

Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Natasha Von Imhof
Members of the Senate Finance Committee

I am writing in support of HB 122: Funter Bay Marine Park; Unangan Cemetery

I have owned adjacent property, the former Funter Bay cannery site, for the past thirty years. The cannery (which at the time was no longer active) was one of the sites used during the Aleut Internment. The old bunkhouse that was used for housing is on our property and the graveyard is a short walk away.

I am pleased that the Cemetery has been recognized for its historical and cultural significance. It has been restored and is available and accessible for visitation. This legislation would guarantee its protection.

The small parcel of state land between the Cemetery and the Coot Cove Marine Park makes sense to include in this legislation. It is de facto public use land that is occasionally used for deer hunting or for access to the Marine Park. There is no commercial timber or other natural resources with commercial potential on the lands to be turned over to park management.

Much of Funter Bay is already in private ownership, primarily used for recreational cabins. The remaining public land, both state and USFS, is used heavily by SE Alaska residents, commercial fisherman and boat visitors from Canada and the lower 48.

Having spent considerable time on the very site where the Internment camp was located has given me a good sense of the difficulties endured by those who were interned. Many paid with their lives. Their memory resides with their Aleut relatives and children, some of whom have had the opportunity to visit the graveyard, and hopefully others will in the future.

To date, there has been no opposition to the bill of which I am aware.

I will try to be on line to answer any questions by committee members on this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Reed Stoops

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