail: leisholm@aisd.k12.ak.us
Web page: www.ptialaska.net/~alaska

Mayor Tim Gilmartin
Metlakatla Indian Community
P. O. Box 8
Metlakatla, Alaska 99926
Phone: 1-907/886-4441
Fax: 1-907/886-7997
E-mail: timeg@ptialaska.net

Welcome to the Annette Islands School District



Metlakatla, Alaska

Board of Education

Paul T. Brendible, President, 97-98 Alaska School

Board President

Charles Wilson, Vice President

Kathy Hayward, Secretary/Treasurer

Melanie Bolton, Member

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Robert J. Pratt

P. O. Box 7

Metlakatla, Alaska 99926

Superintendent's Office	886-6332
Fax No	886-5130
Business Office	886-6009
Fax No.	886-5130
Elementary Office	886-4121
Fax No.	886-4120
Middle School Office	886-6003
Fax No.	886-6019
High School Office	886-6000
Fax No.	886-5120
Annex: Special Ed. Office	886-6020
Fax No.	886-4122

JOIN US AT OUR WEB PAGE FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

SCHOOLS:

Elementary K-5 - 15/FTE Teachers 180 Students
Middle School 6-8 - 5/FTE Teachers 100 Students
High School 9-12 - 13/FTE Teachers 120 Students

Each building has an Administrator, with Counselors at the High School and elementary. The curriculum includes Choir, Band, Indian Ed./JOM, PE, Vocational, Title I, Migrant Ed., Bilingual/bicultural and Special Ed. as well as a balanced academic program incorporating across the curriculum the Alaska Framework which is the guideline to the achievement of the Alaskan Content and Performance Standards. Activities include Close Up, RSVP, Student Council, Academic Decathlon, Indian Dancers, Basketball, Cross-Country, Intramurals to name a few.

HISTORY:

In 1887 Annette Islands became the permanent home of over 800 Tsimshian Indian. A Missionary, William Duncan lead them from their Metlakahtla British Columbia home to an abandoned summer camp of the Tlingets. Before they left for Alaska, Duncan had visited Washington D.C., where he was told that he and his followers would be granted political, economic, educational and religious freedom in Alaska. In 1891 Congress declared Annette Islands an Indian Reserve for the Tsimshians and all other Alaskan natives who wished to join them. On July 4, 1893, President Cleveland granted all Annette Island residents their U.S. citizenship.

The new community was designed upon that of a model Christian community. The community built a new sawmill, community hall, octagonal guesthouse, fish cannery, and boardwalks connecting Victorian style houses. Electricity was supplied from Alaska's first hydroelectric plant. In 1889 the William Duncan Memorial Church was constructed. The renowned structure rivaled in splendor any wooden structure in the Northwest. Its majestic steeples became a landmark for half a century. The community grew and in 1909 the Metlakahtla band traveled to the World's Fair in Seattle to play as one of the three-featured bands in the nation. In 1916, a Presidential Proclamation declared that all waters up to 3,000 feet from the shores belonging to the Annette Island Reserve. Today the community has a population of 1,700 and is concentrating on tourism and natural resources related industry.

Metlakahtla is a warm and friendly community and welcomes and encourages visitors from all over the world.

LOCATION AND CLIMATE

Metlakahtla is located on the Annette Islands, one of the several islands at the southern tip of the Alexander Archipelago of southeastern Alaska. It is a 10-minute flight by seaplane south of Ketchikan; one hour and 20 minutes from Seattle and 1 hour from Juneau by jet plane.

Due to the proximity of Pacific Ocean waters, particularly to the South and West, the climate of the Annette Islands is maritime. Temperatures are relatively mild and daily variations between high and low readings are confined within rather narrow limits. Periods of sub-freezing temperatures seldom extend beyond seven days duration. A minimum reading below zero is of historic note. Conversely, extreme high temperatures occur infrequently during the summer months. However, an outdoor thermometer can reach 110° in direct sun light. [In reality probably 80° in the shade.]

Because it is located almost directly in the path of easterly moving storms crossing the Gulf of Alaska the islands experience frequent and relatively heavy precipitation with annual amounts higher than that of the immediate coastal regions of Washington and Oregon. October and November are usually the wettest month and the greatest percentage of precipitation, even in the winter months, occurs in the form of rain. Some snow, mixed with rain, may occur as early as October.

Accumulated snow depths of a foot or more are rare and, because of moderating temperatures, snow cover seldom persists beyond a week or two. Despite relatively heavy precipitation, flood damage is of no consequence because of the large drainage areas and steep topography, which provide rapid escape of surface runoff into the sea, and into the muskeg. [Muskeg is a swampy, boggy pond like area.]

Strong southeasterly winds are frequent from October through March [with violet gusts at times]/ Thick fogs are infrequent and of short duration. Thunderstorms average one or two a year and generally are the result of frontal activity. The considerable amount of cloudiness prevalent over this area results in a corresponding low percentage of possible sunshine. Unfortunately, visions of the Northern Lights are a rarity in the winter.

Climate Type: The region's climate is maritime with small temperature variations, high humidity, heavy precipitation, high clouds and occasional fog. [i.e. temperate rain forest]

Nov.-April - Average 30-40°F
Rainfall - 12" per month

May/Oct. - Average 50-60°F
Rainfall - 7" per month

Superintendent's Office
(907) 886-6332
FAX: (907) 886-5130

Business Office
(907) 886-6009
FAX: (907) 886-5130

Special Education
(907) 886-6020
FAX: (907) 886-4122



ANNETTE ISLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 7 • Metlakatla, AK 99926
Accredited by Northwest Accreditation Association

February 17, 1998

Metlakatla High School
(907) 886-6000
FAX: (907) 886-5120

C.R. Leask Sr. Middle School
(907) 886-6003
FAX: (907) 886-6019

R.J. Elementary School
(907) 886-4121
FAX: (907) 886-4120

Senator Bert Sharp
State Capitol, Room 515
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp :

Once again we come before you regarding our school district in Metlakatla. Your time and commitments are extensive. Let us be brief.

The Annette Islands School District resides on the Annette Islands Reserve, the only recognized Reserve in Alaska. Our funding is made up of approximately 50% State and the other 50% is offset by Impact Aid Dollars which is used to supplant State dollars. We are an REAA and have no taxing or bonding authority. Our facilities are old and we have seen our CIP un-funded. We have lost nearly \$400,000.00 a year since 1995 in Impact Aid Special Ed. cuts that was not made up by the State. With a frozen unit of \$61,000.00 for the last 10 years we have cut staff and eliminated programs. Our enrollment today is nearly the same as in 1993-94. The following are some of our reductions.

