

Dear Senator Murkowski

My name is _____, I play _____ in the Anchorage Youth Symphony because _____ and the Arts are my Superpower!

It is no secret that COVID-19 has devastated both the arts in Alaska and in the entire country. What many may not be aware of, is how much this crisis has impacted Arts Education.

I am a member of the Anchorage Youth Symphony, a cultural cornerstone that has existed for over fifty years, where I am able to play and grow with other talented musicians. The Youth Symphony not only promotes the arts for high school students but has fostered a culture of art appreciation for many generations in this community.

We have not let the pandemic slow us down. We finished last year's season successfully, with a virtual concert and cameos from Kikkan Randall, Randall Fleischer, and Itzhak Perlman. This season we continue preparing for our winter concert with weekly rehearsals held virtually.

However, COVID has made it close to impossible for our organization to access the CARES Act funding that we need to replace the money we have lost. Non-profit organizations like ours rely on funding from the community, and the current dilemma we face is that relief funds like AK Can Do Fund and the Coronavirus Nonprofit Relief Fund (CNRF) are consolidating all grant requests into the same basket. This means that our arts education requests are competing with vital social services that intend to feed and house our community.

Because of this, we have been denied funding from organizations when making requests that barely reach over the minimum required to receive funding. Our scholarship requests are 100% up from last year's season and we are struggling to keep our organization afloat.

This crisis has already shown how much the world needs the arts. It continues to bring people together and give them comfort. Culture is the foundation of any community and the Youth Symphony is no exception. We need direct and proportionate economic relief to support the soul of our community.

Here is an example of a letter that you can send to Senator Murkowski to let her know we want the arts to stay alive and well during this crisis! You can change any element of it you see fit and are not required to give details about yourself.

If you want to do more than send in this letter, we encourage you to participate in the #BeAnArtsHero campaign on social media! Using the hashtags #artsaremysuperpower and #Beanartshero post a video of you playing your instruments on Instagram or twitter! You can play any piece you want.

You can also email other politicians, like senator Sullivan, Governor Dunleavy, Mayor Quinn-Davidson, and Representative Young if you wish to get further involved.

Be an arts hero.com has information about the DAWN act and the national campaign around funding our arts economy if you want some additional information.

<https://beanartshero.com/>