ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

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SB 50

Letters of Opposition

As of February 22, 2017

February 20, 2017

Senator Bert Stedman
Transportation Committee Chair

I am writing to you in reference to Senate Bill 50 and I would like to go on record opposing this bill.

Our Alaska tire dealer members have a responsibility to provide their customers with the best safety for winter driving; studded snow tires provide that added assurance. If SB 50 is passed into law it gives safety to only those who can afford the extra $50 dollars per tire, which in most cases turns into $200 for a set of 4 tires.

We realize that Senator Giessel has reduced the fee in her substitute bill from $75 per tire to $50 per tire; however we still believe that this added expense will be costly and very unfair. Not only is it unfair to the growing young families who in many cases need these tires on more than one vehicle, but it is also unfair to the senior citizens who are on fixed incomes and who need these tires to safely get to and from medical appointments and other needed trips.

Senator Giessel has also changed the weight of the studs from 1.1 grams to 0.5 grams, which would include the lightweight studs that are more road friendly. We are certainly not in favor of this change.

We do appreciate the fact that Senator Giessel has listened to our concerns of online sales, however there is no provision for enforcement of the fee. Currently states are finding it impossible to collect sales tax on online sales, so how much more difficult will it be to collect this $50 per tire fee from the online merchants who ship from outside the state.

Thank you in advance for listening to our concerns about this bill that we believe would have an adverse effect on the safety of Alaska's driving public.

Sincerely,

Richard Nordness,
Executive Director

93705 E. Granada · Kennewick, WA 99338 · Telephone (509) 948-2433 · Fax (509) 396-7663

David Scott

From: Chelsea Lindquist <chelserin@gmail com>
Sent: Friday, February 17, 2017 7 15 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Proposed Studded snow tire tax

Today I read about the proposed tax on studded tires and would like to express my opposition to this tax.

First of all, the proposed increase - from $5 to $75 per tire - is extravagant. Studded tires are not a luxury item. They are an essential safety measure for winter driving and they need to be an available option for all Alaskans. For many people in Anchorage, not to mention those in the rest of the state, spending an additional $275 on tires would be a hardship, and could even keep them from getting studs at all. Having cars on the roads without proper winter tires would be dangerous for everyone and could result in an increase in accidents, which would increase time and money spent by our police and ambulance workers. Not to mention the increase in insurance premiums.

As an elected public servant you need to be working to help all Alaskans to have more options for making safe decisions. Instead this proposed tax penalizes the middle and lower income residents.

As an alternative revenue source I am very supportive of house bill 115, using permenant fund earnings and implementing an income tax. I also strongly believe that we need to curb the amount of money we are giving to oil companies in the form of credits and subsidies.

Please oppose this proposed tax on studded tires. It is misguided and will only hurt Alaskans economically and make our roads less safe

Thank you for your time,
Chelsea Vukovich
99516

From: <mmsquito@me.com>
Date: February 8, 2017 at 7:37:53 PM AKST
To: Senator Cathy Giessel <sen.cathy.giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Tax is a mistake

Hi Cathy,

I heard today on the radio that you have sponsored SB50 to tax studded tires $75/tire. This is a mistake! As it is drivers use warn or summer tires in the winter, that contribute to accidents. A studded tire has the potential to add just a little bit of traction to control a vehicle. Without studded tires more members of our families will be involved in head on collisions that will kill some of us! No doubt your bill will further discourage drivers to buy studded tires and it will do little to preserve the roads.

In my past I used to work for Wilder Construction and was paid to resurface prematurely warn out roads and even then I thought it was a waste. I worked with John Lambert (Wilder Paving Superintendent) who was a member of an alliance or committee that met regularly to discuss paving issues in the state. John was in direct contact with Newt Bingham who tried all kinds of things to improve asphalt surface wear with little or no success (Ex: Stone Mastic mixes of all kinds, special hard rock from Cantwell, various polymer blends, rubberized asphalt, etc, etc.).

Having paved for a long time in Alaska, John told me (15+ years ago) that at the time there were three roadways that had been paved with Chevron Asphalt oil that were still in use. I recall one of them being A Street between 15th and Northern lIghts Blvd. (high ADT) which had held up way beyond the 5-7 years (I think about 20+ years) we are getting with all the various new mixes out there using polymer modified asphalt oil from Alaska North Slope crude. You see before we had our own asphalt oil made by Tesoro in Nikiski, Chevron imported asphalt oil made from Venezuela crude oil.

There used to be people in the industry like John Lambert who paved a lot of roads over a whole career in Alaska that knew that the oil was the factor in the mix that changed. Newt Bingham couldn't get the Chevron oil for various reasons and tried everything else and borrowed what ever idea he could from other places like the Nordic countries.

I have seen Dimond Blvd ruts within 1 week of fresh pavement without one studded tire ever touching the asphalt. I have milled a stretch of Bragaw just north of the Glenn Hwy adjacent the Red Apple grocery store where the asphalt roadway was dripping (flowing down hill) over time in excess of 18" as measured from a vertical valve box. I have seen many many examples of rutted roads where the the asphalt was higher than the paved surface in the middle of the lane and again at the concrete curb. I DON'T THINK STUDDED TIRES CAUSE ASPHALT TO GROW OUTSIDE OF THE WHEEL PATHS! I also acknowledge that studded tires do not improve the life of asphalt either.

There are also subbase issues at play as well (the gravel below the asphalt).

So, I felt that it was my duty to forward this information to you. John Lambert would be an excellent resource if he is still out there. I have high regard for your husband Rich, and I suspect that he is convinced that studded tires are the problem with his materials background, but he is wrong given that we used to have roadways with high ADT that lasted a long time. Please forward this email to him and I would be happy to share any further information but I pretty much spilled my guts from what I can recall, and I confess that I am not an asphalt expert. But then again I don't have to be a Climatologist to know that our planet has been warming since Noahs flood, with fluctuations of course.

Please reconsider and withdraw your bill.

Sincerely,

Marc Guzik
907-268-1956

From: Stacey Dean [mailto:SDean@graylingconstruction.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 9:14 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Cc: Cody Lee <CLee@graylingconstruction.com>
Subject: SB 50 Increased Studded Tire Fee

Good morning.

I wanted to let you know that right now my cost to put a set of studded tires on my company vehicles, most have dualies, is $30. Now you are interested in increasing this to $450/vehicle. Wow is all I can say. We have the lowest gas tax in the nation, yet you hit tires with a sledge hammer. This tax will only delay purchases of tires by people who need them because they can't afford to pay the $450. Studded tires are a safety item. Often they are the first purchase that new comers to Alaska make. Don't ask new comers to delay the purchase of studded tires due to this super high tax.

My suggestions are do one of the following:

1. Add $25/vehicle for registration – consumer vehicles
2. Add $50/vehicle for registration – commercial vehicles
3. Add $.05/gallon for gas tax
4. All of the above

Do not gamble on whether people will replace a very important safety item like studded tires. In the winter studded tires are sometimes that only thing that keeps people alive. Do not make studded tires so expensive that people gamble on other's safety. Remember that next time you here are about a head on collision caused because someone didn't have studded tires. Studded tires save lives…

Sincerely,
Stacey Dean, ASID
Grayling Construction
7133 Arctic Blvd Suite 3
Anchorage, AK 99518
907-344-5733
www.graylingconstruction.com

From: David Roe [mailto:dardevil_68@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 10, 2017 9:50 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 50

Senator Giessel,

As a constituent in your district, I was pleased to have voted for you, because I believed you had the best interest of your constituents in mind. Today I read about your desire to increase the tax paid for studded

tires. This is exactly the opposite of the best interest of your constituents. Yes, fixing roads costs money, and yes we are in a fiscal crisis, but this is the worst plan conceivable to try to pay for road maintenance. Maintenance is not more important than safety, and that is what this $75 per tire tax does. I understand that you spend the majority of the worst road conditions in Juneau where things aren't so bad, but here in Anchorage, and many places across the state, having studded tires SAVES LIVES. When you overtax something like this, you create a situation where a person must choose to either spend the extra money (which many do not have) or to drive a vehicle with less safe tires. I don't know how many people I've seen with so-called winter tires spinning them on the road in front of me or fishtailing down the road or losing control around corners, while studded cars make these exact same conditions and speeds much easier and safer. When you force someone to choose to not drive studded tires, you have put every one at risk of being the one that is injured or killed when that person loses control of their vehicle. The more people who are forced to make this decision due to your desire to tax the studs, the greater the risk to the entire populous, including myself and my family. I implore you to reconsider this bill and drop it before it goes any further. Passage of this bill will present a clear danger to your constituents.

David Roe
Anchaorage AK

From: Ruth Andersson [mailto:ruthmand@alaskan.com]
Sent: Friday, February 10, 2017 9:03 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tire fees

Sen. Giessel,

I am one of your constituents living on the upper hillside and very unhappy with your proposal. We live on a steep road and have a rather long and steep driveway requiring studded tires many times a year, particularly the past two winters when we had nothing but ice on our roadways. We have lived in the same home for close to 40 years and I remember the days before studded tires were available. To get to work every morning we had to put on chains to get down to Hillside Dr., then take them off on the side of the road. I kept a snowmachine suit in my car to put on over my work clothes so I could crawl under the car to remove the chains and put them back on on my way home in the evening. Studded tires were a salvation!

Being aware that studded tires were blamed for road damage I started taking note. Some years ago, Hillside Dr. was repaved in early summer. By the time fall rolled around there were already grooves back in the road. I was quite surprised and started paying closer attention. The same thing happened to the New Seward Hwy. after repaving. All this leads me to conclude that the problem with the grooves in our roads probably has absolutely nothing to do with studded tires and most likely is due to the makeup of the asphalt laid down or the preparation of the roadbed. I strongly urge you to investigate those issues. The asphalt companies have a vested interest in putting down new paving that doesn't last very long, don't you think? There is a small stretch on the New Seward Hwy. just north of the Dimond interchange where some different type of material is on the road and it seems to be holding up much better than the regular roadbed,. I suggest you to look into that.

And then there is the very definite safety factor that comes with having studded tires. This is a regressive tax that punishes those of us that may not have the means to pay an additional $275 per set of tires, an obscene increase by the way, and still need the studded tires to get around safely. We are seniors and live on a limited income which is already a challenge in Alaska. We also expect to be able to drive safely and expect others to be able to do so as well without outrageous surcharges and/or taxes.

And lastly, if the money collected were to go into a dedicated fund for rutted road repair, proven to be caused by studded tire damage, that would be one thing but we all know that is not a possibility by law. So, basically you are proposing that those of us that require studded tires to leave our homes chip in an additional $275 to the general fund. Do you realize the absurdity of that?

Your job is to cut spending across the board. You can start by cutting boards! Cutting spending on government agencies and departments. When you have done that with a sharp knife move on to government subsidies. Contract out services wherever possible. Why can we taxpayers see the excess and you cannot? Investigate why some of our roadbeds are more prone to rutting and look into using better materials or methods, and so on. That is your job as my representative in Juneau.

