

March 13, 2025

Adrien Wendel, Budget Manager

City and Borough of Juneau

Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Community Funding Request Form

Dear Ms. Wendel,

Enclosed please find Community Funding Request Form and supporting documents submitted by the League of Women Voters Juneau. Should further information be required, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Debbie Tillinghast".

Debbie Tillinghast, Director

League of Women Voters Juneau

328 Coleman St., Juneau, AK 99801

907419.6697

# City & Borough of Juneau Community Funding Request

## Basic Information

### NAME OF REQUESTING ORGANIZATION:

The League of Women Voters Juneau

### SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The League of Women Voters Juneau (LWVJ) sponsors a program that expands civics education in all of Juneau's schools by bringing every eighth grader – over 300 students - on a field trip to the Alaska Capitol Building and the Dimond Courthouse. Before the trip, teachers from each of Juneau's middle schools prepare students with introductory materials provided by LWVJ. On the day of the field trip, LWVJ volunteers and classroom teachers accompany students as they speak with legislators, observe a Senate or House floor session at the Capitol, play roles in a mock legislative committee hearing and attend presentations by the executive branch of state government. Following the visit to the Capitol, students participate in a mock arraignment and trial conducted by the judges and staff of the Alaska Court System.

### ASSEMBLYMEMBER SPONSOR:

Greg Smith

### REQUEST FOR ONE TIME EVENT, PURCHASE OR GRANT MATCH:

No

### REQUEST TO PROVIDE MONETARY SUPPORT FOR THE GROUP'S ONGOING OR OPERATING EXPENSES:

Yes (ongoing expenses)

PRIMARY CONTACT:

Debbie Tillinghast, Director

The League of Women Voters Juneau

907419.6697

[debbietillinghast@gmail.com](mailto:debbietillinghast@gmail.com)

1. FUNDING REQUEST TITLE:

Capital Students-Capitol Visits

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BENEFIT:

Supporting documents show that for 10 years Capital Students-Capitol Visits has enriched civics education for the benefit of Juneau students at little or no cost to the Juneau School District or other participating schools. Also included in supporting documents are statements from the Juneau Legislative Delegation and legislators from outside districts to indicate that legislators from all over the state recognize Juneau's efforts to further citizens' interest in the work of the Alaska State Legislature.

3. PLANS AND PROGRESS:

The League of Women Voters Juneau (LWVJ) has been encouraged by educators, legislators, and judges to find a way to continue this program that strengthens civics education in Juneau. For 10 years the program has been facilitated by untold volunteer hours - contributed by LWVJ members and others - and with financial support from LWVJ, JSD, The Alaska Committee and Goldbelt, Inc. However, to continue the program additional community support is needed.

The League of Women Voters Juneau is requesting that CBJ acknowledge and support Capital Students-Capitol Visits for the following reasons:

- The program's intrinsic value to JSD students
- The program demonstrates to the legislature the capital city's interest in our Capitol and all three branches of our state government
- Provides an avenue for CBJ to support JSD without affecting the state cap on financial funding to school districts

- There is broad support for the program in Juneau as demonstrated by educators, legislators, judges, and hours of labor provided by local volunteers
- Support for the program is also evidenced by financial contributions from local organizations

#### 4. PROJECT SUPPORT:

The amount of time devoted to this program by public service officials, Juneau citizens, and LWVJ volunteers speaks volumes:

- Judges, district attorneys, and court system staff create a mock court case of vital interest to youth whereby students step into the roles of judge, attorney and jury members
- Legislators and staff present proposed legislation to groups of students, talk about their responsibilities as public servants, and provide logistic support so students can navigate through the Capitol Building to observe floor sessions and visit legislative and executive branch offices
- JSD teachers and staff prepare students, provide permission slips and coordinate with school regulations to ensure an educational, memorable and fun field trip experience for kids
- Volunteer instructors produce educational materials; introduce students to the history of the Capitol Building; teach civics lessons specific to Alaska and the federal government; schedule the activities planned over a five-hour day; accompany each of the nine groups over a period of three weeks

We represent the value of in-kind contributions by volunteers as approximately \$12,000, based on time donated by six instructors over seven-hour days during each of the nine field trips, and two organizational meetings.

