

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

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SB 50

Letters of **Support**
As of March 6, 2017

From: Jessica Hoffman [<mailto:jesslhoffman@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 12:54 PM
To: Sen. Click Bishop <Sen.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>; Sen. Anna MacKinnon <Sen.Anna.MacKinnon@akleg.gov>; Sen. Bert Stedman <Sen.Bert.Stedman@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Dennis Egan <Sen.Dennis.Egan@akleg.gov>; Sen. Lyman Hoffman <Sen.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov>; Sen. Peter Micciche <Sen.Peter.Micciche@akleg.gov>; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>; Sen. Donny Olson <Sen.Donny.Olson@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mike Dunleavy <Sen.Mike.Dunleavy@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support the Studded-Tire Tax Increase

Dear members of the Senate Finance and Transportation Committees,

I'm writing to ask for your support in increasing the studded tire tax.

Much has been said for having the oil companies pay their fair share in taxes to the State. An idea that I agree with, however, we Alaskans must also pay our fair share. The owners of studded tires make the choice to use a product that increases the revenue needed for road maintenance and diminishes the safety of our roads. As such, they should pay their fair share to maintain the roads they ruin. Taxing studded tires at \$5.00 per tire is ridiculously low and needs to be increased to better cover the costs of road maintenance.

I spoke with Representative Gara, he mentioned concern for the ability of an individual afford a set of studded tires, an estimate of \$1100. However, I believe owning studded tires is a luxury. When we purchase vehicles, they come with tires that can be used year round. It is not necessary to purchase studded tires to operate the vehicle.

I have been driving in Alaska since I earned my learner's permit at 14 years old. I have never owned studded tires. In large part because the cost to purchase studded tires is cost prohibitive on my budget. It is not the tax that keeps me from purchasing studded tires; I cannot afford studded tires at the current tax rate. The proposed increase in the tax would not keep me from purchasing studded tires. I cannot justify spending money on tires that can only be used in the winter when I own a set of tires that can be used year round.

I have also never bought studded tires because of the damage they cause roads. They create ruts in our roadways that greatly decrease their safety. I have had several experiences that have nearly caused me to lose control of my vehicle while driving on the Glen Hwy and roadways in the Anchorage area. In fact, when my boyfriend and I were driving back into Anchorage from the Valley last week, he nearly lost control of the vehicle due to the tires being grabbed by the studded-tire ruts. A couple years ago, my father nearly had an accident due to a studded-tire rut grabbing his tires near 36th Ave and La Touche in Anchorage.

In a study by the Washington State DOT, 2002, they found that studded tires were no more safe than winter tires such as Blizzaks. In the WA report, they found that studded tires offer no benefit over non-studded tires in winter conditions except icy roads near 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Additionally, an Oregon DOT, study found that drivers increased their speeds with the use of studded tires, thereby negating any benefit studded tires may have.

Something to consider is banning studded tires. As you may know, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan have all banned studded tire use. Maybe banning studded tires all together would be beneficial to the State. Could the State save more money by having less road maintenance due to studded-tire ruts?

In an ADN article about the proposed studded tire tax, one tire retailer mentioned that online retailers, such as Amazon, do not collect the taxes for studded tire purchase. That can be combated by creating a law similar to what other states are using to collect sales tax from online retailers. Here are a couple of articles discussing this issue:

<http://www.governing.com/topics/finance/gov-south-dakota-online-sales-tax.html>,
https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/supreme-court-declines-case-on-making-online-retailers-collect-sales-taxes/2013/12/02/e430ec8c-55f5-11e3-835d-e7173847c7cc_story.html?utm_term=.6b64e9308afc

In conclusion, please support increasing the studded tire tax to help close our budget gap and provide the needed funds to maintain the safety of our roads.

I have attached the studies I mention.

Sincerely,

Jessica Hoffman

Subject: Studded Tires

Reply-To: "Phillip Izon II" <izon.bank@gmail.com>

I am very supportive of your recent bill to increase the studded tire fee. I have winter tires and they are not studded. The only time that I feel like I do not have control is when driving on the highway. The amount of cars that travel on the roads and the damage to them over the course of winter is also very cost prohibitive. I can't speak for every area of the state, but I have traveled to many of them with my car and literally the only time I feel I do not have control of my vehicle is in high traffic areas. These are also the areas that have the most accidents (e.g. New Seward Hwy to and from Wasilla).