Raising taxes and finding sneaky ways to collect more money from us citizens should be the last item on your to do list. As someone who has voted for you every time your name has been on the ballot, I have to say that at this time I am very, very disappointed in you and I do hope you will reconsider and withdraw this poorly thought out bill.

Ruth Andersson
12921 Midori Dr.
Anchorage AK 99516

From: Nancy Perry [mailto:nancyp@ak.net]
Sent: Friday, February 10, 2017 8:18 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Senate Bill 50

Dear Senator Giessel,

Please do not support Senate Bill 50. Making safety more expensive is not what Alaskans need. When people opt not to have studded tires they not only put themselves at greater risk for injury and death but also all the people around them, drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. Someone who can't stop when they need to because they couldn't afford and extra $300 could cost me my life. Please look for remedies to the budget crisis which do not risk lives.

Sincerely,
Nancy Perry

From: lmarkov@gci.net [mailto:lmarkov@gci.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 11, 2017 8:44 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tires

I strongly

Disagree with your studded tire tax. This only make roads less safe as this gives an extra amount of needed traction on ice and snow. I would suggest raising the fine to $250 per tire for the folks that choose to drive past the legal date. I would hope law enforcement would even catch my own son who has summer tires already mounted but is too lazy to change them out.

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

From: Patrick Hartshorn [mailto:patrick@alaskan.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 11, 2017 8:11 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Tax on studded tires.

Dear Senator Giessel;

Please reconsider SB50 if in fact it is what was relayed to me. I was told it included a $75 tax on studded tire purchases?? If so, please do some research, contact high end superintendents of major construction projects, studs are not the problem, lack of funding is! Everyone jumps to conclusions that Studded tires cause the ruts in our road systems, not true, or at least probably 95% not true. Ruts are caused by weight and poor quality materials, partially due to the softer products used due to our weather changes. There are much better products and methods on the market but no one uses them due to reduced budgets on these highway jobs. Studded tires are a minimal wear issue yet are a huge life saver to those that use them properly, without a sense of security motivating stupid driving habits. Studs are proven to provide better traction and stopping power to avoid initial loss of traction and more positive stopping when presented with an emergency. Taxing studs will only stop the sale of studs and could lead to more safety issues, is that what your looking to do???

Thank you for your time and consideration into this matter.

Pat H.

From: Chelsea Lindquist [mailto:chelserin@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 10, 2017 9:42 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Tax on snow tires

Senator Giessel,

Today I read about your proposed tax on studded tires and would like to express my opposition to this tax.

First of all, the proposed increase - from $5 to $75 per tire - is extravagant. Studded tires are not a luxury item. They are an essential safety measure for winter driving and they need to be an available option for all Alaskans. For many people in Anchorage, not to mention those in the rest of the state, spending an additional $275 on tires would be a hardship, and could even keep them from getting studs at all. Having cars on the roads without proper winter tires would be dangerous for everyone and could result in an increase in accidents, which would increase time and money spent by our police and ambulance workers. Not to mention the increase in insurance premiums.

As an elected public servant you should be working to help the people of you district, as well as all Alaskans, have more options for making safe decisions. Instead this proposed tax penalizes the middle and lower income residents.

As an alternative revenue source I am very supportive of house bill 115, using permenant fund earnings and implementing an income tax. I also strongly believe that we need to curb the amount of money we are giving to oil companies in the form of credits and subsidies.

Please reconsider your proposed tax on studded tires. It is misguided and will only hurt Alaskans economically and make our roads less safe.

Thank you,
Chelsea Vukovich
Anchorage, 99516

From: Curtis Smith [mailto:bogusaddy1@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 12, 2017 10:57 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Opposed to SB 50

Dear Senator Giessel,

I would like to express my adamant opposition to increasing the tax on studded tires (SB 50). I have yet to see conclusive evidence that non-studded tires are just as safe as studded tires, and those tires for which there is scant evidence of having nearly the same degree of safety are often too expensive for many Alaskans. Simply put, studded tires provide an affordable safe option. SB 50 would make Alaskans choose between their wallets and safety. It would be a shame if even one additional person died or sustained an injury because they were forced to purchase tires they could afford at the expense of increased safety.

Sincerely,
Curtis Smith

7011 Gibbs Hill Cir
Anchorage, AK 99504
907-240-2640

From: Bobbie Cook [mailto:cook_bobbie@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 9:56 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tires

I am outraged by your proposal to increase the tax on a single studded tire from five dollars to seventy five dollars. This seems like a money gouging plan to fatten the state budget at the expense of safety. Our icy road conditions can persist up to 6 months a year. With global warming comes the unpredictable weather patterns we have been experiencing in recent years. The snow covered roads of the past are being replace with far more ice covered roads today. While icy road conditions are becoming more prevalent, the road maintenance cuts have left us with less snow removal, less sanding, and far less safe roads.

I have listened to people who refuse to buy studded tires for the last thirty years. They claim that the tire ruts in the roads are caused by studded tires. However if one examines these ruts more closely,

they will find that these ruts are not produced from surface wear. If that were true all of the ruts would show subsurface structure showing through the ripping up of the top surface. Instead these ruts are caused by compression from the weight of traffic on a road bed without significant substructure. Alaska's road surfaces are built over areas of tundra and marshes most often lacking in bedrock construction in other states.

This type of tax proposal is hazardous to the safety of Alaskan Drivers. It should not be considered without significant studies, road maintenance, and construction. Another study to consider would be how many people with studs vs. without studs incur traffic accidents each winter. Consultation with insurance companies would also be significant.

From: thirdeye@alaska.net [mailto:thirdeye@alaska.net]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 12:57 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Senate bill 50

Dear Senator Giessel:

Regarding your recent Studded tire tax proposal. Senate bill 50

Regarding the issue of burdening yet another tax on Alaskan citizens to the tune of $300.00 for every new set of studded tires that they decides to purchase

The first problem that I have with this new tax proposal is the irrefutable issue of its effect on potential life endangerment. For the record, it is true that several of the newer tires do have increased grip ability on winter roads. But any 5 year old knows that those tires may work on several types of road conditions, but not on the most severe types of black ice, and marginal road surfaces.

I live in Girdwood, and have been navigating the town of Girdwood, and the Seward highway now for 45 years. Just 3 years ago, I had my first every single car accident on my way to town near milepost 107. My speed was 52 mph, and the conditions were slick, but nothing that I had not previously encountered hundreds of times before. About half way around a long corner, my rear end slid out, I fishtailed twice, and slammed into the rock wall on the side of the highway.

After careful investigation, it was simply because my studded tires had worn out, and were no longer able to provide the grip, that new studded tires would have afforded me. Neither my speed, nor the conditions, nor my driving skills were the problem. I could very easily have slammed into another car or truck, and cause a major accident or even a death, simply due to worn out studded tires.

My second issue with this proposed tax is the effect that it will have on individuals, and families that simply cannot afford this new "luxury" tax to be able to buy these tires, and protect their families safety while on the roads.

My third issue concerns the issue of what happens when a person purchases a set of new studded tires at $900.00, and then hits a rock on the Seward highway, and ruins one of the tires.
He or she returns to the tire shop only to be informed that they cannot simply replace the one bad tire, and they must by law replace the entire set? This is currently a huge issue with todays tire stores, and its clients. So one destroyed tire could cause a driver to have to spend an additional $900.00 on yet another

set of tires, thereby imposing severe financial hardship on every driver who simply wants to enjoy a safe driving experience.

My final issue involves the imposition of a tax on me and thousands, perhaps tens of thousands of your constituents, so that damage to our roads can be repaired.
But, if I for example on a normal week, make a single trip to Anchorage; that works out to be roughly a 80 to 100 mile round trip. But compare my driving habits to the Valley commuter from Wasilla who is spends 5 or 6 days a week on the Glenn Highway, and maybe 2 hours of every day driving around Anchorage. Or a delivery truck on a constant route around town, or a fleet of Taxi's, and Pizza delivery drivers who spend 12 hours a day on our roads?

Your proposal severely penalizes me, the occasional driver, who lives on a limited Social Security income, for the excesses of thousands of other drivers. This is neither prudent, nor fair.

Thank you for your attention to this issue, and I desperately urge you to drop this usury tax, as in the end it will literally cost lives in the long run, and save a few dollars in the short term.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,
Randy Brandon

From: Susan Williams [mailto:smwilliams@gci.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 12, 2017 10:19 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 50

Dear Senator,
I am opposed to the proposed fee on studded snow tires. It is a tax on safety and the middle class. A $75 per tire tax on installation would be $300 per season on top of the cost to put on the tires. The legislation doesn't even have the money designated for road. It says it **may** be used for road maintenance .

This fee will encourage people to leave their snow tires on all year. It would be worth risking a ticket.

Please pull this proposal. Families safety should not be taxed especially at a time winter road maintenance is being reduced.

Susan

From: fred@mtaonline.net [mailto:fred@mtaonline.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 12, 2017 9:12 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tire fee increase

I would like for you to reconsider SB 50. We tend to blame studded tires for the ruts in the roads in Alaska. That is not very true. Every road like a building needs to start with a good base! We simply don't have the right aggregate in Alaska to build the proper base needed for our roads. We have round gravel. Like marbles it doesn't stack up very good. What s happening to our roads is the gravel is settling causing the ruts. The ruts don't match tire width of vehicles. I can go on but, I hope you understand what I am trying to say. I have been schooled on this at Vicksburg Miss. Thanks for your time. Fred Thibodeau, Chugiak

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

From: mike@50below.net [mailto:mike@50below.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 11, 2017 8:45 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tire proposal

Dear Senator,

I haven't seen the actual bill yet but did see a write up where you were proposing to increase the tax on studded tires from $5 each to $75 each making a tax of $300 on a set of studded tires. This is one of the most outrageous things I've heard come out of Juneau in a while. Especially your rationale for doing so...studded tires cause ruts in the road.

I live in Delta Junction and we have no ruts in our roads and it's not because nobody here uses studs. It's because we don't have the volume of traffic that you people do in south central Alaska. The ruts in the roads there are caused by the shear weight of trucks, especially during times when the ground is soft, and the shear number of vehicles that travel your streets. Perhaps you should consult AKDOT and ask them what really causes ruts in the roads.

We drive to Fairbanks for most of our shopping here and the roads are almost always glare ice. Why? Because the road maintenance here is terrible. The Birch Lake station has been closed and the snow plows in Delta do nothing but groom the streets in and around town. The local theory is that the budgets have been cut and DOT wants us to suffer so we will complain and you will give them more money. Everything's political, huh. Meanwhile who suffers. The citizens. And with your proposal who will suffer...the citizens. The roads here in winter are downright dangerous at times in winter. Not everyone has a 4x4 SUV with anti-lock brakes and traction control. For glare ice there is no substitute for studded tires. You should do your homework on that one. My studded Hakkepelitas already cost $750 per set, now you want me to pay over $1,000 for them? And for what? Is there going to be more road repairs with the extra money? I doubt that seriously.