For the previous nine years JSD contributed to the cost of school bus transportation to and from the Capitol. However, due to changes in school attendance hours made in 2025, a school bus was not available, thus transportation was provided by donations from Goldbelt, Inc., (\$2,700 in-kind donation), The Alaska Committee (\$500 cash donation) and LWVJ, (\$500 cash donation).

To sustain the program, additional funding in the amount of \$10,000 is necessary to retain a qualified CSCV coordinator to facilitate the myriad

arrangements that must be made, starting months in advance and continuing during the course of each day, to ensure that the field trips are successful.

5. GOAL OF PROJECT:

Provide vital civics education instruction to Juneau students in a manner that does not impact the city's cap on funding for education; demonstrate to legislators that CBJ values its role as a capital city by taking this opportunity to educate and inspire its young citizens.

6. TOTAL COST:

TOTAL COST (including funds already secured) = \$25,600

A. AMOUNT SECURED (include funding sources) = \$15,700

Goldbelt, Inc., in-kind donation valued \$2,700; LWVJ, cash donation of \$500; The Alaska Committee, cash donation of \$500; volunteers hours valued \$12,000

B. TIMELINE:

This is an annual program culminating each year during the months of January and February.

C. PHYSICAL LOCATION:

Capital Students-Capitol Visits occurs at the Alaska State Capitol Complex and the Dimond Courthouse, Alaska Court System, in Juneau.

## INDEX OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 1-4.) Letters of support from legislators
- 5.) Letter of support from Kristin Garot, Juneau School District (noting the district will not provide funding)
- 6.) Letter of support from Kristy Germain, Juneau School District
- 7.) Statement of (2015-2025) financial support from League of Women Voters Juneau
- 8.) Statement of (2025) financial support from Goldbelt, Inc.
- 9.) CSCV coordinator time schedule and description of responsibilities



SENATOR JESSE KIEHL

February 10, 2025

League of Women Voters Juneau  
c/o Debbie Tillinghast  
328 Coleman St.  
Juneau AK 99801

To Whom It May Concern:

I wholeheartedly support the League of Women Voters Juneau's request to fund the Capital Students - Capitol Visits program. For a decade, the League has run a model of hands-on civics education, showing every Juneau 8<sup>th</sup> grader the inner workings of their Capitol. The first few groups to go through this program are old enough to run for the legislature themselves.

LWV capital students learn about the branches of government, watch legislative floor sessions, and see their Capitol. They speak with their legislators, judges, and representatives of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. Students put their knowledge into action with mock legislative hearing and court arraignment.

The program wouldn't be possible without a stellar group of volunteers. They partner with local teachers to give our 8<sup>th</sup> graders this fantastic, hands-on civic education.

The students' visits are a personal highlight for me every legislative session. Every class comes with new, fascinating questions about the legislative process and government. We have great conversations about how government should work and what it means to our community. A new bill proposing to ban cell phones in schools prompted some particularly lively conversations this year!

Please give this very worthy funding request your every consideration. And feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jesse Kiehl".

Jesse Kiehl

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ALASKA SENATE

STATE CAPITOL • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801 • (907) 465-4947 • FAX (907) 465-2108

SENATOR.JESSE.KIEHL@AKLEG.GOV



# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

## Senator Bill Wielechowski

*Serving East Anchorage*

February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

[CHAIR  
RULES](#)

[VICE CHAIR  
RESOURCES](#)

[MEMBER  
STATE AFFAIRS](#)

[LEGISLATIVE  
BUDGET & AUDIT](#)

[JOINT ARMED  
SERVICES](#)

[ARCTIC AFFAIRS](#)

*Delivered Electronically*

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for the League of Women Voters work on the Capital Students - Capital Visits program. Each year, the League of Women Voters brings every 8<sup>th</sup> grade student to the Alaska State Capitol for a tour, committee hearing simulation, visit to the Governor's Cabinet Room, and more.

Supporting students through quality education is an investment in the future of Alaska. This program puts students at the center of Alaskan politics and gives them an opportunity to better understand the three branches of state government.

This year, I had the pleasure of speaking to several of these student groups during their time in the Capital Students - Capital Visits program. The students were engaged with the mock committee hearing and were excited to be in the Capitol during the start of the legislative session.

