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March 17, 2026

House Labor and Commerce committee

Re: Testimony in Support of House Bill 302 and SB 244, Alaska Travel Insurance Act

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Caren Alvarado and I am VP of Regulatory Affairs for Crum & Forster, a subsidiary of Fairfax Holdings. My organization has been writing travel insurance for many years, is fully licensed in all 50 states, including Alaska, and we are therefore very familiar with the unique intricacies of these products and the marketplace. I am also Co-Chair of the Law and Reg Committee for the US Travel Insurance Association (USTIA) that is comprised of a variety of organizations involved in the travel insurance industry.

I would like to thank the sponsors and the members for bringing these bills before the Committee today and for allowing interested parties the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Travel Bill. We are writing in full support of the bill which is important for travel consumers, state insurance regulators and industry.

Travel insurance plays a critical role in protecting consumers from unforeseen events that can disrupt travel plans, such as medical emergencies, trip cancellations, lost luggage, or natural disasters. As travel has become more accessible and global, the risks associated with travel have also increased. Travel insurance provides peace of mind and financial security, ensuring that travelers are not left vulnerable to significant losses. This legislation is essential for safeguarding the interests of Alaska's residents and visitors, given the state's unique geographic and environmental challenges. In Alaska, where travel often involves remote destinations, unpredictable weather, and limited access to immediate medical care, these protections are especially important. Legislation that ensures clear policy language, fair claims handling, and transparent pricing will empower consumers to make informed decisions and travel with confidence. By enacting robust travel insurance laws, Alaska can set a standard for consumer rights and safety, ensuring that travelers are not left vulnerable to financial hardship due to circumstances beyond their control. This will not only benefit individual consumers but also support the state's tourism industry by fostering trust and reliability.

This crucial legislation builds upon existing regulatory frameworks and further promotes a framework that works for everyone – regulators, consumers, and industry players alike, promoting a clear and level playing field with minimal negative disruption while promoting uniformity throughout the states. Both industry and consumers will benefit from a nationwide consistent approach for travel protection plans that include insurance and non-insurance components. By incorporating this regulatory framework in your state, you will ensure clarity and consistency is provided to the way travel insurance products are regulated.

This travel insurance legislation is good for all industry participants because going forward, we will have specific requirements applicable to travel insurance with which all players will have to comply, including new



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entrants to this growing market. The language before you today has been thoroughly vetted to ensure the legislation creates an efficient, effective regulatory framework for travel insurance that benefits consumers, empowers regulators, and ensures the marketplace operates fairly.

The bill contains Model Act language from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), which is essentially identical to a Model Act authored by the National Council of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL). However, the language also contains compromises as agreed to between the OIC and industry.

To date we are happy to report that 41 states have enacted the Model Act so far and we are hopeful AK will be number 42. In addition, several other states are contemplating enacting similar language in their states during 2026 as well.

If enacted, this bill would amend the insurance code to clarify the regulatory framework for the sale of travel insurance. The bill standardizes definitions and contains robust consumer protections, including with respect to sales practices, a free-look period for refunds, and various consumer disclosures.

These critical components of the Travel Insurance Model Act were vetted and agreed upon by the to ensure that the proper requirements are defined that are unique to travel insurance. We want to make certain that Alaskans are getting prompt, knowledgeable, and effective service when they need it most—often in stressful or emergency situations far from home.

As an industry leader, we support efforts to strengthen consumer confidence in travel insurance. We believe that clear regulations benefit both consumers and reputable insurers by fostering a fair, competitive marketplace. Our company already adheres to the best practices outlined in this legislation, and we are committed to working with regulators and lawmakers to ensure effective implementation.

In closing, I urge the committee to support these bills. This legislation will help protect travelers, promote transparency, and uphold the integrity of the travel insurance industry. To our knowledge there is no opposition to the bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Please let us know if you have any questions or we can provide any additional information.

Very truly yours,

Caren Alvarado, VP Regulatory Affairs & Compliance

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