

From: [Elizabeth Hall](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Alaska Visitor Industry
Date: Monday, March 30, 2015 8:15:34 PM
Attachments: [Reinvest_in_AK_Tourism.pdf](#)

Good afternoon Alaska Finance Committees,

First off, thank you for taking the time to read this email. Please note I understand you are extremely busy so sincerely appreciate your time.

While I cannot be in Alaska at the moment, please know Alaska tourism is my life, my world and everything I do on a daily basis. I have chosen Alaska tourism due to a great love for the state combined with the desire to share this experience with individuals unfamiliar with the greatness which awaits only in Alaska. As a tour operator, my favorite career aspect includes seeing the faces of returning guests and knowing the level of experience Alaska provided while they visited. My goal is for everyone to fall in love with Alaska the first time they visit, just as my father did in the 50's and I did in the 80's traveling the Alaska highway by motorcoach and inside passage by Alaska Marine Ferry.

I was blessed to be raised in the Alaska tourism and will continue to live this life. The tourism brings so many fantastic people to the beautiful state to share the culture, lifestyles, resources, wildlife and nature which can only be seen in our state. While this is true, as a visitor industry as a whole, we also require efforts to create awareness of Alaska's offerings so potential visitors choose Alaska over destinations such as Australia, Europe or Hawaii.

As you look at this email, you may notice I currently do not even reside in Alaska. I am indeed currently a Minnesota resident however my entire life revolves around Alaska, the tourism opportunities and people of the state. Just because Minnesota is where I hang my hat does not make it my home. Alaska will always be the place I strive to live long term, raise my family and continue to promote. However, without your help to continue to promote tourism, I fear one day individuals in a situation like myself may withdraw from the working in Alaska tourism and the opportunities which currently exists due to lack of visitors.

With nearly 2 million visitors a year, the state has only begun to tap the existing potential. Provided the proper resources, I believe tourism can continue to grow and help communities, the state and residents alike. It is estimated that **\$1.24 billion in labor income** was created due to the visitor industry and an **overall impact of \$3.72** which is astonishing considering the majority of this is completed May to mid-September. Year round tourism provides extreme opportunity for growth and additional impact as it starts to see growth.

Tourism provides so much more for the state of Alaska verse what meets the eye. The visitor industry provides jobs, finances, resource, educational opportunities and growth of markets. Many individuals born and raised in Alaska tourism continue to promote their cultures, family values and lifestyles to visitors alike. Other individuals visit the state on a vacation or for the summer only to stay and grow Alaska's economy.

The potential for growth in visitors is endless but the issue remains we cannot do it without the funding from the state. I ask from the bottom of my hear for Alaska legislature to make the conscious decisions to reinvest in Alaska's visitor industry, so we can be provided the right tools to create more jobs for the families in Alaska, provide more visitors to family owned and operated organizations like coffee shops, Alaska owned stores, Alaska made goods and local organizations alike can all see continued economic impact of the visitor industry. It is a chain reaction and without the legislatures help, the industry and anyone associated, big or small scale, will truly be effected long term.

Thank you again for your time and I look forward to meeting each of you in the future.

Kind regards,

Elizabeth Hall

John Hall's Alaska

Chief Operating Officer

1127 N Lakeshore Drive

Lake City, MN 55041

P: 651-345-1212

C: 651-212-0969

F: 651-345-1230

[*elizabeth@kissalaska.com*](mailto:elizabeth@kissalaska.com)

[*www.KissAlaska.com*](http://www.KissAlaska.com)

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