

February 25, 2009

Senator Gene Therriault
Room 427, State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senate Therriault,

I first want to take the time to thank you for listening and responding to our concerns with the operations of the Alaska Marine Highway last summer. Because of the combined efforts of your office and the office of Representative Harris we now have an open line of communication with the AMHS staff.

Secondly, I would like to thank you for your continued support of the Tourism Industry in Alaska. As you know, the marketing programs of Alaska conducted by the Alaska Travel Industry Association and therefore the success of small tourism businesses in our great State are dependent on the support and funding from the State of Alaska.

Tourism is quite near and dear to my heart since I have been involved in our family business since I was 7 years old. I can honestly say I have watched the Travel Industry in Alaska grow and struggle through the years and that there is a direct correlation between a well funded marketing program and the success of Alaskan businesses.

Simply put the success of the current marketing program would not exist without the current \$9 million re-investment of the Vehicle Rental Tax. In order for the Alaska Tourism Industry to compete in the domestic and world marketplace we need to expand the current program and in order to do this more funding is necessary. Therefore, I would also like to encourage you to work toward an increase in funding through a Cruiseline Corporate Income Tax credit.

Thank you again for the time and energy you invest in Alaska and for your continued support of the Alaska Travel Industry.

Sincerely,

Colleen Stephens