

Cheryl D. Fullerton
4581 Sandy Beach Drive
Anchorage, AK 99502

March 19, 2009

Representative Bob Buch
State Capitol, Room 430
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Buch,

As a long-time resident of your district, I wanted to take this opportunity to let you know the importance of tourism to myself, my family and our community. As an employee of the Alaska Travel Industry Association, I benefit directly from the state's investment in tourism. Our industry, Tourism, is a renewable resource that needs your support to regain a strong position in the market.

I have been in Alaska since 1982 and have seen tourism's growth throughout Alaska and its effect on our economy. Visitors to Alaska not only bring new dollars into the state, over \$1.6 billion annually, but provide important benefits for communities. Tourism's core industry is Alaska's third largest private sector employer.

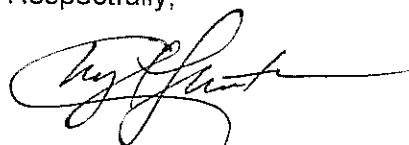
At ATIA, we work every day with members who make their living through tourism, from Ketchikan to Nome. The vast majority of these members are small businesses who love Alaska and want to share it with our visitors. They do not have the budget or resources to conduct marketing in a highly competitive world clamoring for visitors. They rely on ATIA to reach potential visitors as well as provide affordable opportunities for them to promote their individual services.

That is why it is vital for the state to support this industry through increased funding for marketing. It is the only way to sustain and grow our visitor numbers and thus maintain and grow Alaska's tourism now and for our future. I urge you to pass legislation that provides a tax credit to payers of the Cruise Line Corporate Income Tax for contributions to Alaska's tourism marketing program, [HB167]. This is a reinvestment of tourism taxes to fund Alaska's tourism marketing programs.

ATIA's Marketing Committee is comprised of 32 highly qualified individuals from Alaska's tourism industry, and under their direction every dollar is used effectively and in Alaska's best interest. With a \$20 million investment, Alaska can grow visitors and the industry, benefiting people, communities and the state overall.

Thank you for commitment to our great state.

Respectfully,



Cheryl D Fullerton
Director of Finance & HR
Alaska Travel Industry Association