- Home Ed. Program 1.0 Teacher
- Vocational Welding, Auto, Small Engines 1.0 Teacher
- Business Program 1.0 Teacher
- Elementary Special Ed. .5 Teacher
- Pre-school Special Ed. 1.0 Teacher
- Special Ed. Director .5 Director
- Community Education and Director 1.0 Director
- Frozen Instructional Supply Accounts
- Nearly complete elimination of Instructional Equipment Purchases

This coupled with minimal repairs and constant deterioration of buildings is just not what fits into the Quality School Initiative stressing curriculum development and alignment to the Alaskan Frameworks. The stress on assessment of Content and Performance Standards by doing more with less is not a sound educational practice.

Specifically:

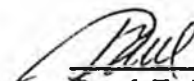
- Adequately fund student needs. Fund at a unit value that reflects inflation. The CPI of Urban Anchorage has averaged nearly 3% a year since 1993. This is a 15% growth while our school funding is frozen.
Address Capital Improvement Projects. With no tax base for levies, no city or borough contribution, we have been cutting instructional programs to even do facility "patchwork". Our facility conditions are failing rapidly to the point it is becoming a health and safety issue. What could be addressed presently will gradually worsen to the extent that minor repairs will turn into major remodeling.

- Fund all Special Ed. Students. Our district follows all State guidelines and our number of identified students is high. Capping the quota of Special Ed. students per district with a hypothetical average is not facing the issue. If over identification is the concern, then please deal with that issue.
It is unfortunate that Metlakatla has an above average number of Special Ed. students who will be vulnerable when we de-identify them or not serve them. Due process hearings are extremely expensive. Recent court cases are challenging districts for failure to identify Special Ed. students. Will the State of Alaska bear the legal expenses of complying with adherence to a set quota system should our district end up in court over failure to identify and serve eligible children?
- Review un-funded mandates. Compliance with the writing assessment program, curriculum alignment to the Alaskan Framework, Fire and Safety Code Compliance, and any other legislation asking for more with less is not an acceptable fiscal impact statement.
- Support our opposition of Annexation by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough of the Tongass National Forest that will reduce Timber Receipts to the Annette Islands School District.
- Support items in legislation such as Senate HESS 146 and House HESS 148, which do not consider Impact Aid into the School Formula. Alaska, by using Impact Aid meets a 'PL874 Disparity Test' which allows it to use dollars intended for school districts with Indian Lands and federal properties to replace state dollars earmarked for school districts. This was never the PL874 intent from its inception.

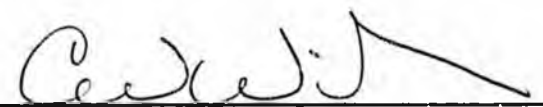
Example: Annette Islands School District basic need equals 2.6 of which we estimate that 1.7 million will be supplanted with Impact Aid, which should go directly to our students and not be used in the School Formula.

We respectfully request that you consider our concerns carefully and diligently as the bulk of our dollars go directly into instructional programs and services for the benefit of our children.

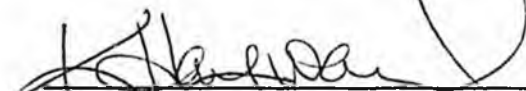
Respectfully,



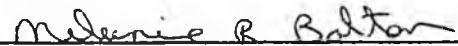
 Paul T. Brendible, President



 Charles W. Wilson, Vice President



 Kathy L. Hayward, Secretary/Treasurer



 Melanie Bolton, Member/Child Advocate

ljl
 /word:
 298lfl

pc: Shirley Holloway, Commissioner
 Governor Tony Knowles

ASSOCIATION OF ALASKA SCHOOL BOARDS
Advocates for Alaska's Youth

POSITION PAPER

1/3/98

FOUNDATION FORMULA PROPOSALS

A number of proposals to revamp the education funding formula have been introduced. Association of Alaska School Boards has considered each of the proposals and is supportive of some portions in each bill. However, the Association of Alaska School Boards continues to have concerns with key components that have yet to be adequately addressed in such legislation.

Association of Alaska School Boards recommends Senate Finance Committee consider the consensus recommendations from Alaska's other elected officials. Consensus points were reached between the following organizations in October '97: Association of Alaska School Boards, Alaska Municipal League, Alaska Conference of Mayors, and Alaska Council of School Administrators.

Consensus points attached.

Consensus Points by AML, ACoM, AASA, and AASB on Education Funding

1. Add a new **"PURPOSE" STATEMENT** defining the state's constitutional mandate for education.
2. Support conversion of the **"UNIT"** into a **"PER STUDENT ALLOCATION"** while retaining the current formula. The least understandable part of the formula is the concept of the "unit" which relates to a number of students, rather than one.

3. AREA COST DIFFERENTIAL

- Support the school Area Cost Differential Study, a broad salary study, and a study of the impact of enrollment growth, funding of mandates, new technology, and other influences on education in Alaska.
- Add a bi-annual process for updating the Area Cost Differential. Area Cost Differentials should be based on:
 - community level, i.e. individual school, rather than the district level;
 - recognition of unique needs related to size and location of schools; and
 - recognition of impacts of growth

4. LOCAL CONTRIBUTION

- Oppose increasing the current four mill minimum local contribution to schools.
- Maintain the current "local funding cap" to avoid further transfers of state education funding responsibility to local taxpayers.

5. CATEGORICAL

- Pupil transportation should continue to be reimbursed under a separate program.
- Maintain bilingual and vocational categorical funding.
- **Special education:** Adopt recommendations of Special Education Task Force. Purpose is to reduce regulation paperwork and "over-identification" by combining specific categories for special education.

Gifted & talented	4.5%
Resource/Self-contained	14.0%
Intensive needs	\$22,500

- Provide method by which districts can request additional funding based on supporting justification and documentation.

6. Provide for a **HOLD HARMLESS** to avoid injury to students.

7. FUNDING

- Support the 70/30 school capital construction match program.
- For FY99, increase in state education funding by at least 3% per student, plus continue to adjust education funding for any changes in enrollment.
- The formula should include a process to annually adjust the per student allocation so that it actually reflects increases or decreases in the cost of education, including funding for new mandates.
- Instead of annual appropriations for single site school districts, add the adjustment to the formula.

3/6/98

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

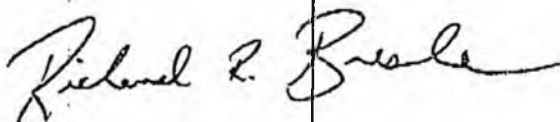
I just want to go on record and state that I oppose Senate Bill-36. I was unable to testify during the February 28th teleconference due to personal business. Therefore, I am giving you my statement through this letter.

Rural Alaska Schools have been in an economic depression for over ten years. This depression is not only state based but seen nationally as well. I feel that SB-36 is a discrimination between urban and rural schools, with the urban schools prospering from it while the rural schools slip further and further into this depression.

