

March 3, 2009

Senator Joe Thomas
State Capitol, Room 510
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Thomas,

I am writing today to share with you my thoughts regarding the value of tourism (to both Fairbanks and to Alaska) and the importance of sustained funding by the state legislature. Two of our three family members work in and derive our livelihoods from tourism. I have been with the Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau (FCVB) for ten years, first as Advertising and Public Relations Manager and now as Vice President of Marketing. Our daughter, Kristin, will return to El Dorado Gold Mine for her fourth summer season sharing her love of Fairbanks (and gold panning!) with guests.

Tourism has been a economic driver in Fairbanks since the 1950's and recent growth in infrastructure – the Fairbanks International Airport, the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center, new hotels, fine dining, specialty stores and major retailers, as examples – has been a direct result of tourism, benefits of which are enjoyed by visitors and locals alike.

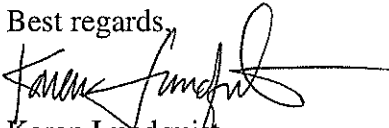
During a time of local, statewide, national and international economic challenges, it is more important than ever the legislature support the state's tourism marketing program which in turns helps Fairbanks and other communities and regions. The FCVB works closely with the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) to stretch and maximize our community marketing dollars in conjunction with their collaborative projects and cooperative advertising.

The state's tourism marketing program as you know is funded from both state and industry dollars. Your support is needed to continue the reinvestment of \$9 million of the Vehicle Rental Taxes into Alaska's tourism marketing program and to strive toward sustainability and long-term growth in funding through a Cruiseline Corporate Income Tax.

When I come to work each day, I know full well that Fairbanks (and Alaska) are competing with other destinations from around the world for visitors. Many of which outspend us, are closer to urban centers, have less expensive airfares, are weekend getaways, can easily be driven to – the list goes on. When things get tough, it is not a time to decrease marketing. It is a time for Alaska to step up its game and for the partnership between our state's government and the state's visitor industry to succeed in a big way.

We will be headed to Juneau at the end of the month for the visitor industry's legislative briefings and look forward to visiting with your and others from our Fairbanks delegation at that time.

Best regards,



Karen Lundquist
Vice President of Marketing
Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau

March 3, 2009

Representative Mike Kelly
State Capitol, Room 513
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

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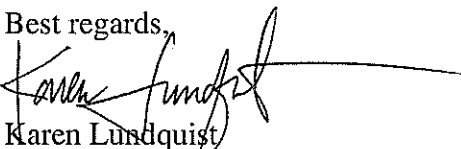
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Karen Lundquist
Vice President of Marketing
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