You Legislative types have been spending beyond your means for years now. Why don't you cut the budget and try to get some oil companies to invest in our state. Don't punish the people of our State, solve the problem. Isn't that why you're there.

Mike White
P.O. Box 1718
Delta Junction, AK 99737

From: Matthew Pauli [mailto:kickwax64@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 11, 2017 5:22 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Senate Bill 50

Senator Giessel:

I am a constituent. Our house is on Circle Drive. We are in a LRSA so our roads are plowed early and sanded often. I realize that this situation is different then when I access Hillside Drive and O'Malley Road to the New Seward Highway.

I have long been an advocate for studless snow tires. They are still on my truck. However, my attitude has changed on the subject due to the poor winter maintenance which in turn leads to ice build-up and accumulation which is equally as dangerous as the ruts created by studded tire use. Similar to January 26 of this year, the forecast for the Anchorage area next week includes rain. This sets up a situation that state DOT will not respond on a timely basis. The roads will be

I would imagine a review of road design and construction should also be in the discussion. Five year vs. 20 year road design?

I realize the fiscal situation the state of Alaska is in. $75/tire is not an answer; it is just window dressing on the larger fiscal problem.

For the record, my wife and I have lived in Anchorage virtually all of our lives (now in our 6th decade). We also realize the Alaska(n) aversion to pay for the services they utilize. We regularly commit a good deal of our income to activities that at one time received direct public funding. We are not averse to paying for the services we utilize; both public and private. We are not averse to the use of our PFD for state services, a state income tax, increased user fees, sales taxes. We both grew up where we benefited from liberal college lending programs (forgiveness), Projects '80's, grain elevators that were never used...

Thank you for your time,
Matt Pauli
11945 Circle Drive
Anchorage

From: Trevor Thompson [mailto:gub_wv@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 6:29 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: No Taxes

Senator Cathy Giessel:

I am writing to you concerning a distrubing article I saw in the ADN. A proposal to increase the per studded tire tax from $5 to $75 dollars is, there is only one way to put it, insane. We cannot tax our way out of our current fiscal crisis and balancing the budget on the backs of your constituency is definitely not the way to do it. Studded tires can serve as a life saving devices for our vehicles and your proposal will price many people out of that option. If we want our road maintence to be less, we should work with our contractors and choose road surface material that lasts longer and performs better. Also, maybe our road contracts should have a performance guarantee stating that the surface shouldn't need to be redone every 3-5 five years as seems to be the case.

I implore you to work with your fellow senators to cut any and all waste from government before a single thought is turned to raising taxes on anyone in this state. I have lived in Alaska my entire life and

it sickens me to have watched our state government grow unchecked into the behemoth it is today. Please embrace libertarian and conservative views of government that it be no bigger than necessary. Thank you for your time in this manner.

Respectfully,
Trevor Thompson
3601 Twilight Ln
Anchorage, AK 99516
907-350-0349

From: John See [mailto:jseeforester@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:35 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Tax

Senator Giessel: I am somewhat appalled by your proposal to raise taxes on something that I consider a "life & safety" issue. I would like you to consider that public safety agencies in Alaska all utilize studded tires for "first responder" vehicles. There are good reasons for this decision. Please do some research and complete an in-depth analysis of the different alternatives before pushing this faulty bill through the system.

I personally have tried the studless winter tires (several brands) with an open mind and have found all of them to be significantly inferior to the studded variety. This issue seems to be heavily weighted by the tire industry. Why is that? What is the profit difference? How about talking to the experts on winter driving; APD, AFD, AST and other emergency response agencies who demand that their employees use studded winter tires for good reasons.

Please carefully consider this faulty proposal before putting our loved ones at additional risk because of the dramatic cost increase mandated by this legislation. This proposed tax will restrict the use of studded tires to the wealthy. Is that fair? I think not!

John W. See

From: Colleen Darrell [mailto:aurorasky@gci.net]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:58 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Have you lost your friggin mind?

Senator Giessel…

I can only attribute your arrogance to being some spoon-fed bureaucrat who hasn't had it too rough! What a loser you are to even suggest that a $75/per tire tax be placed on winter tires… how friggin stupid that was of you! Are you some scientific expert on winter tires?

CUT YOUR LOUSY AND LAZY STATE EMPLOYEES… CUT 1/3 AND LEAVE THE REST OF US ALONE. Then move to all the hand-out programs… Then tell the natives to pay

their fair share since most of them are the recipients of all those free-bee programs… then you can inform the holy than thou oil companies that their oil taxes are being down-sized. They laid off thousands of people… WHY THE HELL CAN'T THE STATE FOLLOW SUIT? TOO GOOD FOR THAT? I HAVEN'T WORKED SINCE LAST JULY 2016 SINCE YOU IDIOTS HAVE NOT BOTHERED TO PRODUCE ANY ACTUAL JOBS…

TIRED OF THE LEGISLATURE'S INCOMPETENCY… WAS IT NOT BAD ENOUGH WHEN YOU IDIOTS LEGALIZED POT AND DOWNSIZED THE TROOPERS?

YOU NEED TO BE REPLACED

C Darrell

From: Mark Inghram [mailto:minghram@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 7:43 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: STUD TAX

SENATOR GIESSEL:

I am very disappointed in your proposed increase on taxes applicable to studded tires. Safety should be your primary concern. The statement that I saw you made said that the studdless tires are "almost as good" as the studded tires. I doubt you are qualified to make that conclusion, and from what I have read there is not agreement on the effectiveness of studdless tires. It is also likely that some of the rutting common throughout Alaska is not the result of stud use, but rather the result of soft asphalt, poor subgrades, and the "spongy soil" that is common throughout much of Alaska during breakup. In essence, you are proposing that we put people at more risk in order to save a money. I find that incomprehensible.

I would speculate that the cost of road repair from the use of studded tires to the economy as a whole is likely less than the cost to the economy of loss due to preventable accidents with the use of studded tires. What is the cost to the economy of the medical bills incurred from the accidents prevented by studded tires? What is the cost to the economy of the loss of productivity due to lost time on the job from injury/death from preventable accidents from the use of studded tires? What is the cost to the economy of repair of vehicles damaged needing repair from accidents preventable by use of studded tires? What are the unquantifiable costs to families that have lost loved ones due to accidents preventable with the use of studded tires? Have you really made an attempt to address all of the costs to the economy potentially saved from the use of studded tires? In reality, there is likely no way to quantify these issues. My conclusion, repairing the roads in Alaska resulting from damage due to stud use may be substantial, but so to is the cost to the economy from the damage, injury, and deaths resulting from not using studs. Even without the ability to accurately determine the true costs, Alaska needs to consider the cost of repair of the roads as a cost for keeping people safer. That keeping people safer is enough justification without even looking at the real costs.

What your proposed tax on studded tires is an attempt to do is to control Alaskan's choices through onerous taxation. This reeks of how the Federal Government controls the social and economic direction

of the country through the tax code. I am sorry to hear that you have decided to follow that poor example, and take a position from "on high" that you know what is best. Combine this with your support of the absurd Dunleavy proposal and it is clear that you have lost your compass.

Thank you for your time,
MARK INGHRAM

From: Bob Kirn [mailto:kirn@gci.net]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 9:14 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: $75 Studded Tire Proposal and Other Budget Fixing Ideas

Senator Giessel,

As a constituent who has voted for you twice, I am very disappointed in your proposal to increase studded tire fees to $75 per tire and feel it necessary to voice my opinion. While you see this as a revenue generating "user fee" for those who might be diminishing the lifespan of our roads (an inconclusive assumption), this is a foolish proposal in many ways. It will disproportionally affect those who struggle economically and cannot afford 4 wheel or all-wheel drive vehicles. As a parent of teenage drivers, I see studded tires as an extra form of insurance to keep my kids and everyone else, including you, safe on the roads. To think that many people will forego extra safety measures because of the excessive cost to buy studded tires is a public safety nightmare. Any reasonable person can predict that accidents and injuries will increase. If you are assuming people will magically become more careful drivers, you are dead wrong. If that were true, we wouldn't have dozens of ditch divers every time it snows. The small amount of revenue generated will be a fraction of the extra costs incurred in auto damage repair costs, insurance premiums and health care costs generated from additional injuries.

While I appreciate that Alaska is facing difficult choices in these challenging financial times, this is the wrong approach to solving the budget crisis. Let's call it what it is – a tax increase for those on the road system.

Sincerely,

ROBERT KIRN

From: beth@bethsvalleyviews.com [mailto:beth@bethsvalleyviews.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 7:25 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sen. Shelley Hughes <Senator.Shelley.Hughes@akleg.gov>; Rep. Cathy Tilton <Rep.Cathy.Tilton@akleg.gov>
Subject: Get Out of Our Pockets and into Government's

Senator Giessel,

Your husband knows, as do all long-term DOT employees, that a study was done in the 90's that proved with higher quality gravel and deeper road beds the roadways would last much longer. Additionally, it is not the studded tires that truly cause the damage, it is the weight on the too-shallow, low-quality gravel, rubber-asphalt design-built of our roadways. Get a grip and go after the true cause and don't come to us to pay for it.

Right now we have $13+ billion in reserves. With a $2+ billion shortfall this year, which potentially on-going, and reserves that statutorily increase every year. We could probably hold on for at least 10 years in this manner. By the end of 5 or 6 yeas the International Energy Association anticipates oil being around $80/barrel, which would the allow our earnings to regrow as we would not need to deep into them to maintain the current budget.

Both chambers of the legislature now we have about $1,200 in income taxes, 10% in capital gains taxes, increased motor fuel taxes, $75/tire on swap-out (not just purchase) for studded tires, increased fishing fees, increased snow machine fees, etc., etc., etc. The ones I have numbers for lead me to believe that each individual (who pays taxes) would be paying the government about $3,000 per year. It is my understanding that only about 60% of us pay income taxes. So, about 292,000 (less children and 60% adults) will pay about $876 million to government. Another tiny drop in our over-bloated budget.

Get back to work and reduce the budget by $1.1 billion and THEN maybe we'll be able to let you have more money to waste. After all, you don't seem to realize that we are in a recession and according to responsible and respected economists, as well as ISER last spring, say the absolutely worst thing you can do in a recession is take money out of the private sector.