I would go as far as to ban them except for vehicles that need studded tires for commercial or towing purposes. Please let me know how I can support you in anyway.

Thank You,
Phillip Izon
CEO
Cerberus Holdings, LLC

From: Douglas Kelsch [<mailto:dkelsch@me.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 11:35 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support

Senator Giessel,

I am writing in support of your studded tire tax. I, like you, believe there are safe non-studded tire alternatives that don't tear up the roads as studded tires do. I agree that the Glenn Highway's ruts, which are caused by studded tires, are dangerous.

I believe that in our current fiscal situation user fees such as the one you propose is appropriate in that those who insist on using studded tires would, at least in some part, pay for the damage they do. I think that in our current fiscal situation solutions lie in continued cuts to government, broad based and multiple tax increases (sales tax, income tax, user fees) and complete elimination of the PFD.

On the subject of the PFD: free government handouts during times of budget deficits do not coincide with a fiscally conservative philosophy and serve as a handout that distorts normal market forces. If there is a need for a sector of our society to receive government aid it should be done by means tested government programs.

Thank you for your political courage and willingness to face hard truths during times like these when it is in short supply.

Best Wishes,

Doug Kelsch

From: Mike [<mailto:mysweeps93@me.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 9:30 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support For SB 50

Senator,

As a member of your district I wanted to reach out to you after hearing about your proposal for SB50. Myself, and my family, support her proposal to increase the fees on studded tires which cause significant damage to the roads as well as put pavement dust into the air which can cause environmental and health concerns. The technology has advanced in tires that I think the costs far out way the benefit as there are viable alternatives without the negative impact. Her proposal doesn't ban their use, just holds them accountable for the additional damage they do on the roads. Seems fair unlike the burden to the rest of us that do not use them but end up paying for the repairs.

I hope you support this proposal and help get it passed.

Regards,

Mike Borys
3421 Hines Circle

From: Richard Koskovich [<mailto:rk2kbay@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 10:59 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject:

Sen. Giessel,

Thank you for finally taking action on the abuse of studded tires!
I grew up learning to drive in MN winters and have now been driving AK winters since 1973. I have never owned a studded tire and I get around just fine. Lived 100 miles up the Glenn Highway for several years and up on the bluff in Homer for the past 35 years and I've never had an accident. So not exactly easy 'city driving'!

MN was smart enough many years ago to ban studded tires because of the damage. Modern Snow Tires equal and in many tests out perform studded tires. If icy roads are EXTREME treacherous, people just shouldn't be out driving.

If they insist on studded tires, you are RIGHT ON! have them pay for the damage.

Several years ago I came across the figure of \$15,000,000 per year highway damage in AK from studded tires. I'm sure that is outdated by now, but I think it would be helpful to the cause to get a current figure of damage out there.

Thank you for your efforts!

Richard Koskovich
Homer, Alaska
907-235-5405

From: Paul Crews [<mailto:pbcrows@alaska.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 2:56 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Tires

I read the article about studded tires this morning. The comment that people would buy them online is troubling. I completely agree with you about ruts. I am willing to pay a tax for my studs but if most people avoid the tax by buying tires from outside we will not gain as much as desired. I think the gas tax should pay for more maintenance. I suggest the gas tax should be very very large...people don't blink much when they fill up.

Thanks
Paul Crews

From: Richard Hanas [<mailto:richnlouie@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 7:08 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Tax

Good call for a large tax on these tires. Soft rubber winter tires such as the Bridgestone Blizzak offer exceptional traction. Now if you justify taxing for road improvements how about money for the UA system???? My daughter has a large scholarship offer to an outside university to study engineering. That university also just got an infusion of \$50,000,000 targeted just for it's engineering department. Although she also has a UAA scholarship, what would be the point of taking a chance on UAA when they are cut to the bone and moral is sagging? Wouldn't greater support for UA be an investment in Alaska?

