



Senator Hollis French

Sponsor Statement

SB 19 – Passenger Vehicle Rental Tax

Senate Bill 19 will remove the 10% tax on motorcycle rentals. With our short summer and the economic benefits of independent tourism, the legislature should support this emerging industry.

Motorcycle tourism brings independent travelers to our small businesses and restaurants. While cruise ships ensure that large hotels are full, motorcycle travelers go off the beaten path, traveling to remote bed and breakfasts or staying in smaller hotels. In contrast to RV renters (who pay a smaller 3% rental tax), motorcycle riders are more likely to eat at restaurants, since it is difficult to cook a meal in one's motorcycle.

With a short rental season, plenty of challenges exist for Alaskan businesses that rent motorcycles. On top of the seven or eight winter months where rental income isn't earned, fleet storage adds to the cost of doing business in Alaska. These factors increase the price of rentals, making it difficult to draw in customers. Adding a 10% state tax makes renting motorcycles even more challenging for rental businesses.

Passing this legislation corrects the accidental inclusion of motorcycles to our existing rental vehicle tax. In 2003, the legislature passed a motor vehicle rental tax for rental cars. No talk of motorcycles was placed on the record at that time. Also illustrating that point, the Department of Revenue didn't even collect the tax until several years after the law became effective.

Please join me in supporting this legislation, to benefit independent tourism in Alaska.