

April 5, 2018

Dear Honorable Representatives of the House Finance Committee  
and those sponsoring HB 217,

We own and operate a small, sustainable market farm growing a diverse array of vegetables, fruits and berries, as well as AK Certified Seed Potatoes using organic methods. This is a quick e-mail to let you know that we hope that you support HB 217.

Though we don't have any dairy production on our farm, we had some concerns about and couldn't support the raw milk provisions in the original Food Freedom Bill, but we do support all the Alaska Grown provisions in the current version.

We will appreciate all the support for Alaska Grown and will buy Alaska Grown items from DNR - our farm/customers really like them and want them to be available. We'll happily buy a number of practical produce packaging items, like "Alaska Grown" twist ties as soon as they are made available from the fine folks at the Alaskan Division of Ag. We support the DEC pilot program regarding some products sold through Alaskan food hubs (including the Kenai Peninsula Food Hub, now being renamed the Alaska Food Hub as we understand it). We have been happily selling fresh produce on the Kenai Peninsula Food Hub and could consider expanding our offerings with this new pilot program in place. Even if our farm doesn't utilize this pilot program, we support other local vendors in having this option in place and believe that it will help the local farms and economy. The supports, protections, and encouragement that this bill provides farmers offering farm tours is terrific. We are asked to give farm tours a lot and this bill can make us do so more easily. Thank you for that! We absolutely support any efforts to encourage buying more Alaska Grown agricultural and fisheries products, including providing more flexibility in procurement rules. We also support all farm to school efforts and education and appreciate your supporting that too! You can feel really good about moving this bill forward!

Indeed, we believe that HB 217 would be good for the economy and health of Alaskans. Please feel free to phone or e-mail us if we can be of any further assistance in this matter or answer any questions from one small farm's perspective.

Thank you for all your good work - and for supporting Alaskan growers and communities!  
Don and Donna Rae

Donna Rae Faulkner and Don "Iceman" McNamara  
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