Beth Fread

Associate Broker

907-354-7759

Beth@BethsValleyViews.com

Lee Realty, LLC

550 E Dunbar Dr., Suite F

Wasilla, AK 99654

From: jlbuskirk [mailto:jlbuskirk@mtaonline.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 8:53 AM

To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Cc: jlbuskirk <jlbuskirk@mtaonline.net>
Subject: SB 50

I am writing to you to express my displeasure at SB 50. Not everyone lives in Anchorage. We have lived in Talkeetna since the mid-seventies and we have always used studded snow tires.I do not feel like it is your place to heavily tax people who live in a very snowy / icy area. Also, this will result in many more accidents and the end result will be a far greater cost of lives. For anyone who has ever driven icy roads and had to brake suddenly (for example for a moose), there's no doubt that studded tires work. This bill is just a dumb idea. Sincerely, Jane and Larry Buskirk

Sent via the Samsung GALAXY S®4, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: Wiley_Lisa [mailto:Wiley_Lisa@asdk12.org]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 9:19 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: no stud tax

To Senator Giessel,

While I appreciate your efforts to create sources of new funding, I urge you not to pass your Stud Tax bill. This would hit everyday Alaskans who are trying to be safe in the pocketbook. That is the last population you should be targeting.

I encourage you, instead, to find create ways to tax the oil industry.

Please do not respond with your logic about why you created this bill. I have read that information. Just please note that this is not a popular decision for every day Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Lisa Wiley

From: skconn@mtaonline.net [mailto:skconn@mtaonline.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 9:30 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Cc: Shelley Hughes <hughesalaska@inbox.com>
Subject: SB50

Dear Senator Giessel,

I am very upset that you have sponsored a huge tax on Alaskans. $75 a tire is a huge blow to people's budgets, especially when the Governor and your House colleagues are looking to continue to cut the Permanent Fund Dividend, triple the gas tax, and institute an income tax. All of these will place more and more burdens on working Alaskans and push us into a full blow recession.

The true reason that our roads have ruts and are falling apart is that those who get the contracts use cheap materials that do not last. We keep throwing money away on bandaids, instead of fixing the real problem. Maybe the state should look at other bidders who will do the job right, and then make sure that they do. That would definitely serve the state, but instead the contracts are awarded to the same companies year after year; who must laugh all the way to the bank.

You know that all money brought in must go to the General Fund first, before it can be distributed out. Once those funds get absorbed into the General Fund they rarely, if ever, go to the programs that they were supposedly collected for. We have seen examples of this with the tobacco and alcohol taxes.

You were sent to Juneau to fix the budget, not put new taxes on the residents of our state. People are furious over this bill back home; I should know since I am the District 11 Chair and Secretary of Valley Republican Women. You can make things right by withdrawing this bill and fight the proposed taxes and restructuring of the Permanent Fund coming our way. If you don't, then you are siding with the Democrats and are telling us that you support bloated governments and wasteful spending. That is not in keeping with the Republican Platform.

Sincerely,
Shannon Connelly
District 11
907-354-1856

From: Les Notestine [mailto:alaska.notes@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 10:06 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 50 - Studded Tire Tax

I would urge you not to vote for your bill. My husband and I are retired. We can't afford all of the proposed taxes. A tire tax is not what is needed to fix the roads. Alaska didn't have this problem in the 1980's. The reason the roads have ruts is because the ASPHALT PLANT changed the formula for asphalt that is placed on Alaskan roads. They changed the size aggregate from a small aggregate to a U. S. quarter sized aggregate. Maybe they should go back to the smaller aggregate and the roads wouldn't need to be replaced or repaired as often.

Last year, portions of the Seward Highway were overlaid between O'Malley Rd. and Tudor Rd. The project was barely completed and the new pavement was already stripping and rutting. I have never seen such bad work or possibly another new pavement formula. Maybe you should investigate if the formula changed in any way.

I do not know exactly where you live, but I have had experience with the non-studded tires. I worked for the Municipality of Anchorage and was a project inspector. The city made a new policy for no studded tires. I had to follow a route on the hillside roads for the Goldenview School sewer line. I was driving a suburban-type vehicle. While driving the hillside road to the project site during the spring melt, the vehicle would not climb the icy road. I was about half way when the car decided to slide down backwards. Miraculously, no vehicles were traveling at the intersection below, where the "T" dropped off about 12 feet. I managed to turn the car just enough to end up at the bottom of someone's driveway instead of dropping of the embankment. The vehicle was filled with surveying equipment including the oversized nails used for survey marking. If I had overturned or hit the garage door, all of those markers would probably be impaled into my body. After that, the city allowed vehicles that had to drive on the hillside to have studded tires, alleviating the slipping problem.

The new snow tires are great on snow, but not on ice. We live in ALASKA! We need to drive on ice during the spring melt especially. An annual fee of $300 to me that is to fix roads that could be fixed with the State asphalt plant formula isn't right. I urge you to further investigate the 1980 formula change. At that time, there was a gravel shortage, and I assume that might still be the case, but the roads can be constructed better.

Look for ways to cut spending vs. more tax. Since our population is shrinking, maybe we don't need as many legislators or aids. There should be NO pay raises. Consider better benefits and bonuses vs. any pay increase. Benefits do not add to future retirement plan dollars. What is costing government so much is the technology hardware, software, training and turnover. Soon to be replaced by robots that will no longer innovate. You can't stop progress, but maybe something can be added to purchase agreements for computers to last more than 2 years before they are obsolete or that will be replaced at no cost to the government. One magnetic pulse will show just how useless all the technology can be.

Government's original purpose was to keep records. You might find out how worthless government is when there is no longer a hard copy of documents. You can't tax or assess property if you don't know who owns it. How will you access records if it is just a blip on a computer screen and the power goes down for a long period with no way to access backup electronic records?

...just things to think about. Don't tax snow tires.

Thanks you for reading,
Sandy Notestine

From: Harold Johnsen [mailto:johnsenharold@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 10:32 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Proposed new tax on studded tires

In visiting with several engineers, I urge you to get more information about what is causing the Glenn Highway, and others, to develop "grooves." Studded tires may "shred" blacktop at stop signs when the drivers spin their wheels on ice, etc. but there is no way that would account for the grooves in the Glenn. I have been told that the grooves result from compression of the blacktop, particularly on long hot sunshine filled days. Some compression from cars and more from trucks, particularly heavy trucks headed for the North slope. The compression is minimized if the aggregate used in the blacktop mix is of different sizes rather than all uniform. Uniform aggregate tends to stack and does not maintain the distance between each piece of aggregate needed to avoid compression. I am not an engineer, but we have a whole department of transportation full of them. Please contact them or others before pursuing a tax that won't result in the ultimate goal you are trying to achieve - better roads. Thanks for your service, we are facing the need for a lot more revenue but this source may be ill-advised. HaJ

From: Ted Jones [mailto:tootall01@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 11:32 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tire tax

I have used studded tires for many years and unless they are outlawed I will continue to use them. I feel as you do, the safety of my family and grandkids. I travel more than the 13 miles between eagle river and anchorage. The 12% of the vehicles running studs should not bear the cost to fix roads. How many of these vehicles keep their studs on thru the summer. This should be enforced and fined as the law states. I don't think an increase $70 a tire is affordable to the average Alaskan. So they will be using unsafe tires and causing accidents or unsafe conditions for other drivers. Any section of road has to be resurfaced over a period of time. Maybe a different method and quality of asphalt would make the road last longer. Don't penalize the few that make a choice to use studded tires for the safety of their family.
Thank you,
Ted Jones
Sent from my iPhone

From: Renne Champagne [mailto:renne@gci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 12:25 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tire tax

Your studded tire tax increase is ridiculous and unfair. I understand Alaska needs more money but I don't see any of you in office or government jobs taking ANY income cuts and you already got the PFD. I'm seriously considering moving to lower 48 and so is my family (which is over 15 persons).

Renne Champagne
Home: 907 357-0103
CeLL: 907 357-0102
Fax: 907 631-4253

From: BOB LOPETRONE [mailto:boblopetrone@gci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 12:54 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Sen. Kevin Meyer <Sen.Kevin.Meyer@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tires/ State workers

Senators: After hearing the proposal of $75 per studded tire I must voice my opinion against the issue. I have done research into the stud less tires that Senator Geisel mentioned and if fact own some of those same tires. They do in fact work very well on small light weight vehicles, but here is where the problem is,they do not work nearly as well on light truck applications because of the load rating, to obtain the required load rating the manufacture must stiffen the side wall making them much less flexible and in doing so they do not work nearly as well as on the smaller vehicles. Also we know that Alaska is truck country. I have owned and operated a snow removal business for 27 years now from upper hillside and all over the Anchorage bowl, I cannot imagine going the places we do in the conditions that we do without studded tires and sometimes we still need chains to get through. Please reconsider this proposal!

The next problem I would like to address is I know several men who work for the state along the state hi ways. It was made known to me that it came down from above to the workers to do 30% less We will show them to cut our budget! It is a well known fact that most of these crews run at around 50% of what the private sector does so where does this leave us? Hmmm

Respectfully Bob Lopetrone

From: copping_janet [mailto:copping_janet@asdk12.org]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 1:30 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Tax on studded tires

You are creating an enormous tax on something that keeps Alaskans safe on icy, winter roads. The grooves in the roads are from thousands of cars and trucks driving in the same path, not solely from studded tires. And how will you tax second-hand studded tires? Will you collect tax every winter or just once?

Are you a democrat? They love taxing people and creating more boondoggle for the public to wade through. Sounds like you.

Please retract your unfair tax and come up with something we can all use... like less spending by our Legislature. Work within your budget, no more taxes!

Janet Copping
copping@alaskan.com

From: gvhunt@gci.net [mailto:gvhunt@gci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 4:19 PM

To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tires account for 1/3 of rut creation

Allegedly, only 1/3 of road ruts can be blamed on studded tires according to a study I recall being in one of the Anchorage newspapers about 20-years ago. If I remember correctly, the majority of the study was done on O'Malley Road. Ruts were observed for different axel widths – everything from Subaru to gravel hauling truck/pup combinations. The conclusion (if I remember correctly) was that ruts were based on three things: heavy vehicles such as the gravel hauling truck/pup combinations, soft asphalt mixture using small gravel/sand composition, and studded tires .

Consequently, I don't feel it fair to put the full blame on studded tires.

Sincerely,

Gaye Hunt – Residence: 12500 Ridgewood Road – mail: POB 111897 – Anchorage, AK 99511-1897 345-5527

From: Cynthia Helmericks [mailto:akh2ogeek@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 3:08 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Tax

Hello Senator Giessel,
I wanted to write to you as someone who lives in your district. I live in Indian and commute on a near daily basis on the Seward Highway. Because I live on such a treacherous road, I find it somewhat comforting to know that people take their safety and mine seriously by making sure that their vehicles are in proper working order, but also try to do all that they can to be safe on the road during the winter months. This includes the use of studded tires. With your introduction of SB 50 I am concerned about what might happen with it's passage. First, not all families make enough income to afford expensive winter alternative tires such as blizzaks. Second, you would be effectively pricing the tires out of the range of many families. This would in turn effect everyone's safety on winter roads, including your own. Based on your interview with Alaska Dispatch I really don't think that you have thought about the possible consequences of creating such a steep tax. Secondly, I believe that you haven't really looked into how much damage a studded tire on a passenger car does compared to semi-trucks with regular tires (which aren't taxed for the damage they do). If you did, then you would know that semi-trucks create 400 times the damage to roads that an average passenger car does.

