



Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance

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April 26, 2022

House Community & Regional Affairs Committee

Alaska State Legislature

State Capitol, Rm 124

Juneau, AK 99811

RE: HB 303 - Oppose legislation as written

Dear Representatives Sara Hannan & Representative Calvin Schrage and Committee Members,

Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance (SEAFA) is a non-profit membership-based organization that represents our 330 members involved in the salmon, crab, shrimp and longline fisheries of Southeast Alaska. We have discussed this legislation with Randy Bates, ADEC during the United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) Board meeting, the UFA webinar, and another meeting with fishing association leaders. We very much appreciate the opportunities we had to discuss and understand this legislation, that said we still oppose the complete repeal of the Ocean Rangers Program.

We support the changes to the ADEC program that grants ADEC personnel scheduled and unscheduled inspections both in port and for voyages between communities and access to machinery spaces of the vessels, and the water sampling in main corridors for both small and large cruise ship vessels. We appreciate the department's willingness to set up a report line for the public and fishermen to report areas where it appears that discharges have occurred.

The Ocean Rangers viewed and watched for a broader range of issues than just the wastewater discharge that this legislation is now focused on. The Ocean Rangers program provided a disincentive that just can't be duplicated through the program as outlined in this legislation. We believe there are tweaks that could improve the Ocean Rangers program, such

as providing legislative authority for more unfettered access to machinery spaces, ability to report violations to the appropriate authority if not ADEC wastewater division, and on a random deployment between communities of SE Alaska using crew bunks as you are arranging for ADEC to reduce costs. A Senate Resource Committee amendment was offered but failed that put an Ocean Ranger on 1 out of every 4 or 5 voyages might be another consideration moving forward. We really oppose the complete removal of the Ocean Rangers program knowing that once removed, it will be unlikely to be able to be reinstated.

We have tried to follow but are still confused about the funding that was collected from the cruise ship passenger for the Ocean Ranger program particularly in 2021 and moving forward. When the legislature defunded the Ocean Ranger program in FY 2020 what happens to this funding? Is the new funding per berth different funding from the cruise ship passenger fee or an additional fee to the cruise ship company in addition to the cruise ship passenger fee approved thru the cruise ship initiative. If a separate fee, what happens to the \$4 per passenger that was collected for the Ocean Ranger program as part of the \$50 cruise ship fee?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Hansen", followed by a long horizontal line.

Kathy Hansen
Executive Director