
DATE

To: _____

_____, strongly supports the industry's

YOUR NAME &/OR ORGANIZATION

efforts to develop a long-range solution for sustainable tourism marketing funding.

A strong tourism marketing program is critical to ensuring Alaska's travel industry remains competitive. Last year 2 million visitors came to Alaska, including a record number of cruise passengers. According to the *Economic Impact of Alaska's Visitor Industry 2014-15 Update*, these travelers, through various visitor fees, contribute \$83 million to city and borough budgets and \$100 million to the state's general fund. The statewide economic impact is \$4.17 billion in the form of business growth and jobs. Alaska's past investment in statewide tourism marketing has returned these positive economic results to communities and the State.

Due to current budgetary challenges at the State, the tourism marketing program has been significantly reduced. In two years, it has decreased by 90% and is currently only \$1.5 million. At this level, Alaska cannot compete with other destinations to attract visitors and continue the growth in economic benefits. In fact, Alaska is faced with losing market share to our competitors, translating to lost revenue in taxes and fees and visitor spending.

The Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA), the state's leading membership organization for the travel industry in Alaska, has proposed a funding plan for tourism promotion based on national Tourism Improvement District (TID) models. The TID model provides a self-assessment framework that reaches various tourism business sectors, including accommodations, attractions and tour activities. The proposed TID concept also includes a mix of current revenue generated from existing taxes on the tourism industry and new revenue from an industry assessment. Successful implementation of an Alaska TID would provide stable statewide tourism marketing funding.

_____, supports the industry's

YOUR NAME &/OR ORGANIZATION

plan for a self-sustaining funding model for Alaska tourism marketing.

Sincerely,

NAME

ORGANIZATION

CC:

Sarah Leonard, ATIA
President & CEO