I understand that the state is in a financial crisis and that new avenues have to be created for income to work on roads and other infrastructure projects. However, compromising safety because you haven't considered all the facts is not the way to go about it.

I hope that you take another look at how the roads are being damaged in our state and how to effectively fix the roads without compromising safety.

Thanks for your time, Cynthia Helmericks

From: Debbie D. [mailto:flythesky@gci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 7:52 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Tax

Hello,
I would like to express my dismay at the bill that would raise the tax on studded tires to $75 each. That is an astronomical jump. I am hoping it does not pass. I would like to suggest an alternative: Raise the tax to $20 per tire and change the dates for running the tires to 2 weeks later in fall for putting them on and two weeks earlier in the spring for having to take them off. The roads have more of a chance of being bare of snow and ice during those weeks. Also, it takes a month off of the studded tire season and therefore protects roads more. Thank you for your consideration of this alternative.

Debbie Dorsey

From: Mitchell Glover [mailto:maglover@alaska.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 8:25 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: tires

Dear Senator Giessel,

I agree with your attempt to decrease wear and tear on our highways caused by studded tires.

However, to increase the fee for usage is to punish those who adhere to the laws of when the tires are allowed. It may be more helpful to monitor and enforce the law of removing studded tires in the spring.

I have noticed many vehicles with studded tires during the summer when the tires should have been changed. The fines collected by citing those drivers who don't follow the timeframe can help supplement the cost of repairs on the roads.

Traffic stops may not reach many offenders. Observing vehicle tires at large venues and events may reach a larger number. At any rate, I think enforcing the law already in place is a good place to start.

Mitch Glover

David Scott

From: David Scott
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 2 22 PM
To: David Scott
Subject: FW· SB50

From: Craig Wortham [mailto:alyeska2@ptialaska.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 3:17 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB50

Senator Stedman,

My name is Steven C. Wortham, I am the Chief Operating Officer for Alyeska Tire. We have 7 Retail tire locations in Alaska, located in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Palmer, Kenai, Soldotna, and Homer. We have a Truck Tire Center in Soldotna and a Distribution/Wholesale operation in Anchorage.

I am writing you because I recently came across Senate Bill 50, proposed by Senator Giessel of Anchorage. This tax would be a $75.00 tax on studded tires that have studs that weight more than 1.1 grams (heavy studs). I would like to voice my concern on this bill.

The **$300** cost per vehicle for the **$75** per studded tire tax will be mostly ignored by those wanting their preferred studded tire. Online retailers have yet to collect and pay to the State of Alaska any revenue from the sales of the most popular studded tire. An Alaskan family with four vehicles will not stand for a **$1,200.00** tax on their safety. Out of state merchants will be selling to Alaskans and putting Alaskan tire businesses in a very unfair and negative position in the marketplace.

Alaskan consumers demand choices when it comes to their purchases and this bill will inherently limit State owned businesses ability to be competitive in the free market, giving Alaskans the choices they demand.

Sincerely,

ALYESKA TIRE

Steven C. Wortham

General Manager

(Phone)-907.252.3659

(Fax)-907.260.9308

To: Chair Alaska Senate Transportation Committee

From: Lynn Willis, Eagle River, Alaska

RE: Testimony regarding SB50

Date: February 20, 2017

I oppose SB50. This "taxation" is not intended to raise revenue for a public good but to modify behavior. Have the courage to ban studs or leave well enough alone. This gesture is akin to using law enforcement primarily to generate revenue instead of affording public protection. This abuse of authority breeds contempt for that authority. I would suggest that at this point in time the Alaska Legislature should be sensitive to that appearance.

The sponsor has opined that studs, and studs alone, are the cause of these ruts. The sponsor also claims that repairs for studs alone cost $1 million per mile then neglects to say how often these repairs are necessary. When checking BASIS on 20Feb17, I see no technical documents included in the testimony to substantiate that opinion. I would observe that the rutting on a three lane roadway seems to be most prevalent in the center lane where the road must be compacted above grade to form the "crown" of the road which allows drainage to either side. Could the weight of trucks also be contributing to this problem? Also, an equally serious hazard is the "delaminating" of the road surface on the Glenn Highway where large slabs of pavement slough off. Is that being caused by studs?

I support a "Do Not Pass" committee recommendation for SB50.

LW

David Scott

From: David Scott
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 2:14 PM
To: David Scott
Subject: FW: SB 50: Tax on Studded Tires:

From: David Bear [mailto:micheal_d.9@alaska.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 11, 2017 2:41 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 50: Tax on Studded Tires:

Senator Stedman,

RE: SB 50 as sponsored by Sen. Giessel.
HB 106 Repeals AS 43.98.025 Effective July 1, 2008:

I believe Senator Giessel's proposal to assess a tax of $75.00 per tire is disingenuous, at best. Her proposal as submitted is entirely lacking in substantive evidence re: her claim that the DOT "says" it cost something like $1million per mile to repair damage caused by studded tires on Alaska's paved highways. That simply is not true. I submit to you that the $1 million per mile cost to DOT is more accurately the cost to construct a primary highway from the ground up.

This issue was before the 25th Legislature in 2007-2008. The result was a thorough vetting of HB 106 which repealed AS 43.98.025 Tire Fees effective July 1, 2008. I invite your attention to AS 43.98.025 which offers very well thought out and definitive specifications for the physical size, material composition and terms and conditions of sale of studded tires. Senator Giessel's propose SB 50 offers only extremely broad and sweeping terms for the taxation of $75.00 per tire. Her proposal does not address any aspect of the purchase, use of or substantive evidence that studded tires actually cause the damage to Alaska highways that she claims in SB 50.

I further submit to you that $75.00 per tire for studded tires is taxation without representation and as such is a legislative over-reach if passed into law. Such a law places undue and, in my opinion, generally unfair financial burden on a large number of Alaskans.

I sincerely appreciate your assistance in defeating SB 50. I think it is an unprincipled and frivolous proposition.

Thanks very much,

dbear

P.O. Box 39283
Ninilchik, AK 99639

Ph.: 907-567-3344

David Scott

From: John See <jseeforester@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:21 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Studded Tire Tax

Senator Stedman: I am somewhat appalled by Senator Giessel's proposal to raise taxes on something that I consider a "life & safety" issue. I would like you to consider that public safety agencies in Alaska all utilize studded tires for "first responder" vehicles. There are good reasons for this decision. Please do some research and complete an in-depth analysis of the different alternatives before pushing this faulty bill through the system.

I personally have tried the studless winter tires (several brands) with an open mind and have found all of them to be significantly inferior to the studded variety. This issue seems to be heavily weighted by the tire industry. Why is that? What is the profit difference? How about talking to the experts on winter driving; APD, AFD, AST and other emergency response agencies who demand that their employees use studded winter tires for good reasons.

Please carefully consider this faulty proposal before putting our loved ones at additional risk because of the dramatic cost increase mandated by this legislation. This proposed tax will restrict the use of studded tires to the wealthy. Is that fair? I think not!

John W. See

From: KENNETH SCHULZ [mailto:ken0556674@me.com]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 8:04 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sen. Kevin Meyer <Sen.Kevin.Meyer@akleg.gov>; Rep. Chris Birch <Rep.Chris.Birch@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jennifer Johnston <Rep.Jennifer.Johnston@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Tax

Dear Senator Giessel,

While I certainly understand the impact of studded tires on our roads, the fact is they save lives. You will have blood on your hands if you increase the tax at such a steep rate. The increase in cost will increase fatalities in our state. Unfortunately, the people this will affect the most are those who can marginally afford the tires now. For example, young adults just beginning their careers, school teachers, and retirees, to name a few.

I personally experienced this in my life. Patrick Mullen died in a crash on Thompson Pass in 2012. He and his young bride moved to Alaska after he completed a PhD in Anthropology and got his dream job, an Anthropologist for the National Park Service. They could only afford studded tires on one of their cars. Patrick took a beautiful spring afternoon off work to do some backcountry skiing and died while driving his pickup on the pass. That decision to save money and only put studded tires on his wife's car cost him his life. There will be many people making that same decision if you raise the tax on studded tires.

Please keep your tax increase within reason. Don't you have kids or know someone who does?

Sincerely,

Kenneth Schulz
4721 E 104th Ave
Anchorage, AK 99507

David Scott

From: Randy Ruaro
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 10:53 AM
To: David Scott
Subject: FW: Studded Tires / Public Comment

FYI

-----Original Message-----
From: Bobbie Cook [mailto:cook_bobbie@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 9:59 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tires

I am outraged by Cathy Giessel's proposal to increase the tax on a single studded tire from five dollars to seventy five dollars. This seems like a money gouging plan to fatten the state budget at the expense of safety. Our icy road conditions can persist up to 6 months a year. With global warming comes the unpredictable weather patterns we have been experiencing in recent years. The snow covered roads of the past are being replace with far more ice covered roads today. While icy road conditions are becoming more prevalent, the road maintenance cuts have left us with less snow removal, less sanding, and far less safe roads.

I have listened to people who refuse to buy studded tires for the last thirty years. They claim that the tire ruts in the roads are caused by studded tires. However if one examines these ruts more closely, they will find that these ruts are not produced from surface wear. If that were true all of the ruts would show subsurface structure showing through the ripping up of the top surface. Instead these ruts are caused by compression from the weight of traffic on a road bed without significant substructure. Alaska's road surfaces are built over areas of tundra and marshes most often lacking in bedrock construction in other states.

This type of tax proposal is hazardous to the safety of Alaskan Drivers. It should not be considered without significant studies, road maintenance, and construction. Another study to consider would be how many people with studs vs. without studs incur traffic accidents each winter. Consultation with insurance companies would also be significant.

Timothy J. Lamb - Horrible idea to charge $75/tire tax: it will lead to loss of life. Many people will forego them who cannot drive well on ice.

From: Timothy J. Lamb
To: cathy.giessel@akleg.com
Date: 2/14/2017 12:37 PM
Subject: Horrible idea to charge $75/tire tax: it will lead to loss of life. Many people will forego them who cannot drive well on ice.
Cc: Timothy J. Lamb

I am an over 50 year resident of Anchorage. I am an attorney.
I primarily defend physicians, hospitals and sports outfitters (heli-ski operators etc.)
In the winter I drive to Girdwood on the weekends, and sometimes to Hatcher Pass etc. when I don't drive South.

With Southcentral Alaska's high population turnover, we have an influx every year of people without experience driving on snow/ice. I have tried numerous winter non studded tires, and they do not hold as well on corners, and definitely do not grip as well when stopping.

