



Southeast Alaska Conservation Council

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February 6, 2013

Dear Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Daven Hafey. I am a Legislative Organizer for the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, and I live in Juneau.

SEACC advocates for its members from eighteen communities throughout Southeast Alaska, ranging from Yakutat to Ketchikan. Many of our members are commercial fishermen, sport fishermen, subsistence users, and small business owners whose livelihoods and households depend on healthy waters.

My organization is not against the cruise ship industry. We understand very clearly the important economic benefits the industry provides to our communities, including Skagway, Haines, Juneau, Hoonah, Gustavus, Sitka, Ketchikan, and Prince of Wales, and we publicly support responsible tourism in our region. We want to see the cruise ship industry thrive in our communities, but we want them to thrive in a way that honors and respects the waters we depend on.

What concerns many of our members is the fact that this bill is based on the Science Advisory Panel's Preliminary Report—not a final report. That preliminary report's findings are based on the analysis of the effects of one cruise ship's discharge. It is unclear to us in what conditions those studies were conducted, but it appears as though the studies of that one ship were not conducted in Inside Passage conditions. On any given day from May through September, between fifteen and twenty-nine ships travel the Inside Passage, most following similar routes. Prior to making a legislative decision, we would like to see the effects of multiple ships discharging their effluent along similar routes in Inside Passage conditions analyzed to get a better understanding of what will really occur in the inside waters we fish and crab in.

From the report and recommendations from DEC, it appears as though Frederick Sound, Chatham Strait, and Icy Strait would be likely candidates for mixing zone use. It would be unfair for the communities of Gustavus, Hoonah, Elfin Cove, Tenakee Springs, Angoon, and Kake, most of whom depend heavily upon the bounty of the sea for their

healthy and reliable food sources and economic opportunities, to put the future of their livelihoods on the findings of a preliminary report.

Rather than an exemption from meeting Alaska's state water quality standards, we recommend that the ships not currently meeting those standards be granted an extension of three years. Such an extension would provide ships not currently meeting our state's standards adequate time to make necessary renovations so that they can accomplish what the cruise ship Carnival Spirit is already doing: treating their wastes in compliance with Alaska state water quality standards. This would allow ships to continue visiting our ports throughout the coming years while granting them the time to improve their wastewater infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Hafey', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daven Hafey
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council