Richard Hanas

From: Chris [<mailto:reedrad@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 8:40 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject:

Cathy

Nice work on getting the conversation going on studless tires. Might the DOT consider a targeted consumer education campaign in the fall each year for a few years, teaching people about the effectiveness of studdless tires? Make it an act of community pride to go studless and save or roads.

Good luck... and don't forget the crime bill. Safety is number one

Chris Reed

From: hdsksully [<mailto:hdsksully@gci.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 5:20 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tires

To whom it may concern:

I think your studded tire tax is a step in the right direction. Perhaps shortening the time that they may be used should also be considered. Two to four weeks less in both the fall and spring is very possible.

Thank you, Shane Lee

From: Sam Dennis <sam_dennis@hotmail.com>
Date: February 14, 2017 at 8:35:27 PM AKST
To: "Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov" <Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Bill

I'm a liberal so I'm sure we disagree on a lot of issues but I have to tip my hat to you for having the courage to touch these third rails of Alaska politics, studded tires and taxes. It might be safer to tell people you're going to take their guns away!

The data is pretty clear that studless ice tires are overall as good as or better than studded tires without destroying our roads and it's very clear we can't afford to keep repaving. Thank you for taking the lead on this and I'll support you as best I can with talking to friends and letters/comments in the ADN. Good luck.

Sam Dennis

From: "Fjelstad, Eric (Perkins Coie)" <EFjelstad@perkinscoie.com>
Date: February 14, 2017 at 9:55:25 PM AKST
To: "Sen.Cathy.Giessel@AKLeg.gov" <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@AKLeg.gov>
Subject: SB 50

Senator Giessel:

Thank you for bringing SB 50 to the table. It's long overdue and is the first step in doing away entirely with studded tires. The ruts are a serious danger. I describe a trip down the Glenn to outsiders as like "crossing the wake" while water skiing. Beyond that, we simply cannot afford

to continue to spend this kind of money on the constant road maintenance

I grew up in Wisconsin. Studded tires are prohibited there and in the neighboring state of Minnesota. These are northern states. Lots of snow and ice. Long winters. Do parents love their kids less there? You'll get a lot of resistance on SB 50 from people who sincerely (but wrongly) believe you are threatening their safety. And there will be the tire industry and road contractors who will push hard to keep this sacred cow in the pasture.

Please toe the line. Thanks for your leadership!

Regards,

Eric Fjelstad
Anchorage
Sent from iPad

From: LONNIE D BROOKS [<mailto:lonnieinalaska@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 7:21 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>; Rep. Lance Pruitt <Rep.Lance.Pruitt@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB50 STUDED TIRES AND RUTTED ROADS

Senator, I am fully in support of Senate Bill 50 that you've introduced, as reported this morning on KSKA's Alaska Economic Report. In fact I was composing in my mind a message to you and Representative Pruitt in which I intended to propose that in the light of the alternative technology available, such as Bridgestone's Blizzak tires, tire studs either be banned or taxed at 100% of the cost of the tire. I'm sure you're aware that some other states have already banned the use of studded tires. Minnesota bans studs, except for visitors who come in from states that permit studded tires.

The cost of the big increase in road maintenance occasioned by the use of studs, with no significant increase in safety, in all fairness to those of us who have adopted the alternative technology, simply must be borne by those who continue to choose studs.

Thank you very much for introducing this bill, and I hope you can persuade your colleagues in both houses of the legislature to support you on it. If you think there is anything Adriana or I can do to help with this, please let me know.

