

Seward State Parks Citizen Advisory Board

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation provides outdoor recreation opportunities and conserves and interprets natural, cultural, and historic resources for the use, enjoyment, and welfare of the people.



March 24, 2025

Senate Transportation: Senate.Transportation@akleg.gov

House Finance: House.Finance@akleg.gov

Senator Matt Claman, Senator.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov

cc Carly Dennis, carly.dennis@akleg.gov

Representative Kevin McCabe, Representative.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov

cc Senator Gary Stevens, Senator.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov

cc Representative Louise Stutes, Representative.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov

cc DPOR Ricky Gease, ricky.gease@alaska.gov

cc Alaska State Parks Kenai/Prince William Sound Superintendent Hans Rinke,
hans.rinke@alaska.gov

RE: Vehicle Rental Tax, SB 138 and HB 123

Dear Legislators:

The Seward State Park Citizen Advisory Board requests your support of Senate Bill 138 and HB 123 regarding the recently reintroduced Alaska Vehicle Rental Tax collection.

This proposed legislation would move the responsibility for collecting and remitting the required vehicle lease and rental excise tax from the individual to the vehicle rental platform company. This would streamline collection of the required Vehicle Rental Tax (VRT) from peer-to-peer car sharing platforms such as Turo, and capture unreported vehicle rentals. It is not a new tax.

The Vehicle Rental Tax allocation provides a stable, sustainable funding platform for much-needed state park field operations. Visitors expect our state parks, especially those that are road-accessible like the Seward area state parks, to provide parking lots, restrooms, public use cabins, and trails. Maintenance, improvements, and timely investments in capital projects for outdoor recreation infrastructure on a shoestring budget with barebones staffing and funding is challenging. Underfunding jeopardizes the mission of Alaska State Parks.

Alaska State Parks are a vital component of Seward's and our state's economic engines. The recent designation of the Fort McGilvray Historic District in Caines Head State Recreation Area to the National Register of Historic Places will attract even more visitors to our already popular Seward area state parks.

Ensuring that all the required VRT is collected will in turn, help our state parks provide the expected visitor experiences.

We appreciate your consideration and support of Senate Bill 138 and HB 123. We fully support them.

Sincerely,
Nick Jordan
Chair

Carly Dennis

From: rainyday <c_griz@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2025 8:57 AM
To: Senate Transportation Committee; House Finance; Sen. Matt Claman; Carly Dennis; Rep. Kevin McCabe; Sen. Gary Stevens; Rep. Louise Stutes
Subject: Vehicle Rental Tax, SB 138 and HB 123

April 10, 2025

Senate Transportation: Senate.Transportation@akleg.gov

House Finance: House.Finance@akleg.gov

Senator Matt Claman, Senator.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov

cc Carly Dennis, carly.dennis@akleg.gov

Representative Kevin McCabe, Representative.Kevin.McCabe@akleg.gov

cc Senator Gary Stevens, Senator.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov

cc Representative Louise Stutes, Representative.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov

RE: Vehicle Rental Tax, SB 138 and HB 123

Dear Legislators,

I support the committee substitute bill that changes the rates for Turo to a flat 9% rate for everyone. This will make collection and enforcement easier and result in a fair process that will generate more revenue.

Currently, many Turo operators are operating illegally without a business license and do not pay sales tax or the Vehicle Rental Tax. They do not support our city, borough, or our state parks and compete unfairly with legit vehicle rental businesses. Unfortunately, this is a growing business model.

It is easy to find these scofflaws in my town of Seward as the Turo website not only includes photos and descriptions of the vehicles for rent, but the first name and initial of the last name. The operators often use the same photo as their Facebook (X) posts. It's a small town. A cross-check of required past and current business licenses did not find any of these operators.

They get rave reviews from their customers who are unaware that their gracious hosts offering clean, well-maintained personal cars with perks and little gifts are in violation of existing law that requires payment of the Vehicle Rental Tax, purchase of a city business license, and payment of sales taxes to the city and Kenai Peninsula Borough.

It's way past time to close this vehicle rental loophole.

Sincerely,

Carol Griswold
Seward