Lake and Peninsula School District is made up of fifteen of these rural schools. SB-36 would dramatically affect each and every one of these sites. I believe in all circumstances these effects would be devastating to our district. If passed, SB-36 could very well close some of our smaller sites which would burden our other sites with more students.

Therefore, I urge you not to allow this bill to pass for the sake of all Alaska rural children. I thank you for your time and I hope you will do what is best for our state's education future.

Sincerely,



Richard R. Breske
LPEA President

SB 36

the hole in the education donut



fails to meet the State's
constitutional mandate to fund education

pits school district
against school district
devastates education
in rural areas

proposes a funding formula
based on flawed statistics

runs rough shod over
equity and fairness

fails to address the real need
for education - more funding



The Effects of Senate Bill 36 on Skagway

Just one example of how small towns get hurt

FY 98 Skagway School Budget	\$1,564,000.
FY 99 Budget under S.B. 36	
The State would fund	460,000.
The City would fund	840,000.
Total school budget allowed would be	1,300,000.
Shortfall from FY 98 to FY99 is	\$ 266,000.

Under S.B. 36 the community of Skagway would be prohibited by law from making up this shortfall. Here is how the funding shortfall would affect our school.

Budget cuts:

Eliminate superintendent (who also serves as principal)	Save \$70,000
Eliminate all extracurricular funds	Save \$70,000
Eliminate 3 teachers (1/4 of staff - average salary \$44,100/year)	Save \$126,000

Staff remaining:

Superintendent/Principal	0	Music K-12	0
Kindergarten	1	English/Counselor	0
First/Second Grade	1	Math	1
Third/Fourth Grade	1	Science	1
Fifth/Sixth Grade	1	Social Studies	1
Seventh/Eighth Grade	1	Special Education	1
Technology K-12	0		

As devastating as these cuts will be, Skagway does not support fixing this bill at the expense of other rural communities who may suffer even more dire consequences. Under S.B. 36, the real losers are the children, the only winners are the politicians.

Vote NO on S.B. 36

Mrs. Evelyn Kirstine

6590 Glacier way #139
Juneau, AK. 99801
(907)-780-4313

March 4, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp,
Alaska State Legislature,
State Capitol (MS3100)
Juneau, AK. 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

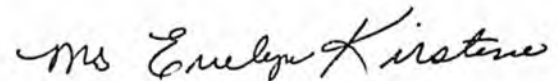
I am writing in regards to the funding of Alyeska Central School, the state correspondence program. ACS, presently counts all their students as elementary regardless of whether they are primary or secondary. As more than half of the students currently enrolled are secondary, this means a substantial reduction in funding for the school.

At present, ACS is not allowed the benefit of a second count as all other schools are, and to add insult to injury, ACS must turn in their final count by end of October. Being that ACS is open for enrollment year round, and cuppled with the fact that many of their students have not had these needs met in a standard class room, they enroll in ACS after the "Official Count" has been turned in.

Presently ACS is in a struggle to keep their students currant in technological education's. The school does offer some renovated computers from state surplus to the students, but they are still in serious need of additional funds to supply technical support and courses to its students.

ACS presently is being funded at only 65% of the foundation formula, with this in mind and mixed with the above injustices, this makes for a very dreary situation. I hope you can help the students and the parents who value this educational experience find fair and equal treatment from the state.

My sincerest thanks,



Mrs. Evelyn Kristine

Hinchinbrook Island
Kenny Cove, P.O.Box BSW
Cordova, AK 99574
February 28, 1998



Dear Senator Sharp,

We just heard that (S.B.36) which seems to be a composite of all the education bills - has been referred to the Finance Committee for refinement. I think you will not have enough time this year to adequately consider the ramifications to those affected or those affected to respond with studied testimony for or against the proposed legislation.

Therefore - in order that hastily combined proposals have acceptable time to be considered, I propose that they be put on hold; that past formulas apply for now and that the fiscal educational shortfall be made up by a head tax. This was once a traditional way to fund public education and in Alaska makes sense again because of the Alaska Permanent Dividend windfall.

A head tax would be a most equitable tax; not pit one region against another or urban vs. rural and could be simply implemented by a deduction from each citizen's Alaska permanent dividend. To supplement the regular education budget, I propose a tax maximum of $\frac{2}{5}$ ths the dividend because of the dividends' importance to the peoples needs and other stimulation to the state's economy. Because of the importance of good education to everyone, I don't think there would be strenuous objection to it.

I do strenuously object to the inclusion of a borough forced on us "bush people" to attempt to get tax moneys for education. It wouldn't be fair. It wouldn't work because there are too few of us, too little real or personal property and too little income.

As far as I know there have been no appraisals of potential borough residents and there minimal taxable property. And what about the villages? Their incomes are small. I retired when the "White Alice" site closed down; on a Forest Service lease with a small house in need of constant repair.

I have a gut feeling that an unorganized borough has an abnormal attraction for would be bureaucrats to fill with schemes and taxes that would provide little services but salaries for more bureaucrats. I also suspect that this bill combo might be a deception to bring boroughs in the back door. If so, I am disappointed with my Republican majority on the committee.

Just be fair. All need to be educated; Urban and rural. It is state oil money that made it all possible. Stop the comparison because there are trade-offs. A head tax is equitable and won't introduce the potential problems the complexity of the combined proposals seem to foster.

*Sent to all Senate Finance
Committee members.*

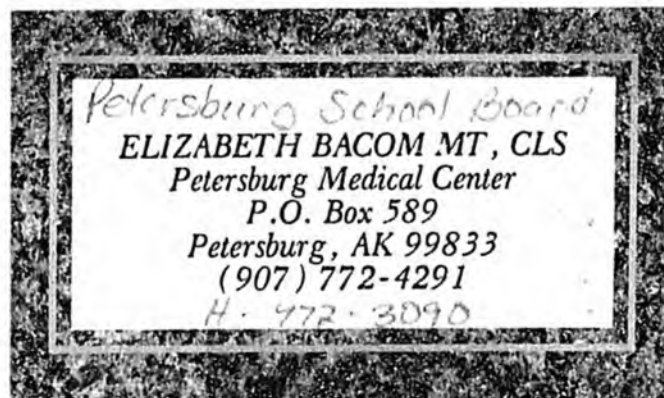
Rme.