Regards,

Lonnie D. Brooks
2020 Muldoon Rd. #344
Anchorage AK 99504-3683
Phone 907-333-4529
Cell 915-491-7646
FAX 907-332-1400

From: Jessica Hoffman [<mailto:jesslhoffman@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 10:16 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tire Tax

Hi Senator Giessel,

Bravo! I'm glad you are pushing to increase the studded tire tax. You read my mind! haha. I also find the deep ruts in the roads created by studded tires dangerous. I have in fact nearly lost control of my vehicle a couple of times while driving due to the ruts catching my tire. In another incident, I was traveling as a passenger with my father driving, when a rut, caused by studded tires, near the intersection of La Touche and 36th in Anchorage, caught the tire of my father's vehicle and we almost had an accident. At the beginning of this month, my boyfriend and I were traveling back into Anchorage from the Valley when he almost lost control of the vehicle due to the studded tire ruts. I have been fortunate so far that I nor others have been hurt during one of these incidents. However, something must change to increase the safety of our roads and have the owners of studded tires pay their fare share of repairing the damage their equipment causes. I also wonder how many of the accidents that have happened on the Glen Hwy have occurred because of the ruts.

In a study by the Washington State DOT, 2002, they found that studded tires were no more safe than newer winter tires such as Blizzaks. In the WA report, they found that studded tires offer no benefit over non-studded tires in winter conditions except icy roads near 32 degrees Farenheit. In addition, an Oregon DOT, study found that drivers increased their speeds with the use of studded tires, thereby negating any benefit studded tires may have. I have been driving in Alaskan winters since I first got learner's permit when I was 14. During that time, I have found that reducing my driving speed allows me to maintain control of my vehicle and studded tires are not needed for safety. As a disclaimer, I have never owned studded tires.

Something else to consider would be an outright ban on studded tires. As you may know, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan have all banned studded tire use. Would our State benefit from such a ban as well? Would the State be able to save more money by not repairing the roads as frequently than it would gain with the tax? I grew up in the Interior and it seemed that road repairs due to ruts did not occur. It was not until I visited Anchorage that I had ever seen ruts in the road. In trying to fix our budget, maybe consider banning studded tires all together.

I have attached the studies I mention.

Sincerely,

Jessica Hoffman

From: David Kranich [<mailto:dave@nusalaska.com>]

Sent: Friday, February 10, 2017 1:48 PM

To: Jane Conway <Jane.Conway@akleg.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Found, the email with stud info which was trapped on my dead computer.

Senator Guissel,

I applaud your efforts to expose the real cost of tire studs. I am forwarding this email sent to me by a friend which I have shared with Mark Luiken, transportation commissioner. I run a fleet of 12 vehicles year round and run winter tires "blizzaks or equivalent" year round. I see no increased wear over a standard tire in the summer, and have had no accidents that studs would have prevented. We have however had two loss of control accidents caused by stud ruts. We save thousands of dollars each year by keeping winter tread tires on year round, and my drivers feel more secure than with studs that tend to skate in some conditions. The link to the 2014 Oregon study is particularly enlightening if you haven't already seen it. Thanks for all you do.

David Kranich
Northern Utility Services
907-632-0012

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Raymond M" <raymondm2@mtaonline.net>

Date: Dec 3, 2016 8:13 PM

Subject: Found, the email with stud info which was trapped on my dead computer.

To: "David Kranich" <Dave@nusalaska.com>

Cc:

Studs and their cost. This was sent to a Senator who wished for input last year.

If you know someone who might be interested please forward. This was assembled with the help of searching and reading for a few evenings. This was even interesting. The links included refer to the source material. I double checked these links, they appear to be good.

If someone credentialed relating to this field were to estimate costs, with a peer review, I think the information would be quite useful.

Raymond.

From: Raymond M [<mailto:raymondm2@mtaonline.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2015 11:15 PM

To: John Wood <John.Wood@akleg.gov>

Subject: Greetings John, Please forward this to Sen. Mike Dunleavy. Please

Large Budget reducing opportunity Please read and reply with your thoughts.

Stud ruts and Quality of life, road safety and outstanding costs.

Some time ago I researched this a little and was reminded of it again as in the last week I've been in traffic backed up for a 3rd time due to vehicle loss of control due to water in the Stud ruts. This is of course in addition to the spin outs in the winter, slowed driving due to ruts and intersection roughness that substantially slows time in intersections and of course road repair, just in time for Studded tire to go on vehicles again. To me this is serious safety issue as well as property lost or destroyed, and enormous state and city burden.

Tire Studs. Direct costs. Found a recent study 2014 in Oregon. Please open it for review. Pulling some key info out below. I will refer to the page number on the PDF rather than the number at the bottom of the scanned page. In this way, you can type in the PDF page number and go directly there.

