

Working Together to Reduce the Cost of Higher Education and Job Training For Students Who Return to/Stay In Alaska

Rep. Les Gara

Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2013 4:34 PM

To: 2013 House Legislators; 2013 Senate Legislators

Dear Colleagues:

Hope you're having a great summer! Rep. Tarr and I would like to work with other interested offices to find a solution to the high costs Alaskans face for student loans and job training. With the changes in the job market nationally and here in Alaska, having a college degree or specialized job training is becoming even more essential to Alaskans looking to get a good, reliable job that pays a comfortable salary. The problem is the cost. We would like your help identifying state level opportunities to make post-secondary education more affordable for Alaskans, especially those who put their skills to work here in Alaska.

Reducing the cost of student loans and job training is about jobs. It's about building our economy with a workforce of trained Alaskans to attract new investment and help more Alaskans get the good jobs already available here.

Student loan debt, behind mortgages, is the highest debt Americans carry. Some of you talked to us during session about support for our student loan principal reduction bill, HB17, and we'd like your help in crafting the best Alaska solution possible. We would appreciate your collaboration and input as we continue working on ways to lower the cost of post-secondary education and job training leading up to next session.

As you may know, Congress is still debating a solution to the recent doubling of federal student loan rates, but that doesn't affect Alaska's state student loan rates, which contribute to the high costs Alaskans who want to better themselves with job training and higher education face.

Our Best,

Representative Les Gara

Representative Geran Tarr