Sincerely,
Bob EVANSON
Bob Evanson

SB36

Unfunded/Underfunded Mandates

- Mid-Year Decreases in Correspondence Funding
- Bilingual Regulation Changes
- Professional Practices Conference
- Scoring Writing Assessments
- Cost of State Regulatory Agencies
- Technology Plans
- IASA Applications
- H.S. Graduation Assessments
- Teacher Evaluations
- Cost of Curriculum Alignment/Development (i.e. Setting Student Standards and Assessments)



**Advisory School Board
Elfin Cove School
P.O. Box 89
Elfin Cove, Alaska 99825
907 239-2226**

**Senator Bert Sharp
Room 516 State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811**

Dear Senator Sharp:

After twenty years of grass roots labor to establish and support a school with it's concomitant civilizing influence on our rural community of Elfin Cove, we are appalled at Senate Bill 36 which would close our schools with a population of under ten students. While it is true that our Elfin Cove School holds only nine students currently, it is also true that in the fall and the spring we serve up to nineteen migrant fisher children. The effect of closing this school because of one low counting period would be very detrimental to our local children, our local families, migrant fishing families, as well as on this whole community. In addition to these local effects, we know that the proposed change would be bad public policy. It would cause further urbanization of Alaska.

In Elfin Cove, we have seen the detrimental results for children when this community did not have a school. Children grew up unschooled with the problems of the uneducated following them wherever they go. With a school, we serve well, and with care, those children who pass through our community. The whole village rises to raise the children. We have offered to students a more structured, self-motivated, hard working, goal oriented, successful view of themselves and of the world than was provided by some families struggling with various forms of dysfunction. We have sent students from here to Mt. Edgecumbe High School and on to Dartmouth College. Our district, Chatham, and this school are involved in a process of restructuring in efforts to reach the goals of Alaska 2000 with our students. We are finding out what we are doing right and what we need to do better. We have discovered that the Elfin Cove School is doing almost everything right. The students, staff, parents, and community are in concert concerning standards and goals. We have high academic standards and high standards for behavior. Our children are kind to one another. Our multi-graded classroom is a model of effort and achievement. We can

Elfin Cove-ASB page 2

provide individualized education. All sixth graders do not have to be on the same page. Each can challenge herself/himself and build self-esteem through hard work and a good attitude. Our one teacher is responsible for seven subjects in eight grades. We often have thirty-five or more different preparations going on. We are not wasting Alaska's money. We are a successful school. We are a community of learners.

The only thing we really need to do better is to increase enrollment. Any parent who puts their child in our school is a happy parent. We provide a safe learning environment with high standards. However, increasing the number of families and children in our school is out of our direct control. Due to the increasing level of chartered sports fishing activity, and activity sponsored by Alaska tourism promotion, land values have been inflated because of purchases by people from other states. All entry level rentals have been demolished for fishing lodge activity. There is no place for a new family to stay in our community at an entry level. Recently, a family with five children was unable to move to our community due to lack of housing. This family is making continued efforts to secure a place to live. These plans would certainly change should there be no school. Closing our school on one low enrollment period would make it extremely difficult for families to continue to find this an attractive place to settle.

Furthermore, with no school, the four families with children enrolled in our school would be forced to move. All of us have done correspondence study with our children and know what it takes. Since that time our lives have changed and we need to be economically active throughout the winter in order to survive here. We parents can no longer both teach our children and work. We would all be forced to vacate our homes, our self-supporting and pioneering economic activities, and move to the city in order to secure an education for our children inferior to the one now provided here. This move would disrupt our happy children, our families, and our community. With no school and no families to galvanize activities, very few would remain here- two retired couples and a few bachelors. There would be neither energy nor interest to carry on educational, social, political, church, innovative local economic development, and volunteer activities which bind people together in community.

Elfin Cove-ASB page 3

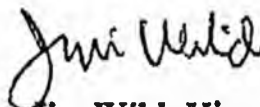
Closing this and other rural schools will cost the State of Alaska federal funds. Fishing and subsistence activities overlap the school year. Here in Elfin Cove we see fishing families able to stay together and on the fish by placing their children in our educational care both Spring and Fall. Identification, recruitment, and serving these children brings Federal Migrant Education Program money into the education budget of Alaska.

Closing small schools with under ten students enrolled is unrealistic for rural Alaska. The minimum of eight students would be a number more workable for small communities. Even more important is a one year grace period after the ADM falls below the minimum in order to establish a low enrollment trend would be a better public policy than to defund a school on the basis of a one low year pupil count. There is no better way of supporting rural development by people who actually live there than to maintain schools. With professional teachers in charge of education, we parents are free to work on new industries for the increased self-sufficiency of our communities. As commercial fishers come under increasing regulation, the bush economy is changing and we in Elfin Cove are changing with it. Here, one family has spent five years developing an oyster farm. Another family has the only Alaskan owned sports fishing lodge in our community. The third family operates our first bed and breakfast and year round cafe. Forcing these families to abandon the bush and self-sufficient rural development activities to secure an education for their children is a movement in the wrong direction. This would leave continued development to non-residents who buy nothing in Alaska, hire no one from Alaska, and take profits South in September. It would not really save money, but only shift costs to urban areas as the bush is abandoned by families from the nine villages affected by SB 36.

Please do not support SB 36 as written. Please support families who choose to live, work, and raise children in rural Alaska.

Thank you,

Shirley Perkins, Chair
by:



Jim Wild, Vice-Chair

PO Box 113

Klawock, AK
99925

**City of Klawock
Alaska**

"Site of the first cannery in Alaska"

Phone: (907)755-2261

Fax: (907)755-2403

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

~~PAGES FOLLOW~~
THIS PAGE ONLY

Date: Feb 27, 1998

**TO: Senator Bert Sharp
Senate Finance Committee
465-2070**

**From: Doc Waterman
Administrator
Phone: 907-755-2261
Fax: 907-755-2403**

MESSAGE: The City of Klawock opposes CS SB36, or any school funding formula which reduces the funding for Klawock School District. To enact a funding formula which takes money away from small rural districts with limited means of maintaining programs while giving additional funding to the largest districts, which have more resources to draw from, is to deny rural children what opportunity they presently have to get an adequate education. I cannot see any kind of equity in this approach. Please oppose this ill-considered attempt to rob our children of their future.

Sincerely,

Doc Waterman



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the SFIN
 committee name
 committee on SB 36, dated 2/27/98
 bill/ subject

I feel Iok and Delta/Greely School districts would function successfully separately.

I additionally feel this bill's two economic measures are detrimental to positive action. I am willing to contribute my fair share but would be agreeable to a local decision^{as to} how. We are already facing economic change and a decrease in funds would be damaging.

Signed:

Jean Haley Jean Haley

Testifier

Delta/Greely School Dist

Representing (Optional)

PO Box 393 Delta AK 99737

Address

Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the SFIN
 committee on SB 36, dated 2/27/98
 bill/ subject committee name

*I oppose the measures of this bill.
 I feel that contributions should be decided
 locally.
 Our Districts would probably do better separately
 rather than combined with Tok.*

Signed:

Julia L. Arnold
 Testifier
DSD
 Representing (Optional)
P.O. Box 43
 Address

 Phone No.



