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February 6, 2013

The Honorable Kevin Meyer
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capital Room 532
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: House Bill 80 – Letter of Support

Dear Senator Meyer,

On behalf of Goldbelt, Incorporated, I would like to express our support for House Bill 80, an act relating to the regulation of wastewater discharge from commercial passenger vessels in state waters.

Organized under the terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Goldbelt is an urban, for-profit corporation with over 3,300 tribal member shareholders, most of who reside in Alaska. Goldbelt is more than just a for profit business however, we are a community organization that is charged with the responsibility of promoting the socio-economic well-being of our shareholders.

This is a responsibility that is taken seriously and financial returns generated from our operations are distributed back to our shareholders and descendants in the form of dividends, scholarships, elder's benefits, internships, numerous job opportunities and in support of the Goldbelt Heritage Foundation, a non-profit organization which is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the Tlingit culture and language.

The heart of Goldbelt's tourism operations and the primary source of financial returns in Alaska is the Mount Roberts Tramway in Juneau. The Tram is one of the premier tourist attractions in the state with up to 200,000 ticketed passengers riding it every summer. Approximately three fourths of those passengers come from the cruise lines.

Over the years, we have seen our ticket sales at the Tram mirror the number of cruise ships and cruise line passengers disembarking in Juneau. It is evident that our operations are sensitive to an industry which can easily change their venues to new ones with reasonable permitting and attainable standards. The economic impact on our operations from a reduction or loss of cruise ship passengers would be felt immediately and difficult at best to recover.

We understand that a panel of independent experts created by the Legislature concluded that cruise ships have the best technology available and no proven system exists which can meet the 2006 initiative standards. Also, this piece of legislation allows the DEC to issue permits applying

Alaska's tough Water Quality Criteria while not reducing any standards for cruise ships and still requiring more advanced treatment than other dischargers in Alaska.

In turn, Goldbelt supports HB 80 as we believe it will have a positive effect on the cruise line industry, the economic health of our state, and the financial performance of our operations. We respectfully ask for your consideration and support of it too.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek Duncan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Derek" and last name "Duncan" clearly distinguishable.

Derek Duncan
Vice President, Alaska Operations
Goldbelt, Inc.

cc: Bob Loiselle, President & CEO, Goldbelt
Senator Dennis Egan