



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ATIA to Host Gubernatorial Forum on Tuesday, October 9

Tourism Industry Representatives

Anchorage, AK – Governor Bill Walker, Mike Dunleavey, and Mark Begich are scheduled to participate in tomorrow's Alaska Travel Industry Association's (ATIA) gubernatorial forum at 12:30 PM, immediately following the kick-off of ATIA's Annual Convention and Trade Show at the Carlson Center in Fairbanks.

ATIA's members-only convention attracts more than 500 tourism professionals from across the state.

Forum participants will be asked about their vision for Alaska's tourism industry, the state's second largest employer after the oil and gas industry.

"The State of Alaska's investment in destination marketing is of critical interest to our members," said Sarah Leonard, ATIA President and CEO. "Research shows that every dollar spent in marketing Alaska as a destination provides a return of \$58 in visitor spending. Industry will be closely listening to candidate's views on tourism, tourism marketing, and general support for this important sector of our state's economy."

State support for destination marketing declined from \$16 million in FY 2014 to \$1.5 million in 2017. In FY 2019, the State granted \$3 million in general funds to ATIA to manage Alaska's destination marketing program.

More than 2 million visitors travel to Alaska each year.

ATIA is Alaska's largest statewide membership trade association for the travel industry and represents close to 700 members and businesses supporting Alaska tourism. ATIA promotes Alaska's travel industry as one of the state's major economic forces and advocates for the growth of the industry while remaining attentive to Alaska's natural environment, diverse cultures, and unique quality of life.

For more information, visit www.AlaskaTIA.org or contact 907.306-2331.

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Alaska's leading statewide nonprofit membership organization for the Alaska travel industry.

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