

I was born in Alaska and I am entirely a product of an Alaskan public education: Seldovia High School, 1969; UAF, 1973; and I took my MFA in Creative Writing from UAA in 1985. My success in my profession is as much due to that education as any inborn smarts I myself brought to the table.

over the years, hundreds of fans have told me in person or via social media that my books inspired them to travel to Alaska. Indeed, I have met some of them here during their travels.

If that is true for me, it is equally true for Velma Wallis, Nancy Lord, Nick Jans, Heather Lende, Tom Kizzia, and all the other Alaskan writers. Our books have educated and entertained and ultimately enticed thousands of visitors to the state of Alaska, where they spend their money and contribute to our economy.

Last year Governor Dunleavy cut UA's budget by 43 percent. This year UA has responded in part by cutting the MFA program from their curriculum.

In 2018 I went to listen to Sarah Vance and Paul Seaton at the Homer Public Library. Someone asked what their agenda in Juneau would be if they were elected. Vance replied, "I will support Governor Dunleavy's agenda."

Vance was elected and she has certainly kept her promise. That means that she, too, is responsible for the draconian, disabling, and destructive cuts to UA's budget.

This morning at Captain's I had coffee with Assemblywoman Kelly Cooper, who is running against Vance. Kelly sounds sane and pragmatic, not driven by ideology and definitely doesn't sound like any governor's lap dog. The borough assembly, currently a body of eight men and one woman, elected her their chair, which says a lot all by itself.

Kelly's got my vote in November. She should have yours, too.

Dana Stabenow