Thank you for considering my comments and for supporting the work of the League of Women Voters.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Senator Bill Wielechowski

SESSION  
STATE CAPITOL  
JUNEAU, AK  
99801  
(907) 465-2435

INTERIM  
1500 W BENSON  
BLVD  
ANCHORAGE, AK  
99503  
(907) 269-0120



# REPRESENTATIVE SARA HANNAN

## ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Alaska State Capitol  
120 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Juneau, AK 99801  
Office (907) 465-4766  
Toll Free (877) 465-4766  
Rep.Sara.Hannan@akleg.gov



House District 4  
Downtown Juneau  
Thane, Lemon Creek  
Douglas Island, Airport, and  
the Mendenhall Valley to  
Stephen Richards Drive

League of Women Voters Juneau  
c/o Debbie Tillinghast  
328 Coleman Street  
Juneau, AK 99801

19 February 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I write in strong support of the League of Women Voters of Juneau and their Civic Student Capitol Visit (CSCV) program. This long-standing initiative has given Juneau students invaluable firsthand exposure to the legislative process, fostering civic engagement and a deeper understanding of state government.

To ensure the program's continued success, the League of Women Voters Juneau seeks funding to support its operations and logistics. This funding is essential to sustaining the program's ability to provide enriching experiences for Juneau's youth while strengthening civic engagement in our community.

I encourage local businesses and other community supporters to recognize the significance of this program and contribute to its ongoing success. Investing in civic education today helps cultivate a more engaged and informed citizenry for the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sara Hannan".

Representative Sara Hannan  
House District4



## Representative Andi Story

### Alaska State Legislature

February 12, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Civics engagement for our youth is key to a healthy democracy. Becoming an active citizen and learning how to participate in government also supports the foundation of our Constitution. In Juneau, we have the honor of being a capital city. Educating our local youth about the process of government is an active, hands-on learning experience through an outstanding program for students in our Capital City community. This program, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Juneau (LWVJ), is entitled "Capital Students, Capitol Visits Program."

Open to eighth-grade students, in all our neighborhood, correspondence, charter, and home schools, the LWVJ provides a guided, educational tour throughout the legislative session. During the tour, the students participate in mock committee hearing and judicial trials, learn how to read a bill, observe a House or Senate Floor session, and meet with the Juneau Delegation and other legislators.

Having the experience of walking through the Capitol building is often a first for many of our eight-grade students. Many of the students have not visited the Capital and report that their families have not been inside the building. The pride of hosting state capital visits is supported by The League of Women Voters Juneau through this volunteer organization. I applaud their work and support the "Capital Students, Capitol Visits Program."

I strongly recommend making an investment in this high-quality program and encourage others to do the same. Please contact my office if you have any questions.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andi Story".

Representative Andi Story

Contact  
Alaska State Capitol  
120 4<sup>th</sup> St Juneau, AK 99801

907-465-3744  
[rep.andi.story@akleg.gov](mailto:rep.andi.story@akleg.gov)



Kristin Garot, Director  
Teaching and Learning Support  
10014 Crazy Horse Drive  
Juneau, AK 99801-8529  
(907) 523-1720

**Re: Letter of Support for the Juneau League of Women Voters Student Program**

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the Juneau League of Women Voters' program that provides all Juneau 8th graders with an invaluable opportunity to engage directly with the legislative and judicial processes of our state government. This program allows students to visit the Alaska State Capitol to experience firsthand how legislation is made and meet the people who do it.

This experience is an essential part of our students' civic education. It brings government studies to life, helping students understand how laws are debated and passed, the role of elected officials, and the importance of civic engagement. Observing the legislative process in action fosters a deeper connection to democracy and encourages lifelong participation in civic affairs. Likewise, visits to the courthouse provide a real-world perspective on the judicial system, reinforcing critical thinking and legal literacy.

Ensuring this program continues is a priority for the Juneau School District. However, our school district is not able to allocate funds to support the program at this time. Grant funding will directly support student access by enabling the League to provide bussing for all Juneau 8th graders to attend this field trip at the capitol building and nearby courthouse.