Many people without a lot of disposable income will not purchase studded tires, if your proposal is accepted and passed.
There was a time when I was in my teens, on my own without much money, and I could not afford studded tires.
I wished I had them. Of course, now I can afford them, and put them on all our cars in the fall.

The auto collision repair shops, auto dealerships, hospitals, physicians, chiropractors, etc. will benefit if the proposed statute is enacted because there will be many more accidents and serious injuries, particularly now that it seems the snow, rain, freeze cycles occur more frequently than they did when I was growing up.

I have been involved in death lawsuits where people slid, crossed the center line and died after a head on crash.
I suspect it was a combination of their poor driving, no studded tires, and who knows what else.

If it saves even a few lives to continue to urge new drivers and people not use to winter driving to use studded tires (a high tax will obviously have the opposite effect) then we should do what we can to get them to use the tires.

While there are good winter snow tires, I know form personal experience, they do not work as well on ice.

I urge you to not continue with sponsoring the bill.

I do not have any financial interest in the issue. If anything, my law firm earns more income when there are crashes and lawsuits are filed, so this opinion is against my overall monetary benefit.

Thank you.

Tim 907-279-3581 (work)

Tim Lamb

I mailed this because I received a "bounce back"

From: Jean Musser [mailto:musserjm@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 2:28 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tires

Dear Senator Giessel,

While I do appreciate that you want to make our roads safer, I disagree with you wanting to raise the fee for studded snow tires. Have you driven on a regular basis in Anchorage lately? It is lawless. People do not abide with the speed limits and rules of the road because they know there are no police to enforce the law. This is causing accidents especially with snowy and icy conditions. Many times it is causing those that are abiding the law to be in crashes due those breaking the law.
By increasing the fee for studded snow tires, you are again burdening the citizens who care about safety, and are most likely abiding to the laws, paying taxes, and voting.
Why not have a fee for every driver in the road regions they drive? Why not have a toll fee for those entering Alaska?
Why must you burden the families that want to drive safely? There is a better solution to this problem.
While I'm talking about this issue, I would also like to know why Anchorage hasn't saved it's snow plowing tax dollars for a "snowy day" since it really hasn't snowed for the past 3 years. I know this is a question for the muni, but I think it is also a question for you. Those snowless winters had less road maintenance and more wear & tear on roads from studs. Couldn't some of those funds be used? What happened to that money? And what happened to all the tax money we've paid for police and have gone without any enforcement on our roads? Our dear mayor doesn't seem to think we need either. So goes the integrity of our community.
I have voted for your every election and appreciate all you have given in time and effort. I hope you can come up with a better solution than to burden the citizens who are trying to make our community one of wellness, safety, support, and a great place to live.
Sincerely,
Jean Musser

Sent from my iPhone

From: Jen Hardy [mailto:ohardy@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 1:30 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Senate Bill 50

Hello,
I am writing in regards to the studded tire tax. While I agree the Glenn Hwy is heavily rutted and can be dangerous (my husband commutes from Anchorage to Chugiak everyday) I feel like the jump from $5 to $75 is to high. Maybe start at $25 per tire? I think it's a great idea but it would also be such a financial burden and it seems people would just skip the tires and that seems to just make matters worse.
Thanks,
Jen Hardy

Sent from my iPhone

From: inmans@alaska.net [mailto:inmans@alaska.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 11:06 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB50

Good Morning:

I am opposed to your bill regarding studded tires. I was born and raised in Alaska (Kenai Peninsula) drove 26 miles to work each way. Until my retirement I had studded tires every winter. They were and still are a necessity. During this time in my life, working raising a family I could not have afforded the additional cost of a tax on studded tires, but would have been one of the ones who desperately needed them. Often the working people are on the roads before the snow plows and sand trucks are. The safety of those people is very important. There are several things that damage the roads in Alaska I don't believe that studded tires are the biggest contributor.

I feel the State of Alaska needs to live within its budget. Not try and find ways to screw its citizens and continually grow. Some non essential programs will need to be cut, there are several.

It wouldn't matter if the tax was $300.00 or $10,000.00 the people who need them couldn't afford them, and the state would no doubt blow any monies it collected on something non essential anyway.

Sincerely,

David & Carol Inman

From: Shawn Aspelund [mailto:saspelund@BBNC.NET]
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2017 8:23 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer <Sen.Kevin.Meyer@akleg.gov>
Subject: No to Giessel's Tire Tax

Senator,

I agree we need our URBAN road surfaces to last longer. Before we tax the &%$# out of everyone maybe we can understand what is causing the ruts.

I personally use stud-less tires. But at a cost of 4X the cost of studded. How many people in rural Alaska can afford that? How about the rest of urban. Many do not have extra cash- they will use their summer tires which will lead to loss of life and property.

Please pull Cathy away from the edge!!!

Thanks- tough year I know. Be encouraged. Once the oil is gone (not possible), PF is gone (not likely) with those who are in AK for both, we will restart this state and create a sustainable economy. Whatever you guys do to keep either is just a bonus. You can't go wrong....

Shawn Aspelund,

From: Cindy Butherus [mailto:Butherus@cvea.org]
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2017 3:49 PM
To: Jane Conway <Jane.Conway@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire

I am incensed over Senator Giessel's proposal of $200 fee on a set of studded tires. How dare you? Like those of us that use studded tires for maximum safety in Alaska winters are the only ones destroying the roads. Do you understand the freezing and thawing that our roads go through in Alaska? Do you understand when you see the deep ruts in the Glenn Highway that is not caused by studs but by the weight of traffic especially the trucks. So you are proposing to make a small portion of the people on the road pay for all the repairs? You should be ashamed of yourself. That amount of fee will force people not to be able to afford studs. For those of us that live in areas/terrain that need studs in the winter there will be more accidents and injuries and their blood will be on your hands! SHAME ON YOU!! Shame on you to target a small group to pay for damage that EVERYBODY is responsible for.

Cindy Butherus
P.O. Box 3632
Valdez, AK 99686
(907)835-7018
butherus@cvea.org

From: Marc and Cathy Bond [mailto:mcbond007@live.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2017 9:46 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Tax on Studded Tires

Dear Senator Giessel: I write to oppose your proposed tax on studded tires.

First, we need to study how many accidents are prevented and lives are saved each year by the added safety of studded tires? Do you know those numbers? Are you prepared to accept responsibility for additional fatalities and non-fatal crashes?

Second, it is my understanding that much of the rutting is due to heavier trucks passing over unstable substrate. Do you have the information and data on the causes of the ruts?

Third, the Alaska Constitution prohibits dedication of tax revenues. Article IX, Section 7 provides: "Section 7. Dedicated Funds The proceeds of any state tax or license shall not be dedicated to any special purpose, except as provided in Section 15 of this article or when required by the federal government for state participation in federal programs." The revenues from this new tax will simply go into the general fund.

I urge you to get all the facts before proceeding with this bill.

Sincerely,
Marc Bond
14720 Park Hills Circle
Anchorage, AK 99516

From: Florence Norwood [mailto:florencenorwood@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 10:26 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Tire tax

Please do not make it harder to be safe on Alaska roads. People who cannot afford an extra $200 on top of the price of studded tires will drive on unsafe tires. Those of us who live in Girdwood need studded tires. We already have to pay more for police protection. We count on you to make decisions that benefit the people of our community. Thank you , Florence Norwood

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From: Golden Rod [mailto:goldyn_rod@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 9:35 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tires - no tax hike

Senator Giessel,

Road damage is not caused by tires, but by compression from heavy vehicles on a sub par surface.

Studs provide an extra level of safety for driver and others on the road.

Taxes you are proposing are extreme and unaffordable for many folks. Especially when we anticipate layers and layers of taxes and our PFD erased with no promise of reducing the size of a government we do not want nor can afford.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth
Sent from my iPhone

From: ecombs1@gci.net [mailto:ecombs1@gci.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 10:06 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>

Cc: Rep. Jennifer Johnston <Rep.Jennifer.Johnston@akleg.gov>
Subject: Senate Bill 50 - Studded Tires

Dear Senator Giessel:

We absolutely oppose the proposed Senate Bill 50 to increase the tax on studded tires up to $300 for 4 studded tires per vehicle. In our household on Hillside we have 4 SUV/trucks and this would cost us $1,200 per year taxes just on studded tires!

We understand the State budget deficit. We actually prefer the Legislators reinstate a State Income Tax instead of nickel and diming us to death with new or increased taxes on our goods and consumables. We on Hillside are already over-burdened with property taxes and believe we are being targeted with increased property taxes every year to carry the rest of Anchorage's population who do not pay property taxes for their goods and services. This is not a State Legislative concern it is a local issue but we are painting a picture of what increased taxes on essentials such as vehicle studded tires looks like. We are also Seniors who live on a fixed income and this kind of taxation in SB50 would hit us in the pocketbook as well as others on a fixed income.

Of concern to us is how Senate Bill 50 will affect the tire sales business owners. As a Republican Senator, for whom we voted, you should be supporting our businesses not trying to undercut their sales.

Finally of great concern to us, we believe it is absolutely criticall that the State have a Balanced Budget particularly in our crisis deficit situation or even without a crisis situation--we should always have a balanced budget. Lack of it has caused our present situation notwithstanding the oil revenues reduction which should have been factored in years ago through a balanced budget.

Thank you for your time and keep us posted.

Allen and Esther Combs
11001 Snowline Drive
Anchorage, AK 99507

From: J.S. Collins [mailto:jshanecollins@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 9:54 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Shane <jshanecollins@gmail.com>
Subject: The tire issue

Senator Giessel,

I can imagine being a state senator at a time when there are huge budget deficits is difficult and tenuous at best. It is a tough job that you are in for. I am hopeful that you and the Alaska Legislature can solve these difficult problems to ensure the long term sustainability of Alaska for future generations.

Why I am writing as you can imagine from the subject line is your proposed $75 per tire tax on studded tires. My first question would be where did you come up with the $75.00? Currently at $5.00. This price would put the safest tires on the road out of reach for many as it would increase the cost by over $300.00 for a set of 4 tires.

The other question is I do not follow your logic regarding "ruts in the road". I would argue that the materials being used during road construction and methods are of such poor quality and standard that they are doomed to fail. I have watch a few roads being repaired or constructed in my time. I have to say that what happens here in Alaska is not what I would consider a high standard. Given the conditions here are some of the toughest in the nation. Permafrost. Constant freeze thaw. I would imagine some of the toughest standards would be in place when it comes to these infrastructure needs. With this being said I would argue that studded tires do not cause ruts in the roads any more than a semi truck driving up Rabbit creek does. When an over loaded truck (or any heavy truck) drives on a road not engineered for the surface it will indeed cause ruts.

