

## Joe G. Hardenbrook

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**From:** Sarah Leonard <Sleonard@alaskatia.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 19, 2021 3:22 PM  
**To:** House Transportation  
**Cc:** Liz Harpold; Jillian Simpson  
**Subject:** Written Comments: HJR13 from the Alaska Travel Industry Association

TO: Representative Hopkins, Chair  
Alaska State House Transportation Committee

RE: House Joint Resolution 13

On behalf of the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) - Alaska's leading statewide organization for travel and tourism and over 600 tourism business owners and community partners, I respectfully submit this written testimony related to HJR13: A Resolution Urging the United States Congress to exempt cruise ships from certain provisions of the Passenger Vessel Services Act (PVSA) for the period during which Canadian ports are closed to cruise ships carrying more than 100 people.

The health and safety of Alaska's visitors and residents, along with its member businesses, remains a top priority of ATIA. We know that providing safe experiences to visitors will help tourism businesses and our industry stay on the path toward economic recovery. ATIA continually advocates for a safe return for cruises in Alaska. Because the industry is supported almost exclusively by out-of-state and international visitors, Alaska is highly susceptible to national and international affairs. Transport Canada's continuation of prohibiting cruise vessels in Canadian waters until Feb. 28, 2022, further threatens Alaska's already fragile tourism industry, predominately made up of small businesses.

ATIA is working closely with Alaska's congressional delegation on brainstorming solutions to safely resume cruising operations. ATIA supports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and its work with the industry to identify safety protocols for cruise operations and to keep passengers and communities healthy. ATIA also seeks possible changes to complicated federal regulations, such as a temporary waiver to the Passenger Vessel Services Act of 1886, that would allow cruise ships to sail between U.S. ports without stopping in Canada.

As the manager of the state's destination marketing program, ATIA is sharing information about independent and air travel as accessible ways to safely travel to Alaska. Promoting safe travel to Alaska can help generate much needed economic activity for tourism business owners, their employees and communities across Alaska.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

**Sarah Leonard**  
President & CEO



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*Alaska's leading statewide nonprofit membership organization for the travel industry*