STATE of ALASKA

Delta Junction Legislative Information Office

P.O. Box 1189
Room 210, Jarvis Office Center
Delta Junction, AK 99737
(907) 895-4236

Fax: (907) 895-5017

March 3, 1998

TO: Senate Finance

Please accept the enclosed originals of written testimony for the Senate Finance Committee hearing that was scheduled on 3/3/98.

Copies of this testimony were transmitted by fax on 3/3/98.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tammy R. Hall".

Tammy R. Hall
Information Assistant

Enclosures: # 3



RECEIVED

Sent 2/28 11:57

MAR 05 1998

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

PLEASE ENTER INTO THE RECORD MY TESTIMONY TO THE SFIN
COMMITTEE NAME

COMMITTEE ON SB 36 DATED 2/28 98
BILL/SUBJECT

I believe that the current funding formula needs to be evaluated but I do NOT support this bill.

It would be devastating to the students and parents in the rural districts to be lumped with others hundreds of miles away. We need the local ASB, the district school board and the central office that exist now in our area.

Mrs. Olson's testimony that natives would receive even less representation if we were part of an even larger district is absolutely correct.

We need to consider taxing salaries of those who work on the North Slope and live out of state. We need to also consider using Permanent Fund Dividends for education since our children are our Permanent Resource.

SIGNED

TESTIFIER

Janette A. Petyrski

Parent of 2 children enrolled in Alaska Gateway SD and one child enrolled in Galena School District (IDEA program)

ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

PO Box 486, Tok AK 99780
(907) 883-4343



RECEIVED
MAR 05 1998

Fax # 465-2187

sent 11:57
2/28/98

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

PLEASE ENTER INTO THE RECORD MY TESTIMONY TO THE SEIN
COMMITTEE NAME
COMMITTEE ON SB 36 DATED 2/28/98
BILL/SUBJECT

My name is Helen Olson, a concerned parent of the Tok community. I have resided here for 22 years in this area. My 3 children, one 2nd yr college) ^{2nd in school.} have all started off on their educational pursuit in Tok School. The genuine concern + gut feeling for this Bill (S for NO 3 & (FIN)) is No!! Do not join our school District into the Delta area ^{For reasons such as}. We are two totally ~~diff~~ diverse communities we have many more native peoples + native issues + very little military peoples. R E A's were formed for local control + input on the local level. If you remove our State way school District from our community we will lose the "Key" effectiveness to our children's education. I want my values + standards of right + wrong, eg, the Christian Puritan work ethic to be directly impacted by my efforts to reach/ contact + / connect with the Powers that govern our local school. I truly believe there is also a hidden Agenda in this bill that is to Governmentize our little ~~How~~ incorporate community and I agree ^{totally with Glen Marundis Testimony} I Believe this ->

SIGNED _____
TESTIFIER Helen Olson

REPRESENTING (OPTIONAL) _____
ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER Box 106 Tok, AK 99780

883-5659

March 2, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Senator Sharp,

I am writing this letter as a concerned parent in the state of Alaska. I am in opposition of SB36-School Funding, which is basically a shuffling of money between districts in the state. I cannot believe a bill that would have such drastic impacts on rural school districts would even be considered. SB36 does infact have some very good and much needed changes, however not at the expense of rural districts. Funding at the current level, with no increase along with inflation has been causing school districts to cut vital programs for our children and our future. How can children be expected to learn what they need to survive as adults when classroom size has increased drastically due to combined classrooms, a result of cutting teacher positions from a lack of funding or less bang for the buck(inflation) I was born and raised in what is now Aleutians East Borough School District, which is a 6 site school district. We have 4 smaller sites and 2 larger sites. If this bill infact does pass we would have to start closing the doors at some of our schools. In the area we live this would be devastating as no school in a community would mean no community. I would urge you to seriously consider the impact of the current SB36.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Tara P. Fuller

Tara P. Fuller
Parent and School Board Member in Aleutians East Borough
School District

*Box 115
Cold Bay, AK 99571*

CORRECTION

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



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Central Microfilm Services
Department of Education
State of Alaska



RECEIVED

MAR 05 1998

Fax # 465-2187

sent 11:57
2/28/98

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

PLEASE ENTER INTO THE RECORD MY TESTIMONY TO THE SFIN
 COMMITTEE ON SB 36 COMMITTEE NAME
 BILL/SUBJECT DATED 2/28 98

My name is Helen Olson, a concerned parent of the Tok community. I have resided here for 22 years in this area. My 3 children, one 2nd yr college) ^{2nd yr school.} have all started off on their educational pursuit in Tok School. The genuine concern + gut feeling for this Bill CS for NO 36 (FIN) is No!! Do not join our school District into the Delta area ^{For reason south of.} We are two totally ~~diff~~ diverse communities we have many more native people + native issues + very little military people. P E A's were formed for local control + inputs on the local level. If you remove our State way school District from our community we will lose the "Key" effectiveness to our children's education. I want my values + standards of right + wrong, eg. the Christian Puritan work ethic to be directly impacted by my opportunity to reach/contact/consult with the Powers that govern our local school. I truly believe there is also a hidden Agenda in this bill that is to Governmentize our little town incorporate community And I agree totally with Glen Marundis Testimony I Believe this ->

SIGNED _____
 TESTIFIER

Helen Olson

REPRESENTING (OPTIONAL)

Box 106 TOK, AK 99780 -
 ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

883-5059.

Bill will only creat a huge mess, more
problems + more difficulties in the

"Monster" size of a ^{over-seeing} ^{cost when} ^{cost of Transportation piles up.} ^{diverse area such as ours.}
There is a distance of 120 miles and that will not cut administrative
There would be no way money could be saved +
put directly into education when these 2 school
districts combined.

Please, as a concerned parent. Do Not
push this Bill upon our community.

If you feel the state education is in such a
crisis Please consider the Permanent Fund as
a purse to put to good use.

Please take a Hard look. This is really
unfair + I urge you to make some
revisions in this bill.

Thankyou

March 2, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Senator Sharp,

I am writing this letter as a concerned parent in the state of Alaska. I am in opposition of SB36-School Funding, which is basically a shuffling of money between districts in the state. I cannot believe a bill that would have such drastic impacts on rural school districts would even be considered. SB36 does infact have some very good and much needed changes, however not at the expense of rural districts. Funding at the current level, with no increase along with inflation has been causing school districts to cut vital programs for our children and our future. How can children be expected to learn what they need to survive as adults when classroom size has increased drastically due to combined classrooms, a result of cutting teacher positions from a lack of funding or less bang for the buck(inflation) I was born and raised in what is now Aleutians East Borough School District, which is a 6 site school district. We have 4 smaller sites and 2 larger sites. If this bill infact does pass we would have to start closing the doors at some of our schools. In the area we live this would be devastating as no school in a community would mean no community. I would urge you to seriously consider the impact of the current SB36.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Tara P. Fuller

Tara P. Fuller
Parent and School Board Member in Aleutians East Borough
School District

*Box 115
Cold Bay, AK 99571*

March 6, 1998

Senate Finance Committee
Capitol Bldg., Room 250
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: SB36

Via Fax: (907) 465-2187

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Have you asked the children? Have you asked the children of the North Slope or Pelican what they think of SB 36? Maybe you should take a few moments and ask, after all this bill directly affects these children. Let me take the time to share these thoughts with you.