I have two cars. One with studded tires. One without. There is NO question that the vehicle with studded tires drives much safer and stops quicker than the one without. I have to really think ahead when I am driving the vehicle sans studs. Tire dealers will gladly advertise the benefits of both studded and studies tires. Both work fine but the studded tires are the best option for every driving condition in Alaska. If you pass this legislation I will gladly join you at the bottom of Rabbit Creek or Clark Road and watch the ensuing accidents.

How about "actually" enforcing the current law when people put their studded tires on and off? Isn't this a $75 fine using studs in the summer season? As a cyclist commuter most of the summer, I hear the familiar sound of studs every single day I commute to work. This would be $75.00 each occurrence. This could generate some your needed tax revenue and prevent the supposed damage these studded tires cause the roads. If you "chose" to leave your studs on then you pay the price. With a stud tax you don't have a choice.

Why stop with a stud tax? If you want to generate revenue through taxes, just charge $75.00 for every tire sold here in Alaska. Make it $150 for vehicle over a 6,500 pounds to include Semi trucks and buses. I could get behind this. Again everyone is vested.

I am hopeful that the Alaskas Legislature will come to a solution to solve the budget crisis. As I read the news I am constantly reminded of several history lessons that I have learned over the years. Remember this. You cannot tax your way out of a crisis. Be it a studded tire tax, state income tax, sales tax....historically these just do NOT work.

Just "tired" in Alaska,

Shane Collins

From: Mike Roberson [mailto:mikeroberson63@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 12, 2017 6:31 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tires

Instead of charging $75 per tire, how about enforcing the law that already exists, making it an offense by driving studded tires in the summer, except punishable by $500 per tire. Why are the middle class always targeted when trying to cure a social ill. I say that because most of the cars that drive around in the summer with studded tires, are junk. The damage from the studded tires are a result of driving on a clean road. I'm not an analyst or scientist, but I know what friction does. There is nothing wrong with studded tires in the winter with SNOW and ICE. Penalize those who are responsible for the damage to the roads. I suggested to the Anchorage Mayor's office that parking enforcement be granted the permission to tag violators if they have studded tires unlawfully.

Think about it.

From: Karen Lederhos [mailto:klederhos@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 18, 2017 10:29 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Tires

Please don't tax studded tires! I need on my little car. Tried techie no studs, went back to sure grip of studs. By the way, can we stay on AK Standard Time. Daylight Savings Time is ridiculous and way old fashioned!!!

Sent from my iPhone, Karen Avila-Lederhos

From: Peter Aftreth [mailto:paftreth@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 17, 2017 11:22 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: NO on STUDDED TIRE FEE

Please KNOW WE HILLSIDE RESIDENTS VOTE NO on ANY STUDDED TIRE TAX.....much less and INCREASE of $70.00 (SEVENTY DOLLARS).....YOU CANNOT BALANCE the STATE BUDJET ON STUDDED TIRE TAX>>>>>>

I/WE Have been VOTERS IN ALASKA/ANCHORAGE since 1970.....Living on the HILLSIDE since 1975....My wife BECKY rolled a 4 wheel drive vehicle with ALL SEASON tires on our first snow of the winter....Our CHILDREN were in the CAR going to school....BECKY Chained UP TWICE a DAY going to work as a SCHOOL NURSE after that TRAMA...

At $300.00 TAX for a set of 4 tires.....HOW MANY MORE STOLEN WHEELS and TIRES will YOUR CRAZY TAX CAUSE? LIVES SAVED are MORE IMPORTANT Than a little more road ware.....

HEAVY COMMERCIAL TRUCK CAUSE EXCESS RUTTING....POOR ASPHAULT MATERIALS also increase RUTTING...

MINNESOTA has NEVER ALLOWED STUDDED TIRES.....THEY Have WORSE RUTTING than we have here in Anchorage with studded Tires for THOSE who elect to drive them.....IT is an OPTION we will SELECT.....and we will GET AROUND ANY CRAZY TAX YOU TRY to FORCE ON TIRE SHOPS...ARE YOU GOING TO TAX CHAINS ALSO?...

DO You KNOW MANY .....MANY HILLSIDE VOTERS LIKE TO Have STUDDED TIRES for SAFETY OF FAMILIES?

PLEASE RETHINK THIS CRAZY TAX.....Peter and Becky Aftreth and family of EIGHT DRIVERS...and SEVEN Grandchildren....

From: Ace Worley [mailto:dotguy47@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, February 17, 2017 11:03 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Tax

Senator Giessel,

I understand you have proposed legislation that will impose a tax on the purchase of studded tires.

Based on my experience driving in Alaska for 40 years on studded and un-studded tires I believe studded tires offer a substantial safety benefit to all drivers during the winter months.

Your legislation will make it less likely that a driver purchasing winter tires will choose the safer alternative, worsening a difficult driving condition.

The increase pavement maintenance costs associated with the use of studded tires are a small cost compared to the increased safety benefits to all drivers.

I ask that you reconsider your support for this issue and withdraw this ill-advise legislation.

Thank you,

Ace Worley

dotguy47@yahoo.com

From: Jane Giraldo [mailto:jpgiraldo@alaska.edu]
Sent: Saturday, February 18, 2017 8:48 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Senate Bill 50: Tire tax

Dear Representative Giessel,

I read with concern your proposal to raise the tax on studded tires from $5 to $75.

Doubtless you have a good motive--protecting our highways and our safety. But you seem to suffer a disconnect with the working class and poor people of Anchorage. For you, the cost of Blizzaks is reasonable; for many people, it's prohibitively expensive.

There are already many people who drive on unsafe tires because they can't afford better ones. Raising taxes so drastically would create hardship for them.

I urge you to look at this issue again. Consider what SB 50 would mean for tire sellers and for people who barely have enough money to survive on. Consider how greatly the tax would hurt some Alaskans and how little it would help defray road maintenance costs.

If you still think a tax is warranted, why not raise it 300% instead of 1500%? That just seems unreasonable.

What I foresee is that poor people won't buy good winter tires. That hurts the tire businesses but, much more importantly, creates dangerous driving conditions, not only for the people who can't afford taxes or Blizzaks, but also for the people they slide into. It could be you with your grandchildren!

Sincerely,

Jane Giraldo

From: Yarger [mailto:yarger1@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 18, 2017 6:07 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Cc: Rep. Jennifer Johnston <Rep.Jennifer.Johnston@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB50

Senator Giessel,

I am writing in opposition to your position and sponsorship of SB50. Reading your quote from the ADN, I was surprised to hear your belief that studded tires cause deep ruts in our highways/roads. Were you misquoted or do you not understand what is actually causing this damage?

There are DOT scales between Anchorage and Eagle River. When are they open? I have lived here over 8 years and have yet to see them operational. Are there any other scales that could be used to enforce commercial weight limits? Are the current weight limits reasonable considering the condition of our roads? Are there any mobile scales that check weights of commercial vehicles? If you haven't figured it out yet, the ruts you refer to on the Glenn Highway (and all other highways) are caused by commercial trucks, most of which are overloaded by 20,000-50,000 pounds. Attached is a study from Ohio State that clearly explains road damage and its causes.

Alaska's DOT oversight during the construction of these roads is clearly insufficient. I have personally witnessed large round rocks used as fill in the construction phase in the highway just outside Wasilla, northbound. Round rocks do not compact. Longevity of any road is dependent on its foundation. That foundation needs to be the correct material and compacted or it will fail.

I do agree that some surface damage to asphalt is caused by tire studs. There is more to the damage than just studded tires. Magnesium/Calcium Chloride are commonly used on icy roads to melt the ice. Chloride based deicers, acetate based deicers affect asphalt pavement. The damage comes about through the combination of chemical reactions, emulsifications, and distillations, as well as generation of additional stress inside the asphalt. Reference the black tar stuck to your car every spring. We commonly see fresh asphalt each summer. Why is it not chip sealed? Would you leave your new asphalt driveway without a seal coat? Most would suggest sealing it to preserve it. Many states will apply chip seal to preserve the asphalt, why is this not done in the state of Alaska?

The last point I will leave you with is safety. Studded tires provide an extra level of safety on our icy roads. This winter is the perfect example. Travel on the hillside would be treacherous without studded tires. Maybe not as bad with timely snow removal, but most families can't wait for days to get to work. Local governments are holding citizens hostage with purposeful neglect in clearing the roads and streets. The future revenue generation intent of this inaction is obvious. I wonder how much overtime was paid last year in an effort to spend budgeted dollars at the state and city level? The "use it or lose it" monetary policy is killing efficiency.

Consider some meaningful thought to the states budget and fiscal challenges. SB50 is misguided at best, ignoring the root causes of our poorly constructed, maintained and managed roads.

Denim Yarger

Anchorage, AK

From: Margie C [mailto:margiec@ak.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 10:47 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Tax

Dear Senator Giessel,

I understand that we are in need of raising additional funds to bring our budget afloat, but I am strongly OPPOSED to a studded tire tax.

These are my reasons why:

Not everyone in Alaska drives the monster trucks. I do not.

I also believe, it's not just studded tires. When you drive down the road, do you go in the same tracks that are already created? I try to avoid the path for as long as I am able, to distribute wear on our roads.

Last year I ran all season tires on my Saturn and was unable to even get onto Tudor Road with maybe a 20% incline. I would get part way into the road, then just remain there as the traffic got closer and closer, and fear absorbed me. It was total unsafe, and waiting until their was no traffic to amble onto Tudor, is truly not an option when trying to go to work.

I also was unable to stop in a Safeway parking lot going less than 2 miles per hour and bumped into someone in front of me on the sheer ice. There was no grip.

Or have you ever had to keep rolling at the slightest m.p.h. just so the above doesn't happen? I have with all season tires.

And the cost of $300 tax, would not generate the dollars you're thinking, mainly because they would be unaffordable for most that don't have those monster trucks. So maybe you feel that's a win as there's less studs on the road, but what I see is totally different. I see more slipping and sliding through intersections, running into the car or truck in front of you as you are unable to stop. I see more crashes with less control of the vehicle. Have you ever sat spinning at an intersection through 3 lights without being able to move? I have, and I did last year with my all season tires.

I just don't think it's a good idea to put our lives at risk by taxing studded tires out of existence. Please stop this bill.

PLEASE SAY NO TO $300 TAX ON STUDDED TIRES

Thank you,

Marjorie Crain

6018 E. 43rd Avenue

Anchorage, AK 99504

margiec@ak.net

From: Jim Wojciehowski [mailto:wojo@ptialaska.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 11:03 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB50 - Studded tires

Dear Senator Giessel,

I have voted for you since you first ran. I do wish to express that I think the studded tire TAX is a bad idea even though I use Blizzak studless tires. Too many vehicles in the Anchorage bowl already are poor equipped with tires not designed for winter driving such as all terrain tires. I've seen front wheel drive cars stuck at flat intersections in icy conditions. Obviously these same vehicle can sliding into another car or even a pedestrian.

Making someone pay $300 additional for studded tires will simply deter many from buying better winter tires.

