



February 3, 2022

The Honorable Click Bishop  
The Honorable Bert Stedman  
The Honorable Lyman Hoffman  
The Honorable Natasha von Imhof

The Honorable David Wilson  
The Honorable Donald Olson  
The Honorable Bill Weilechowski

Re: Amended Senate Bill 9

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Two years ago, the Alaska State Fair's alcohol license was in jeopardy of not being renewed because AMCO determined the Fair did not meet the definition of a Recreational Site License category, a license category the Fair had been operating under for the past 39 years. The matter was temporarily resolved with the passage of SB16 in 2019. Senate Bill 16 grandfathered the Alaska State Fair under the recreational site license until new license categories could be adopted in the Title 4 rewrite.

Unfortunately, the initial rewrite of Title 4 did not allow the Fair to operate as it has in the past with the ability to serve during the annual Fair and the off-season events. This would have a devastating impact on our ability to generate revenue in the interim, revenue that we have come to rely on more and more each year. The Fair is a host site for over 70 events each year and some of these events are provided with alcohol service. The loss of alcohol service would make many user groups unhappy and result in a loss of alcohol sales as well as income from facility rentals.

Also, there was no other mechanism in SB 9 that would allow for a simple solution to the problem. Other license categories or permits do not fit the business model of the Fair, making the Fair subject to different interpretations by each new AMCO administration or limit the number of special alcohol permits in a year. The Sporting Activity or Event License (sec.04.09.270) was not intended for fairs and presents us with a challenge to meet definition requirements. The Nonprofit organization event permit sec.04.09.650 limits the number of alcohol events to 10 per year and would therefore cause cancellations and lost business opportunities.

We are thankful to Senator Hughes for bringing forward the amendment to Sec. 04.09.290 that allows the Fair to operate as it has in the past. The Alaska State Fair has always been a responsible steward of our privilege to serve alcohol during off season events and we are simply asking to keep those same privileges in the future.

For the reasons written above, the Alaska State Fair asks for your support of the current amended version of Senate Bill 9.

Sincerely,

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