For 5 years I have been an educator at the Unalaska City School, on a daily basis these children are faced with challenges that children from Anchorage and Fairbanks have never encountered or probably ever will encounter. How many times have you heard children in Juneau say, "I want off this rock, I will do anything to get off of this rock!" I am quite sure you have never heard this phrase, but it is a phrase that I heard every day. How did I reassure these children that the Alaska Bush is not a bad place to grow up? Simple, I showed these children that our school offered many of the same programs that children "in town" were offered. These programs include athletic and academic extra-curricular programs, a secondary sports program that is able to travel to other communities and a swimming program and pool. I realize that Unalaska is blessed with these and that this is not the norm. As a matter of fact, this is very extraordinary. Still, many times these options were not enough to mask or comfort what our children are feeling, isolated and alone. These programs, however, have made the difference. By passing SB 36 you are taking away these shreds of hope. Why? Your bill simply eliminates the necessary funds needed for these programs to exist.

CITY OF UNALASKA

P.O. BOX 610
UNALASKA, ALASKA 99685
(907) 581-1251
FAX (907) 581-1417



March 6, 1998

Senate Finance Committee
Capital Building, Room 520
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Sent Via Fax 907 465-2187

Dear Senators

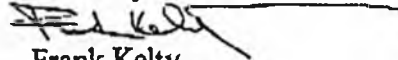
I'm writing to you today on behalf of the City Council and Community of Unalaska, we strongly oppose SB 36 in its current format. This bill will not only have a negative impact on our community but many other rural communities through out Alaska. In Unalaska with SB 36 in its present format we would lose close to \$500,000 in state funding, \$200,000 in proposed state aid, \$200,000 in single site funding and additional costs by cuts the Aleutian Region would face that we share administrated costs with, we would have to make up the cuts from our budget.

The City of Unalaska has been for years supporting our school district at the maximum allowable local contribution, this year at 1.7 million dollars, plus food service, and preschool contributions. We also have a capital projects budget that we fund that could be well over million dollars this year, four portable classrooms need to be purchased along with funding for technology upgrades. Our community places a very high priority on education and we fund it at a very high level, this years school funding may reach 17% of our general fund revenues. Why should this community that pays its own way, have to face cuts because its assessed value to student count is high. This community has a three percent sales tax , a mill rate of 11.78% a two percent local landing tax on all fish delivered to our local processing plants. We also generate a tremendous amount of revenue to the State of Alaska, during the past ten years this community through the Fisheries Business Tax, The Offshore Landing Tax, and Marine Fuel Tax, revenues in they amount of 86 million dollars have been paid to the State of Alaska. This legislation in its present form would penalize a hard working community that contributes locally at a high level, and provides revenues to the state. In conclusion I would urge the committee to take another look at this legislation that will be disastrous to so many rural school districts in our state. I believe it is time to increase state funding for education and this bill doesn't do that, it takes dollars away from some of the most economically depressed areas of the state, does that make sense? It doesn't to me . I just received my quarterly report on the permanent fund in the mail yesterday, fund value 23.04 billion dollars and last year the legislature rolled over almost 2 billion dollars back in to the fund but yet our state can't afford to increase funding for education or even to cover inflation.

Page two
Letter to Senate Finance
SB 36

I believe it time to start thinking about the future of the children in all areas of state and the education that they deserve to receive, they are Alaska's greatest resource. I would you urge to rework this bill, add more funding for education, use some of the earnings of the Permanent Fund. I can't think of a better use of that revenue than to provide a first class education to the children in all areas of this state.

Sincerely



Frank Kelty
Mayor

Rick Kniazowski
PO Box 228
Unalaska, AK 99685
(907) 581-2823

27 February 1998

Senate Finance Committee
Capitol Building, Room 520
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

VIA FAX (907) 465-2187

Dear Senators,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify last night. SB 36 will have a huge impact on the state's children and it is important that you are taking the time to gain public testimony. I would like to reiterate in writing what I testified to last night and raise a few more points. I have been a school board member for six years in Unalaska and am the parent of five children.

I strongly oppose SB36 in its current format for many reasons, most important of which is the lack of any new funding being added to formula. Shifting existing funding from mainly rural districts to mainly urban districts is only a stop gap measure for the larger districts and an act of devastating proportions to many of the small rural districts. As the young lady from Bettles so clearly stated last night: what about the children?

Basing a school funding formula on a study as flawed and as hastily put together as the McDowell study is not a responsible policy making decision. If the final bill remains based on that study it will not be able to stand up to close scrutiny and school funding will remain with an uncertain future as some of the impacted parties take steps to investigate the legalities. The study itself states clearly in many places that it does not take into account many aspects of school costs such as teacher's salaries and the cost of housing. Schools operating in rural Alaska work hard to keep teacher turnover to a minimum and one part of the solution is a higher starting salary.

I agree that the current school funding formula is flawed and difficult to understand. Your bill does not address the inequities nor does it simplify existing regulations. All it does is shuffle around the numbers until majority members districts get more money at the expense of minority members. Save partisan politics for something other than our children's future.

Your bill forces the creation of a new tax, something I thought Republicans opposed. Not just a new tax, but a tax only on the poorest, most economically depressed regions of the state. Squeezing blood from a turnip was an apt description used last night. How many rural villages will lose their schools from this bill? How many children's lives will be completely disrupted from your actions?

Capping special and bilingual education at a flat percentage does not allow small schools any flexibility to deal with transient special needs children. In our district, the level of kids needing these services varies drastically from year to year and we will not be able to meet federal mandates some years without taking further monies from the general fund. You have said that the reason the caps are in this bill is that some districts abuse the current regulations. If this is the case, then punish the individual districts, not the whole state.

Page 2

The cap you have placed on administration is unrealistic and lower than anywhere else in the country. If it can't be done in most small states, how can it be done with school districts as vast as ours? Our district of Unalaska shares its administration with Aleutian Region at a savings to both districts and the state. Yet both districts exceed the standard you have set. I have seen how long and hard our people work and yet this cap will force a reduction in staffing. And still you continue to allow unfunded mandates with their additional paperwork to trickle down to all schools. I would argue that the percentage of money currently going to administration in each district is directly related to the size of the district and a low level of funding in years past.