Page 5 Section 16. Wear rate of asphalt with 100,000 passes is 0.0295".

Here is how I work out the math to relate it to the cause, ie the Studded tire.

(This is .03 per 50,000 vehicle passes, two tires per vehicle in same track.) Let's convert this to miles.

...Let's say this was one vehicle. My wife's winter tires lasted ~50,000 miles, but are studless. Yes, that's longish, make your adjustments later. If they were studded, that one single set of tires would have removed 0.03 in their life time. If this were just 100 cars, this would be 3 inches of ruts in one mile of pavement. Ok, your saying, usually winter tires only last 25k, so those 100 sets of tires would then on average would cut 1-1/2 inches of rut in one mile of pavement. Oregon uses a max limit of 0.75" depth before repaving, of course you can't pave just one lane easily, let's go with that. So it only takes 50 sets of tire studs to kill one mile of pavement. Cost per lane mile in Oregon is (26,282,169/200.53) Page 46 Asphalt cost for 200.53 lane miles. For studded tires to pay for themselves, \$131,063.53 per lane mile / (50 cars x 4 tires) = \$655 per tire tax. It get's worse.

Safety. Key important points. Page 20 Item 1. Excerpt. "Studded tires produce their best traction on snow or ice near the freezing mark and lose proportionately more of their tractive ability at lower temperatures than do studless or all season tires." Continue reading for more info.

Item 3, specifically cites Alaska. I'd like to find this study. On clean ice there is a 15% advantage.

My opinion, most of the winter is colder than borderline freezing, where studless do better.

Item 4, cites Blizzaks in Alaska offered better traction..

Item 5, Studs had worse traction on pavement. (I might add while grinding the pavement away)

Page 50. Specific note. The second to last sentence, "Approximately 46 percent of the total

statewide costs occur in Region 4 with 98 percent of the costs attributed to asphalt, which has relatively low volumes but high studded tire use. " (This sounds like all of Alaska.)

When on the phone, reference information found in this Oregon study, but it has been superseded by the one referenced above. Good news is, studs aren't as expensive as they were, it's direct repaving costs are down to just \$655 damage per tire. Does not include all of the other costs.

Math. How long a road will last without studs. -minus- how long a road lasts with studs. The Cost difference should be applied directly to a studs tax. Remember how long ago it was when the Parks and Glenn highway bridges were put in. They are repaving it now, and the recent rain, is blowing new potholes due to ruts. I doubt the debt was paid off on this road already.

Here's a national breakdown of Alaska's ranking. We are 49th least cost effective. Considering the bloated road budgets found nationwide, achieving a 49th most cost effective is somewhat of a statement!

What makes studs worse? Going faster increases impact damage, stopping, accelerating, going around corners, using heavier studs than the lightest, using studded tire with higher counts of studs.

Summary. I don't have Alaska numbers. Actually, it's hard for me to consider this hasn't been done by some engineer. Beyond that, there is still more. Loss of control due to stud ruts, by hydroplaning, by changing lanes in the winter and getting spun out, even flipped over in the winter. Loss or damage of vehicle, cost of healthcare either direct to state or indirect, cost of insuring vehicles, excessive road work, excessive delays because on road work, excessive state deficit and prolonged debt. Still doesn't include pothole repair and other repairs, nor bridges, nor city costs, especially at stop lights. For the environmentalists, each lane mile paved might be equal of 1200 tons of CO2 produced or saved by not resurfacing.

Putting a number on this is hard, because, it's not easy to locate information and what is found can be argued if someone wants to. Whatever I have found, suggests studs have a staggering cost. Put a number on that, and let's reduce the budget.

Tire studs. While an outright ban might be too much, I want the costs publicized and then tax them. There isn't a chance a tax could pay for all of the ruts ground into the tarmac.

The tax should be PER STUD with a sticker on the window for each year they are paid for. Old tires should not escape and prevent studding over the internet. Even if there were a \$1 per stud fee for every new stud, that would save some huge money on repairing the roads. With each tire having 100 studs and some many more, people will think twice before signing up for a quad row asphalt grinder on each wheel-well.

