



March 11, 2009

101 Dunkel Street, Suite 111 • Fairbanks, AK 99701-4806
(907) 457-3282 • (907) 459-3787 Fax
www.explorefairbanks.com

Dear Representative Coghill:

On behalf of the visitor industry in the Interior, the Fairbanks Convention & Visitors Bureau heartily thanks you for sponsoring HB 167. By supporting the marketing funding for the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA), you are supporting small businesses in Fairbanks and the Interior.

Entrepreneurialism is one of the hallmarks of the Alaska visitor industry. These local business owners and their employees are your neighbors, friends and constituents. As you know, tourism has a ripple effect throughout our community, generating construction, transportation and countless other services, infrastructure and quality-of-life benefits to our community. The locally-owned Hotel North Pole is a great example of this entrepreneurialism

The beauty of a state destination campaign is that it reaches a depth and breadth of potential customers that is beyond the reach of most small businesses. Destinations operate in a fiercely competitive marketing environment which becomes even more ferocious in trying economic times such as these.

The success of our "mom-and-pop" businesses is not only creativity, hard work and persistence but also relies on the success of the ATIA campaigns. On a daily basis, the FCVB sees the benefits of the marketing and sales efforts of ATIA. Please continue to support small business by doing the following this legislative session:

- Support the Governor's budget that continues the reinvestment of vehicle rental tax revenues into Alaska's tourism marketing program [QTA contract] at the \$9 million level in the FY10 operating budget. This will be matched with \$2.7 million in private-sector funds, including funding from FCVB.
- As you have proposed, pass the HB 167 legislation to provide a tax credit to payers of the Cruise Line Corporate Income Tax for contributions to Alaska's tourism marketing program. The goal is to sustainably grow Alaska's tourism marketing funding to at least \$20 million. 50% of Fairbanks' summer visitation is cruise related. Let this tax credit help us to grow small businesses in Alaska and to grow our winter tourism season!
- Measure the results of Alaska's tourism marketing reinvestment. Appropriate \$850,000 in the FY10 capital budget to fund the Alaska Visitor Statistics Program, an economic impact study. FCVB cannot afford this kind of important research on our own.

Now in my tenth year at FCVB, over the years, I have seen our marketing team work hand-in-hand with the ATIA marketing team to bring visitors to Fairbanks and the Interior. We feel blessed to share our wonderful Alaska product with visitors from throughout the world.

On a personal note, I have made my living since 1982 as a destination marketing professional. I feel personally blessed to have challenging work in a field that I feel passionate about while supporting my child.

Last but certainly not least, thank you for your tireless efforts in Juneau and especially for your support of this important legislation. It is an honor to work with you to foster the economic development of our community.

I'll be in Juneau on April 1 and 2 and look forward to seeing you then. Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (907) 459-3770 or dhickok@explorefairbanks.com.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deb Hickok', written in a cursive style.

Deb Hickok
President and CEO



Mission: to promote cooperative economic development that preserves the essence of the community while enhancing the quality of life.

March 11, 2009

Representative Coghill
Via fax: 907-465-3258 (Juneau)

Dear Representative Coghill,

The Homer Chamber of Commerce urges the State Legislature to support HB167 which will provide continued marketing funds to the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA), and ultimately assist smaller destination communities like Homer to sustain a viable economic engine – tourism.

Our mission is to promote cooperative economic development that preserves the essence of the community while enhancing the quality of life. A significant share of Homer's economic base comes from the more than 150,000 visitors that travel to Homer each year to experience Alaska. We attribute a key portion of this success to our continued partnership with ATIA.

Homer has numerous tourism related businesses, many of them small businesses, who rely heavily on the marketing success of organizations such as ATIA. Through ATIA's tremendous wide reach and effective marketing efforts, communities like Homer can reach potential customers collectively that individual businesses could not do alone.

Please consider the economic impact that the tourism industry has on Alaska's small communities and support HB167. This is a critical time when economic stimulus and recovery is essential, and with your support we can keep our tourism industry strong.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tina Day". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Tina Day
Executive Director

cc. Senator Gary Stevens
Representative Paul Seaton