SB50 makes no sense and should be opposed.

Jim Wojciehowski

February 20, 2017

Senator Bert Stedman
Transportation Committee Chair

I am writing to you in reference to Senate Bill 50 and I would like to go on record opposing this bill.

Our Alaska tire dealer members have a responsibility to provide their customers with the best safety for winter driving; studded snow tires provide that added assurance. If SB 50 is passed into law it gives safety to only those who can afford the extra $50 dollars per tire, which in most cases turns into $200 for a set of 4 tires.

We realize that Senator Giessel has reduced the fee in her substitute bill from $75 per tire to $50 per tire; however we still believe that this added expense will be costly and very unfair. Not only is it unfair to the growing young families who in many cases need these tires on more than one vehicle, but it is also unfair to the senior citizens who are on fixed incomes and who need these tires to safely get to and from medical appointments and other needed trips.

Senator Giessel has also changed the weight of the studs from 1.1 grams to 0.5 grams, which would include the lightweight studs that are more road friendly. We are certainly not in favor of this change.

In May of 2004 the University of Alaska released the most comprehensive study done on studded tires in the United States. The Alaska legislature funded the research. The report had a broad focus on the overall socio-economic impact of studded tires. The 156 page report concludes that studded tires have a positive impact on the overall Alaskan economy. In summary, the Alaska School of Engineering concluded, **"Savings from avoiding crashes are the most substantial impact, and benefits the broadest range of groups including the state government, vehicle owners, passengers, and insurance companies."**

The technology of winter tires continues to improve. "Studless tires" with improved traction are growing in popularity, however tire manufactures continue to manufacture these tires pinned for studs for added traction and safety. Studded snow tires now have rubber compounds that minimize stud contact on dry or wet pavement, minimizing road damage. **All current major studies investigated indicate that studded tires provide improved traction on icy roads in acceleration, lateral movement and stopping over any tire available to the consumer.** The Alaska study concluded that there is no significant difference in performance of studded tires and non studded tires **on wet pavement.**

We do appreciate the fact that Senator Giessel has listened to our concerns of online sales, however there is no provision for enforcement of the fee. Currently states are finding it impossible to collect

sales tax on online sales, so how much more difficult will it be to collect this $50 per tire fee from the online merchants who ship from outside the state.

Studded tires reduce accident risk. The Alaska study and the Washington State DOT 2003 consumer survey determined that studded tires are selected by consumers to improve the vehicle's surface traction in adverse conditions. Bans or higher user fees on tires studs will produce a net increase in costs

Thank you for listening to our concerns about this bill that we believe would have an adverse effect on the safety of Alaska's driving public.

Sincerely,

Richard Nordness,
Executive Director

Tire Industry Association Position Paper

Senate Transportation Hearing 2/23/2017: Senate Bill 50

The Tire Industry Association (TIA) is an international non-profit association representing all segments of the tire industry, including those that manufacture, repair, recycle, sell, service or use new or retreaded tires, and also those suppliers or individuals who furnish equipment, material or services to the industry.

The mission of TIA is to promote tire safety through training and education, to act as the principal advocate in government affairs, and to enhance the image and professionalism of the industry so that our member businesses may be more successful. TIA has over 8,000 members from all 50 states and around the globe.

TIA opposes, SB 50, a bill seeking to raise the per-tire user fee from $5 to $50 relating to fees for the sale or installation of studded tires; and providing for an effective date. The user fee has been in place since 2004 at $5.

TIA is concerned that the legislation prohibits low income families from having the safety option of studded tires. We need low-income families to have access to reliable transportation during the winter.

Many Alaska residents think studded tires are essential for winter driving safety and should not be taxed so heavily.

"I have studded tires which I'll be replacing this year and seeing this tax hike makes me upset, especially since I feel studded tires are essential, especially with the type of road conditions we have in Alaska," Harrison Jennings, UAA music student, said. "They've saved me in situations where if I didn't have my studs, I would've easily gotten into an accident, or worse."

If you drive more on icy roads than on snowy ones in winter, studded tires are a sensible choice. Studded tires are especially suitable if you live near the coast, where roads tend to be icy during the winter. Studded tires prove to be effective on ice more so than non-studded tires.

Many tire dealers in the state of Alaska install and maintain studded tires for residents in the state. This makes up a significant portion of their business. Customers are comfortable with the benefits that studded tires provide at an affordable price. The only other state that charges a studded tire fee is Washington State ($5). The Canadian provinces do not charge a fee.

TIA asks opposition to SB 50 as the safety of the residents in the state should not be compromised.

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February 22, 2017

Senator Bert Stedman
Transportation Committee Chair

Dear Sen. Stedman,

I am writing to you in reference to Senate Bill 50, we would like to go on record opposing this Bill.

I have read thru Senators Giessel's list of oppositions, those in favor, her support documents, in fact all her data. I do appreciate the effort and intentions, but introducing a Bill that effects Alaska Citizens by removing a proven safety device and making miss-leading statements in her Sponsor Statement seems like just one more Bill that will anger many Alaskan's.

Her Sponsor Statement has much to be argued. Traffic, Heavy traffic such as tractor trailers, Sanding, Salting all contribute to road wear. VTI,. VT, STRO are all organizations that have spent millions of dollars evaluating Road Wear, Environmental, Health issues and more in regards to Tire Studs. Their conclusion is Tire Studs are a safety device and necessary in Winter like climates like Alaska. Senator Giessel's statement "Alaskans do justifiably demand better roads, safer roads for their families", correct, why would you take that away with this Bill? There is no data period that shows tire technology has improved to be equal to studded tires. Not one study! Tire Technology has improved no doubt but so has studded tire technology. "Many Northern States have banned Tire Studs." Not since the 70's has a Winter state banned tire studs? The three states that banned studs in the late 70's Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois have not made any changes since, however, all State Police, Ambulance, School Buses, Mail Carriers, all essential emergency vehicles are permitted. Ontario reversed the ban several years ago and now allow Aluminum studs outside of the Toronto area. Quebec made it Law that Winter tires must be used during winter months.

Taxing Consumers who use studded tires is a mistake, it will make these tires un affordable to many. We stand with Tire Dealers, Consumers and safety advocates that do not want to see this Bill passed.

Best Regards,
Garry Wessel

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Concerning the tire fee's on studded tires.

For those about to die, I am sorry.

Have you ever ate corn on the cob?

Have you ever ate corn on the cob without teeth?

Studded tires are the gums, studs the teeth, notice the ease the cornels are removed from the cob.

Without the teeth the cornels do not so easily come off!

So too does the studded tire have the advantage in traction performance.

If you price the studded tire out of range, just like folks with no dental plan have a hard time with corn on the cob, they will forgo the studs and people will die.

Think about being hit at the traffic stop, going through the light and hitting a car, a bystander.

Ah! But in the quest to "Grope for dollars" we shall eliminate those who need studs to get around in wintertime safely.

In the rosey, posey world , everybody drives the subi with the blizzaks, but we Anchorageians can't all live up to that standard, and road ruts are a reality yesterday , today and tomorrow.

So cheap being cheap, and folks goin' through hard times and all, if this political thriller goes through, I for one expect some folks are going to die, and a politician will end Her career.

Thanks for your attention,

Cordially yours, Daniel McManus

Tire sales, and Bling Slinger, The Tire Pirate.

MEYER BROS. MUFFLER CITY & BRAKE 105 WEST 5TH & A. ANCH. AK 99501 907-279-0408

I am writing this letter to Oppose Senate bill 50

To Whom I My Concern:

First off the #1 priority is safety.

Do not gamble on people's lives over money.

According to| " the Research Report T2695, Task 21 Studded Tire "

I found connected to Senator Giessel's SB 50 tire tax increase. The same study Jim Johnson used to get the steel stud tax passed for his own personal gain back in 2004. He was the only one who used alloy studs. The study showed that on icy road conditions the studded tire was superior.

In the report with the 3 vehicles they used here's the average:

FRONT WHEEL DRIVE CAR STOPED 20 FEET SHORTER WITH STUDS OVER THE BLIZZAK STUDLESS

2WD P/U STOPED 5.5 FEET SHORTER WITH STUDS OVER THE BLIZZAK STUDLESS

RWD CAR STOPED 10.8 FEET SHORTER WITH STUDS OVER THE BLIZZAK STUDLESS

The overall average of the studded tire on icy roads stopping distance,

(20'), (5.5'), (10.8'), = 12.8' shorter than the studless tire.

Basically, the study says the studded tire performs superior in many ways other than on dry pavement. I don't know about you "but I don't buy studded winter tires thinking how well they stop on pavement. It's the ice and others around me on the road I'm concerned with."

Has anyone ever slid through a stop sign or a stop light before maybe more than once?

Hold that thought I'll come back to that.

In the test conclusions, and the rest of the report there is a lot of mumbo-jumbo that can be very hard to decipher even for a 39-year veteran in the tire business like me.

If you notice this report was done for Washington State in Fairbanks, Alaska. This is what the mumbo-jumbo is about.

Fairbanks is cold and flat which makes it easier to control the data. No inclines, icy hills, rain, etc. I suggest reading the whole report keeping in mind conflicting conclusions such as #6 and #7. This is referring to a different test altogether. Tire manufactures know exactly what temperature would be optimal for their testing to get the desired results there looking for. This is how to control data. Anchorage can go from 20 degrees below 0 to 60 degrees above 0 in a 24-hour period. Tire companies I talk to said they would not do test in Anchorage for this reason. Being in business down town for 63 years I'm sure we know the subject matter.

To the answer for the question above. About sliding through a stop sign.

Customer comes in askes the salesman "What we think are safer? Studless or Studded'. Salesman askes "Where do you live and who are they for?". Customer "My 16-year-old daughter" or 16-year-old son or grand kid. With no hesitation

"STUDDED" IS ALMOST SCREAMED OUT BY THREE OF US AT THE SAME TIME. WE KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TIRES. THAT's 5' TO 12' SHORTER OUT INTO THE INTERCECTION. THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH TO SAVE LIVES AND WE BELIEVE IT DOES.

It's not about what tire were going to make more money on. We sell safety 1st.

For us safety really is 1st. we drill and stud tires as a cost alternative. The problem with that is most tires we've seen in the last 5 months have been worn beyond 2/32nds. The throw away mark. Even doing a flat repair I'd rather give them a used tire for the cost of the flat repair on a tire that's not even safe to drive on in summer let alone this winter. People just don't have the money right now especially with all the pay cuts and layoffs.

Most people I talk to in all kinds of businesses are down 20 to 30 percent if they even have a job. I've been standing at the counter on 5th & A helping people for 39 years I haven't seen things this bad since the 80s. This is not the time to put the Burden on us we are trying to survive ourselves. Sincerely, ALFRED MEYER

THE NEW TAX WILL KILL PEOPLE AND WHO ARE THEY GOING TO BLAME.