The idea of a state agency determining cost of living adjustments is a sound economic decision whose time has come. Take such an important part of school funding out of the hands of the political process and leave it with nonpartisan professionals. Unalaska is one of the most expensive communities in the state to live in, yet we rank somewhere in the middle in your current analysis.

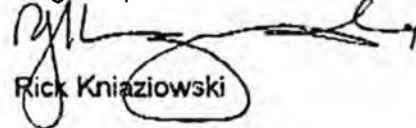
I understand that oil prices are dropping and I understand times are tight. Last year, you rolled over almost \$2 billion into the corpus of the permanent fund. If times are so tight that you must resort to a bill that cannot get any new funding, then why does this practice continue? How many children's lives will be ruined before you feel it is time to use some of those PF earnings to increase the basic foundation formula?

Unalaska is considered a wealthy community by many because our ratio of assessed value to student count is high. We are a community of hard workers who work long hours to support both the inshore and offshore fishing fleets. 4,200 people call Unalaska home while 60,000 fishermen pass through town each year. We are a community that has grown dramatically over the past few years and we are struggling to bring our infrastructure up to meet the high demands this growth has placed on us. Water systems, power supply, sewage treatment, road improvements, dock upgrades, are among just some of the projects facing us that need funding. Millions of dollars pass through here and on to Juneau with only a small portion returning. Yet your bill will cause Unalaska to pay an additional \$397,000 per year to fund education. This doesn't sound like a reward for strong work ethics, but a punishment.

Our state is approaching a time of crisis. Urban versus rural. Subsistence versus cash. Rich versus poor. Your actions with this bill will split this state in two. We are seeing a steady rise in wealth for the rich and a steady decline for the poor. It is time we worked together to heal these rifts and to bring our state back together as a healthy whole. I pray that you, as the majority leadership, will see in your hearts that the time for healing is now. We must work together to make this state a better place for our children. This calls for hard decisions and strong leadership. I know you have it in you to reverse the course you are choosing.

Thanks for listening and good luck.

Regards,



Rick Kniazowski

P.O. Box 125
Sand Point, AK 99661
February 27, 1998

Senate Finance Committee
State Capital
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Sirs/Madams,

I would like to comment on CSSB36 and the current revision for school funding.

Senator Phillips may be correct about inequities in the current foundation program, with some districts not paying their fair share, but the proposals appear go completely overboard in addressing the problems.

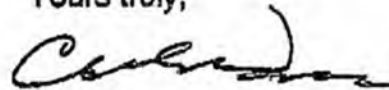
First, rural areas generally do not have the incomes available to urban communities for supporting local schools. Raising taxes to make up the proposed cuts is not an option, and drastic reductions would be required.

Secondly, the proposals do not account for the simple fact that smaller school districts must absorb a higher percentage of fixed costs, including administration, utilities, and maintenance expenditures. Economies of scale are a definite advantage to larger districts.

I agree with Deputy Commissioner Richard Cross's assessment that the provisions would discriminate against rural districts. Children in urban areas enjoy many educational opportunities not available to rural students, and the proposals would make the system more inequitable by focusing on misleading statistical information.

Southwest Alaska is already suffering from a steady decline in fishery prices and quotas, which has lead to many families moving out of the area, and the effect of large school funding cuts would be disastrous. Please consider the practical realities for all Alaskans, and thank you for allowing public testimony.

Yours truly,



Carl Warner

March 6, 1998

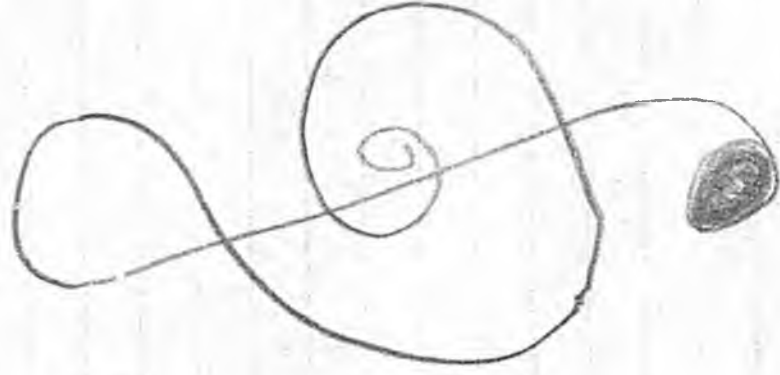
Senator Robin Taylor
AND ALL OTHER SENATORS

SB 36 sounds like
Robin Hood in
Reverse. TAKE FROM
THE POOR AND GIVE
TO THE RICH.
Like TO HAVE ALL SENATORS

Dear Senator Sharp
Please listen to Mr. Dowell.
We like music and P.E.

from, Elizabeth NOLA Howard

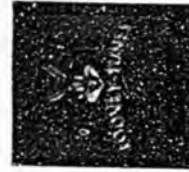
I LOVE



Music

I love

P.E.





Dear Senator Sharp
please listen to MC. DOWE
11. We like music and
pe. in sitka library
Valentine.
from JACK JOEPH



CORRECTION

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT(S)
HAVE BEEN REFILMED TO
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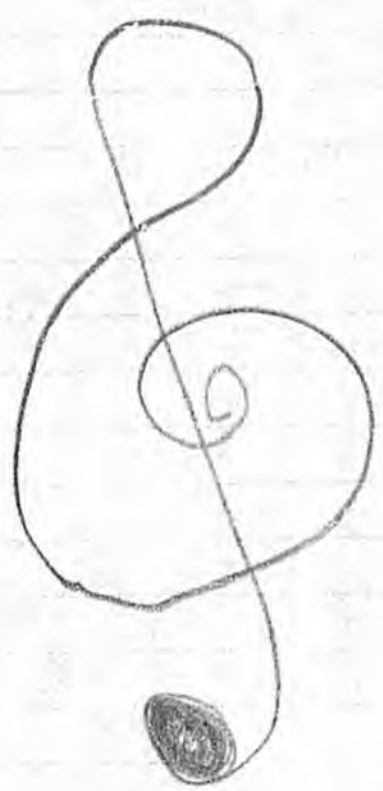
Rev. 6/98

Central Microfilm Services
Department of Education
State of Alaska



Dear Senator Sharp
 please listen to MC^P Dowell.
 we like music and P.E.

~~from~~ from, Elizabeth & NOLA Howard



I LOVE

Music

I LOVE

P.E.



D

I want
music and

PE!!!!

OK



Dear Senator Sharp
please listen to MC. DOWE
1. We like music and
pe. in sitka library
Valentine.

from, JACK JOEPH



- Dear, Senator /

JACK C.