Thank you for supporting this funding request. The League of Women Voters has provided an outstanding educational service to our students, and with your help, they can continue to do so for years to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*K Garot*

Kristin Garot

kristin.garot@juneauschools.org

Director, Teaching and Learning Support

Juneau School District

907-523-1720



Director of Operations  
10014 Crazy Horse Drive  
Juneau, AK 99801  
(907) 523-1740

February 5, 2025

To Whom it May Concern:

I am happy to write this letter in support of the Capital Students - Capitol Visits (CSCV) program. I have worked in the Juneau School District for twenty-two years as a social studies teacher, English teacher, secondary school administrator and now at the district level as the Director of Operations. I also grew up in this community and benefitted from civics education in action during my school years. The Capital Students - Capitol Visits is an excellent program which provides our Juneau students opportunities to experience state government.

As the Assistant Principal of Dzantik'i Heeni and then Principal of Floyd Dryden Middle School, I was excited that all of our 8th grade students were able to participate in CSCV. Special guests from the League of Women Voters Juneau provided classroom presentations and curricular materials for our students to have more than a week-long focus on state government surrounding their Capitol field trip. Students always came back to school jazzed about the day. They consistently rose to the occasion by dressing more professionally and soaking in the atmosphere in the Capitol building, committee rooms, legislative sessions, courthouse and State Office Building. Many of our students had never been in any of these places prior to this field trip.

The hallway chatter around CSCV changes each year for the 8th graders as students tell their friends about who they met and what happened in their mock trial. Because the field trip includes experiencing multiple aspects of our state government, we have always needed to divide the classes and have groups attend over four or five days. The logistical coordination and planning that goes into the success of CSCV is impressive. Our social studies teachers would not be able to provide this opportunity for our students without the coordination of CSCV and League of Women Voters Juneau.

Sincerely,

Kristy Germain, Director of Operations  
Juneau School District



To Whom It May Concern:

I write on behalf of the Juneau chapter of the League of Women Voters in support of the Capital Students/Capitol Visits program. This program originated with members of our league who saw an opportunity to take advantage of our local access to state government. For 10 years and counting, every 8th grader in Juneau has been able to see the three branches of government up close and in action. The program offers students a day of hands-on civics education invaluable for preparing the citizens of tomorrow.

None of this would be possible without staggering amounts of volunteer hours in addition to the actual financial costs of providing transportation and materials. The Juneau chapter has budgeted \$500 annually in support of this program and has approved increases as needed when other external funding falls short. As costs rise year over year, the program has been fortunate to find partners who are willing to adjust their budget, but increased financial independence would go a long way to ensuring the future of such a valuable curriculum.

The Juneau League will continue to support this worthy effort and hopes that you will join us in doing so.

Sincerely,

Kirsa Hughes-Skandijs  
President, Juneau League of Women Voters



Deborah Tillinghast &lt;debbietillinghast@gmail.com&gt;

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**League of Women Voters/Capitol Students-Capitol Visits**

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Elias Hastings <elias.hastings@goldbelt.com>  
To: Deborah Tillinghast <debbietillinghast@gmail.com>

Thu, Jan 23, 2025 at 8:58 AM

Good morning Debbie,

Thanks for reaching out about this. Our team has informed me that the actual cost for similar bus charters would be approximately \$3,600, as opposed to our ask of \$900 for these nine bus trips. We are more than happy to help out with this project, please let me know if there's anything else you may need going forward.

Thank you,



**Elias Hastings** | Operations Manager - AK Group  
3025 Clinton Drive, Juneau, AK 99801  
Office: 907-790-1443  
Cell: 401-484-4124  
[elias.hastings@goldbelt.com](mailto:elias.hastings@goldbelt.com) | Goldbelt.com



| M-F 8:00 – 5:00 PM AK Standard Time

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**From:** Deborah Tillinghast <debbietillinghast@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2025 2:27 PM  
**To:** Elias Hastings <elias.hastings@goldbelt.com>  
**Subject:** League of Women Voters/Capitol Students-Capitol Visits

You don't often get email from [debbietillinghast@gmail.com](mailto:debbietillinghast@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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[Quoted text hidden]

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## CSCV COORDINATOR TIME SCHEDULE AND DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

### August (estimated 5 work hours):

Determine program dates; contact 20 to 25 instructors and other volunteers; set up pre-visit school activities such as A Fishy Story and other preparatory materials; ensure that email contact lists are accurate and Google Drive files from previous years are accessible to all volunteers; confirm availability of all previous instructors and identify potential new instructors