Other ways to reduce these outrageous costs, we largely drive on snow free roads from middle of March on, do we really need more months of asphalt munching? Days studs are prohibited 5/1-9/15= 137 days, or 228 days with studs. Well over 7 mos. Can the date which studded tires can

be put on modified, in the same way Fish and Game watch fish and game. Road people should watch the weather adjust times. Seeing people driving for several months with no snow chiseling up the road is just distracting. Banning them entirely might be more logical, however, that might be too controlling. Count the cost. Start advertising with info. Then add tax per stud. Reduce dates.

Normally there is a state fee 2.50 per tire.

Existing Heavy Stud fee The 5 fee per tire for heavy studs does not seem remotely responsible. A heavy stud doubles the road damage. These heavy ones should be banned, have no benefit.

As much as I dislike it, consideration for a \$25 bounty for studded tires removed from rims when replaced new studless tires, waive the 2.50 new fee for this purpose.

Thanks for serving Raymond Miller.

PS. Here is a side note. Found New Winter tires largely only wear faster above 45°. Ground temps are 41° deeper down in our area. Our test. So purchased Blizzaks for my wife's Ridgeline. Drove through last Winter, we left them on for this Summer. She drives in early mornings and evening when it's cooler. Almost no detectable wear for the first Summer. Forecast. We will be leaving Winter tires on Year round, and saving \$100 swapping tires every year, and just buy new ones every 3 years instead of tire change fees and a little bit.

From: woods_niles [mailto:woods_niles@adk12.org]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 3:49 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Stud Tax and HB 115

Cathy,

I very much support your \$75 tax on each studded tire sold!

I also hope that you support the Senate Bill that corresponds to HB 115, on solving our fiscal imbalance!
We need to balance our State Budget!

Thanks! Niles

From: "afn@yahoo" <afn16755@yahoo.com>
Date: February 15, 2017 at 6:36:50 PM AKST
To: "Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov" <Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 50
Reply-To: "afn@yahoo" <afn16755@yahoo.com>

Sen Giessel,

Please allow me to say that I am opposed to any type of user tax. Having said that, I feel that a better approach is to eliminate studded tires altogether. Studded tires give you a false sense of security (like driving a 4x4) and do more damage to our roads than non-studded tires. Other states have eliminated them, it's time for Alaska to follow suit.

thank you

detlef wanke

palmer ak

From: William Sola [<mailto:wmsola@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2017 10:37 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded tire issue

Hello - Although I am not in your district, I too feel that studded tires pose several problems, ranging from excessive road wear to increased air pollution.

Perhaps you've already discussed this, but I feel that metal studded tires are the real culprit here.

Why not consider banning metal studs altogether, as they are not superior to the newer "stud-less" snow tire technology as seen on such brands as Blizzak, Nokian, Michelin, etc.

They are not that more expensive than standard studded tires, and the burden of road wear is traded off from the public to the private sector, with no monetary "penalties" from the state.

Regards,
William Sola
Anchorage

From: Carmen Gutierrez [<mailto:ave2cg@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2017 1:41 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giesel <Sen.Cathy.Giesel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Re: Please support HB115

Senator Giesel,

First, I would like to tell you that I support your effort to raise the fee on studded tires. Studs cause tremendous damage to our road systems which results in great expense to the state & municipalities. I believe this is just one of many examples of how Alaskans have grown accustomed to not paying for infrastructure used.

I will respond in another email to the Senate's goals and objectives outlined below. I oppose a constitutional spending cap and believe the other measures outlined will not be sufficient to bridge the budget gap.

Thank you,

Carmen

From: Judith Brendel [<mailto:loonranger4@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, February 17, 2017 10:40 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giesel <Sen.Cathy.Giesel@akleg.gov>
Subject: kudos to you

Kudos to you for having the guts to propose the tax on studded tires. It is good to see someone willing to take an unpopular stand - too often legislators are working on getting reelected rather than work on governing.

Thank you, although I am not convinced studded tires are the only cause of ruts in highways, the ruts are dangerous. Maybe the highways need to be built better.