Dear senator
sharp please

listen to
mc Dowell, we
like music

and P.E. in silka
ibaf y valan Tinen.

done

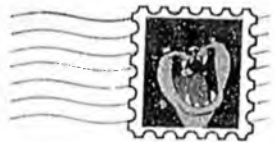
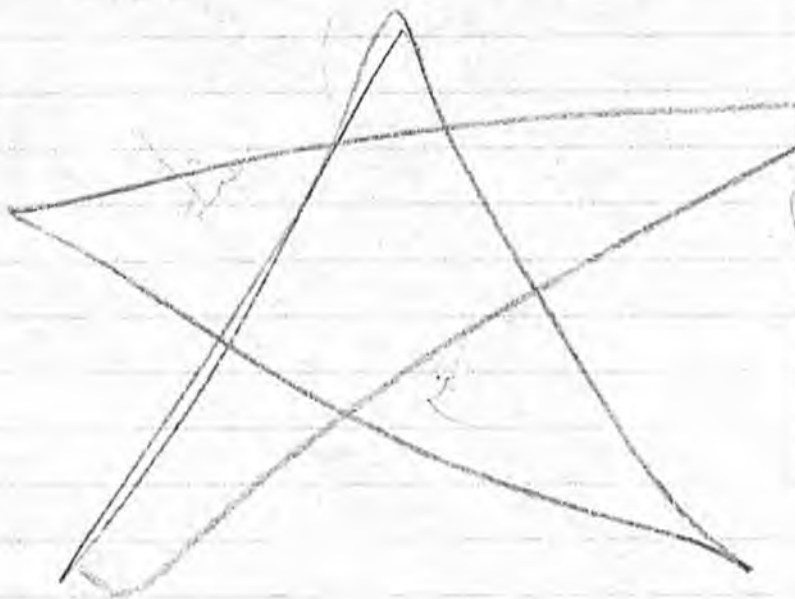
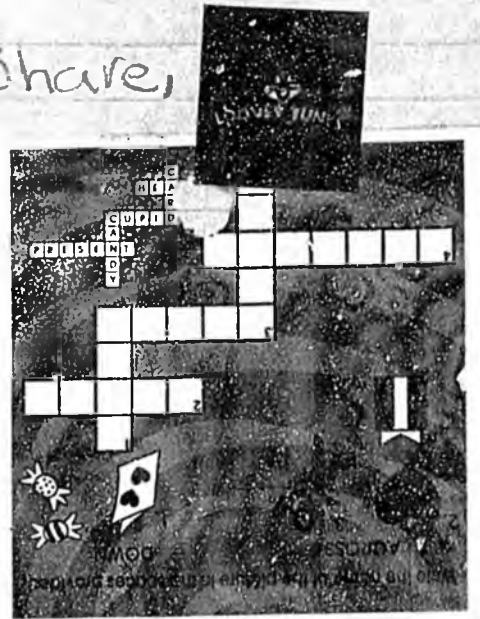
Dear Senator Share,
please listen to McDowell. we like pep
music, math, library, valentine party in
Sitra. Shapp valentine to you.



~~SE~~ Shawn



Dear Senator Share,
please listen to
m c Dowell. We like
music, PE & math
& valentine party.
Ps happy valentine
day to you



TO _____



Dear senator sharp
please Listen to Mc Dowell

We Like Pie and music
Library Valentine



Head to go to room

Bath room

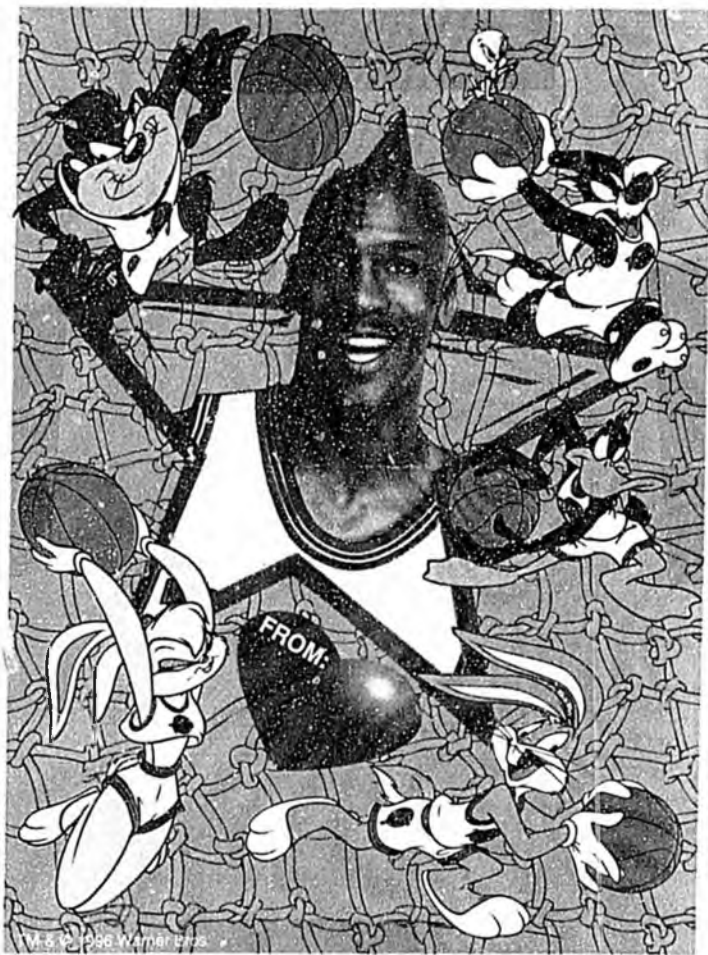
11



Dear Senator Sharp

pleasa help are shoole

pleasa listet to McDoweli.



Dear senator pearce,

please listin to McDowell.

we like music and P.E. in Sitka
And library too.



TM & © 1997 DC Comics



please
 we like music
 and P.F. in sitka

Dear Senator
Sharp Please
listen to MC
Dowell. We like

P.E. and Music
in Sitka

library
Happy
Valentin.

From, Jenae

Dear senator sharp.
please listen to McDowell
we like music and p.e.
in sitka library valentine.



Sarah Chen

Dear Senator Sharp

Please listen to M & Powell,
we like M & S & P. in S. H. R.

library Valentine

From: Sarah





From, Ellen

Dear ~~Senator~~ Sharp
please listen to McDowell.
We like our music.
please play happy
Valentine

Dear Sentor Sharp,
Please listen to McDowell.
we like music and P.E. in sitka in P.E. we like
jump rope and in music we like to sing.

TO: Sentor Sarp

From, Nichel Kernin



Dear Senator ^{stamps}

Please listen to
MC Powell. WE Like
PE and Masie we
do NOT want to
have Les of it.

From Zoe Skordahl.