### September (estimated 40 work hours):

Communicate with Juneau School District superintendent and middle school principal; identify and meet with middle school liaison and teachers; confirm program dates with school; determine numbers of students per field trip; confirm financial support from The Alaska Committee and League of Women Voters Juneau that contributes to the cost of student transportation; arrange bus transportation for nine to ten trips from the middle school to the Capitol Building and Dimond Courthouse; get availability of instructors and prepare tentative daily schedules; identify and meet with Executive Branch and Alaska Court System liaisons

### October (estimated 40 work hours):

Contact legislative offices to search for appropriate proposed legislation (bill) for the mock hearing; appoint instructors to research suggested bills; identify one bill for the mock hearing debate; appoint instructors to develop pro and con statements for the bill; appoint instructors to develop instructional materials for teachers so they can prepare students for the field trip and the mock hearing; deliver program materials to teachers; arrange visit dates with court system; arrange visit dates with legislators; confirm availability of instructors and substitutes; update Google Drive with new materials; conduct meeting with instructors to discuss selected bill and to introduce new volunteers to the program

### November (estimated 10 work hours):



Meet with and assign instructors to teach civics lessons and take roles in the mock hearing; prepare lesson plans for civics instruction and scripts for the mock hearing; prepare draft daily schedules; update visual aids as needed

December (estimated 25 work hours):

Establish work teams and their schedules; confirm dates/times with the offices of the governor, lt. governor, legislators and court personnel ; reserve meeting rooms in the Capitol Building; communicate with House and Senate sergeants-at-arms to inform them of the visits and get information regarding protocol for the student groups; reconfirm dates and locations with the court system; reconfirm dates with bus transportation; create handouts for each group of students; confirm daily schedules and activities; lead a walk-through at the Capitol for new instructors

January/February (estimated 175 work hours):

Each night send reminders to instructors and teachers who are attending the next day; before each visit print and organize instructor materials for that day; communicate each day with Capitol Building staff, legislative staff, executive branch staff and courthouse staff; ensure availability of supplies; assemble instructor folders, deliver nametags to teachers; make changes to schedules as needed; meet and accompany each student group throughout the field trip (nine 7-hour days); carry multiple copies of Words w/Double Meanings, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Scavenger Hunt and other worksheets in case there are last-minute delays in scheduled presentations; arrange for and deliver 3 color-coded coat tubs and the portfolio of lesson visual aids to coat storage; arrange for and deliver extra-large bag and student lunches to lunch storage; assign instructors to help students with lunches, coats and special needs

February (estimated 10 work hours):

Write thank-you notes to all instructors, governmental presenters and sponsors; prepare and deliver a wrap-up report to the League of Women Voters Juneau; prepare a report on the program for distribution to print media; conduct a meeting of instructors to evaluate the year's program and recommend improvements; archive all documents on Google Drive and store materials that can be used in subsequent years





Sponsors of the Capital Students/Capitol Visits Program embrace and support the opportunity for every Juneau 8th grade student to spend a day in and around the workings of Alaska State Government.

Thanks to:

The League of Women Voters of Juneau (LWVJ)

a non-partisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government.

The Alaska Committee

a non-profit corporation charged with enhancing Juneau as Alaska's capital city.

Working closely with CBJ and other organizations, the Alaska Committee promotes access to the Capitol, improves communication and reinforces Juneau's role as Alaska's capital city.



Capital Students-Capitol Visits Program was created in 2015 by

Marjorie Menzi, with a group of volunteer members of the League of Women Voters. Juneau School District teachers introduce 8th grade students to materials and activities created by the team of leaders.

Through their active participation in the program, students become familiar with the workings of state government and the importance of their own involvement.



2024-2025 Coordinators

Marian Clough

[mcloughak@mail.com](mailto:mcloughak@mail.com)

Sally Donaldson

[sallyanndonaldson@gmail.com](mailto:sallyanndonaldson@gmail.com)

## CAPITAL STUDENTS CAPITOL VISITS



*A day at the Capitol, State Office  
Building and Dimond Courthouse*

*designed for*

*Juneau 8th Grade Students*

