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June 9, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

The Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) wishes to express our support for the planned Seward-to-Fairbanks Alaska Long Trail. ATIA, Alaska's leading statewide nonprofit membership association for the travel industry, promotes Alaska's tourism industry as an economic contributor while providing statewide marketing resources, education opportunities and advocacy to members. ATIA has long managed Alaska's destination marketing program: Travel Alaska.

The Alaska Long Trail, when complete, will become a world-class trail system connecting 500+ miles of Alaska's iconic terrain and diverse communities from Seward to Fairbanks. The Trail will embrace the many ways Alaskans recreate outdoors and will bolster the Alaska economy by attracting visitors from all over the world.

In addition to our support for the trail itself, we also support the creation of a management body which can work with all landholders to coordinate construction and ongoing maintenance projects. [The Pacific Crest Trail Association](#), [Green Mountain Club](#), and [Continental Divide Trail Coalition](#) are examples of this.

Alaska has become a global destination for tourism, exploration, recreation, and natural experiences. The travel industry and residents alike benefit from our existing outdoor recreation opportunities. Completing this world-class trail will create additional recreation opportunities for residents, expand the economic opportunities for tourism operators along the corridor, and further amplify the allure of visiting our State.

Many Alaska Long Trail projects are "shovel-ready" which means investments in these projects will create near-term construction jobs. These projects will also provide lasting benefits to Alaska's economy, communities, health, and our unique outdoor recreation lifestyles.

Specific benefits include:

- *Economic Impact* – Outdoor recreation infrastructure is essential infrastructure, building on Alaska's global competitive advantage, and supporting local jobs, business opportunities, and a stronger, more durable Alaska economy. If a typical years' out-of-state travelers had reasons to spend one more day in Alaska, the result would be an additional \$250M in annual spending in our state.
- *Health Benefits* – this trail will provide more opportunities for a larger portion of Alaskans to be active, healthy, happy outside. Multi-Use – The Long

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Trail will be an Alaska long trail; a four-season trail system designed for hikers, bikers, skiers, ATV's, snowmachines, for both day and multi-day use.

- *Broad Support* – trail projects were identified and are supported by tourism businesses and tourism marketing organizations, local governments, state and federal agencies, trail organizations, and individual trail users. Projects span five legislative districts and benefit both Alaskans and visitors.

ATIA is excited to lend our voice to the large and growing group of Alaska Long Trail supporters. We encourage local, state, and national decision makers to support the planning, design, and construction of the Alaska Long Trail due to the many benefits it will bring to Alaska.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JS' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Jillian Simpson
ATIA President & CEO