Again, thank you for having the backbone to address unpopular subjects.

Judith Brendel

From: John Mahaffey [<mailto:johnmahaffey@email.com>]
Sent: Friday, February 17, 2017 1:09 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giesel <Sen.Cathy.Giesel@akleg.gov>
Subject: support studded tire tax

I was disappointed that you dropped the tax from \$75 to \$50 but recognize it will help get it passed. I strongly support this tax, our roads suffer greatly due to studs and it is way past time stud users help to pay for the damage. Please get this tax pushed through. John Mahaffey, Anchorage

From: Bob Redlinger [mailto:bob.redlinger@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 19, 2017 1:12 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB50

Good day Senator Giessel,

You have sponsored SB50, the additional tax on studded tires. I'm sure studded tires do affect our roads, so do we have any current studies

that show how studded tires affect our roads? My major concern is if there is an increase in tax on studded tires, can those monies be directed to our state road maintenance? I know as of now the tax proceeds cannot be dedicated to one item. I live on the Hillside and commute weekly to Seward and the road snow removal for Hillside, O'Malley and the Seward Hiway the last couple of years has continually gotten worst.

I support the tax if the studies show studded tires affect the roads and the additional monies can be dedicated to improving road snow removal.

Thank you for your time.

Robert M Redlinger

From: Kit [mailto:kith@gci.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 19, 2017 10:25 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Income tax/ PFD bills

Dear Senator Giessel,

Kit and I want to thank you for your hard work in trying to fix the budget problems that our state is experiencing. We both agree with your bill to tax the studded tires as they cause accelerated wear on our highways. We went to the soft studless snow tires a few years ago and find them perfectly fine in most conditions.

Our primary concern right now is the attempt to impose an income tax on working Alaskans without the total elimination of the PFD program. We feel it is an illegal bill that can be challenged based on income redistribution. The state would also have a new costly program to manage. We are both retired and have limited ability to make up for the loss of spending ability this would cause. We do not want to leave Alaska but would seriously consider this option if an unjust PFD/income tax bill were to pass. Please follow my logic here. Say the PFD

payout was 500 million and the income tax collects 500 million. This seems to take from the "rich" and redistribute my money to others with no basis of need(welfare). How can this be legal? I have always been against the PFD giveaway and would love to see it end. It is bad PR for the state and attracts some to Alaska who may think they can live here for free". *Thanks again for your efforts! Darrell and Kit Holmstrom, Anchorage, Ak 99504*

From: Mark Bloch [<mailto:mbloch18@comcast.net>]
Sent: Saturday, February 18, 2017 4:53 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Constituant Feedback

Dear Senator Giessel:

I wanted to give you my views on some issues that you will be addressing in the upcoming weeks.

Concerning your call for a tax on snow tires, I applaud your goal of eliminating studded tires in Alaska. This being my fifth state of residency, I am almost certain that we are alone in allowing their use. I am also aware that you have modified your original proposal but I think that the only way to achieve this goal is to increase the gasoline tax so that we can rebuild our road infrastructure. Those who use the highways (meaning drivers) should be responsible for maintaining them and for building new ones. This also includes those operating electric vehicles wherein I would suggest a yearly vehicle tax equivalent to the average tax paid by Alaskan gasoline consumers.

The most important issue facing our great state is of course the budget and I would strongly urge that no other business take place until this issue is resolved. Going into extra innings is not a good way for the legislature to structure their responsibilities.

Most of the Governor's proposal as well as that presented by Representative Paul Seaton and others are good starting points. We all have to share in the load and those of us (including my wife and myself) of means do need to bear a greater role than those of lesser means. That is not a political statement but what I would consider an ethical and moral view point. Continued cutting of the state budget will only lead to a deeper recession and a longer one. Cuts to safety (like our State Troopers), health and education will only exacerbate the problem of attracting families to move to Alaska. Families with school age children will seriously take our school systems into account in making relocation decisions. And yes this does mean that the PFD will have to reflect more closely on what was paid out in 2016.

