

HB 74 - H STA, 2/18/20

House Testimony 2

My name is John Clifton Passmore and I am representing myself. I am a resident of Eagle River, a US Coast Guard licensed master mariner and an Ocean Ranger. I watched this Committee's previous hearing on HB 74 and I would like to make a few comments.

First of all, there are a few good ideas in the bill. Requiring the cruise lines to submit data in an approved format should save the state time and money and is in line with requirements for other monitoring programs.

Random inspections may also be a way to improve the program, although as I explained in my written testimony, the devil will be in the details.

When voters including myself passed the ballot initiative in 2006 establishing the Ocean Ranger program it was our intent that the funds collected for the Ocean Ranger program be used for onboard monitoring by licensed engineers or equivalently qualified individuals. Marine engineers are senior vessel personnel, ships officers, that meet national and international standards for training and competency. Licensed engineers, together with licensed deck officers, are the men and women who operate the ships. We are, contrary to statements by Commissioner Brune, more than qualified to monitor cruise vessels. The US Coast Guard has determined that we are qualified to be legally responsible to operate large vessels and follow all applicable laws, including environmental laws. Most of us have unlimited tonnage licenses, in other words, any vessel, any tonnage, any waters, and many Ocean Rangers are licensed chief engineers, which is the highest engineering rating. 2 of us are master mariners and could take command of any vessel, including cruise ships. We are the experts on operating large vessels, and this is the reason Ocean Rangers are required to be licensed engineers or equivalent.

Upgrading sewage treatment facilities in ports visited by cruise ships is a good idea, but diverting funds from the Ocean Ranger program is not the most appropriate source. More appropriate sources include revenue collected from cruise ships that is ^{not} designated for the Ocean Ranger program

Princess Cruise lines and its parent company ^{not} Carnival, are on probation for environmental violations and were found in violation of conditions of probation in June of 2019 and fined \$20 million. My written testimony included a link to the Court Appointed Monitor's report from December 2019 showing a culture and pattern of repeated violations of environmental laws, including using heavy fuel ^{oil} in Glacier Bay last August. If there is any doubt that some cruise lines are not capable of policing themselves and cannot be trusted to do the right thing, a few minutes of review of this document will remove any doubt. Now is not the time to remove monitoring requirements from convicted felons that repeatedly violate conditions of probation and allow them to police themselves, which is exactly what HB 74 proposes.

Paul