



April 5, 2023

**LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY**

Senate Bill 99

Senate Education Committee

Senator Löki Tobin, Chair

Senator Gary Stevens, Vice Chair

Senator Jesse Bjorkman, Member

Senator Jesse Kiehl, Member

Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson, Member

Chair Tobin, Vice Chair Stevens, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

Good afternoon. I am Carmela Warfield, and I am testifying today on behalf of Alaska Policy Forum (APF). Alaska Policy Forum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and a nonpartisan state policy think tank. We do not receive public funds. Specifically, I am offering testimony in support of modifying the core curriculum high school graduation requirement for Alaskan students to include a financial literacy course.

In addition to my role as Executive Vice President for Alaska Policy Forum, I am the mother of two students in Alaska K-12 schools, and a volunteer with local youth organizations. In my experience, I have found that young adults want to be self-sufficient, independent and knowledgeable on matters that impact them. Few things are as impactful in the life of a young person as successfully managing their household budget, savings, investments and cashflow, earning and maintaining a positive credit rating, and avoiding financial scams that are an unfortunate reality today. Educating students on these critical areas as a component of their high school diploma ensures they have the tools they need to be financially literate.



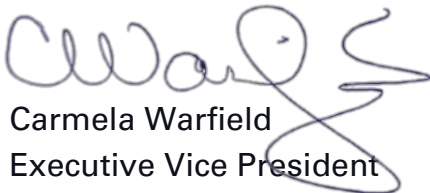
Other states and school districts have already implemented financial literacy curriculum requirements for high schoolers, realizing the importance of its role in the lives of their residents, and Alaska should follow suit.

Additionally, we support an accelerated timeline for implementation of these courses. While stakeholders understandably need the opportunity to develop the curriculum, expediting the availability of financial literacy courses helps prepare more Alaskan students for future success.

Financial literacy courses also provide a stable foundation for Alaska's youth as they prepare to leave high school, and equip them with tools that will serve them well in their lives. Whether a young person chooses to pursue a post-secondary degree, additional courses in Career and Technical Education (CTE) or enter the workforce, a comprehensive awareness and understanding of their personal finances equips them with the foundation they need to be self-reliant adults. This leads not only to their personal success, but also to a more vibrant economy for our state and healthy community for us all.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Carmela Warfield  
Executive Vice President