Alaskans who are home owners will also find that their home values will decrease (the market of supply and demand) as the demand continues to decrease (I just spoke yesterday with someone very involved in this field and the trend is continuing on the down swing).

Recently I purchased an expensive camera as a gift for my daughter in Colorado and had to pay almost \$50 in Colorado State Tax. I don't have a problem with that because I know that the money is needed to run the Rocky Mountain State. I want my daughter's family to be safe, live where schools are excellent and be provided all the necessities that Colorado provides.

We live in a country with sharply divided political views but perhaps you can help to lead the way by providing a comprising leadership role in this very difficult situation that we find ourselves facing. I hope that you will reflect more on this than on how many would balance their vote on how it will reflect on their re-election.

Thanks for taking the time to read my comments.

Sincerely,

Mark Bloch

From: Sue and Wes Tonkins [<mailto:w.s.tonkins@gci.net>]
Sent: Sunday, February 19, 2017 5:12 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Studded Tires

Honorable Cathy Giessel
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Giessel,

My name is Wesley G Tonkins. I live in the Eastbrook Subdivision in east Anchorage.

A year ago I sent you an email suggesting eliminating studded tires or charging a large enough tax on them to encourage drivers to switch to studless winter tires. I want to thank you for recently proposing legislation to tax studded tires.

Thanks for following up on my suggestion last year,

Wesley G Tonkins
7555 Eastbrook Circle
Anchorage, AK 99504

Kenneth Huckleba
6920 E Wolf Lake Rd
Wasilla, AK 99654
907 227 6390

February 15, 2017

Kathy Giessel
Alaska State Capital
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Giessel,

I am writing a letter of encouragement to you for your efforts to tax studded tires to enhance the ability to repair the damage done by these tires.

I commute from Wasilla to Anchorage every day of the week. In the summer, I use my motorcycle. Having thousands of miles of experience with the ruts, I'd like to offer some observations.

On both my four wheel vehicles and my motorcycle, the ruts are a severe hydroplaning hazard when it rains. The ruts, particularly on any slopes and turns where they are deeper, actually become small creeks filled with water. This is hazardous in a truck or car because of hydroplaning and jerking the vehicle abruptly to one side or the other. On a motorcycle, it can be deadly because one can not even think about crossing over the lanes for any reason, emergency or not, when it is raining hard.

When it is icy, the ruts cause the vehicle to shift abruptly breaking tires traction and causing spin-outs, I've seen this many times, studded tires or not.

I'm not sure if there's a study or not, but I've seen many accidents in close proximity to stud-induced rut areas.

In short, any safety considerations for the use of studs could easily be cancelled by the safety concerns caused by the ruts resulting from their use.

I've heard many statements about asphalt hardness. There's an urban myth the cause of the ruts is some specially utilized soft road material. I believe this is misinformation and it would be good to educate the public about the facts concerning stud use and road wear.

I've also heard that there is a small percentage of people who actually use studs. If this be the case, are stud proponents worth the damage they cause?

I believe studded tire drivers ride faster than they should in mixed traffic. This false sense of unlimited traction makes people drive too fast for conditions. On the Glenn and in town, studded tire drivers go much faster than others around them. This causes a dangerous condition all unto its own.

All in all, for safety's sake, and for wear and tear on the roads, we need to not simply tax studs but eliminate their use entirely as other states have actually done.

Sincerely,


Ken Huckleba

February 26, 2017

3409 Bailey Blvd
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Senator Cathy Giessel
State Capitol Room 427
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: SB 50 Studded Tires

Dear Senator Giessel,

I am writing in support of SB 50 which proposes to raise the fees on studded tires. Previously I was a regular user of studded tires. However, around 5 years ago I switched to the newer technology winter tires without studs and have noticed no appreciative difference in traction. Our house is located up basically on a hillside with a very steep driveway and so if studded tires improved our ability to get up and down it I would utilize them.

I see our local roads deteriorate in the winter and I know studded tires play a substantial role in their demise. An expensive demise for sure.

I appreciate your efforts to help maintain our roads by introducing this legislation.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry D. Christensen". The signature is stylized with a large initial "B" and a long horizontal stroke.

Barry D. Christensen, RPh