



Rum Runner Charters

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Alaska State Legislature
State Capital Building
Juneau, AK 99801

Subject: Opposition to HCR1, the formation of a Task Force on Limited Entry for the Charter Industry

Dear Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

My name is Chris Conder. I own and run Rum Runner Charters. I have been Captaining and running Rum Runner for 33 years. That is a long time to be in chartering with all its ups and downs. It is my career, my livelihood and my way of life.

As a lifelong member of the charter boat fleet, I tend to follow any legal developments that could affect my business. I got notice HCR1 and its intentions through a general email sent out just yesterday (Saturday, 8th) by SEAGO with the letter needed to be summited this Monday. That is not enough time for quality responses from the user groups and I can't help but feel that was intentional. Therefore, I urge you to reject House Bill HCR1.

In the-for hire, guided charter business in Southeast Alaska, there are 3 main groups. The small Mom and Pop companies that work with the individuals and families that are only in town for the day, be they cruise ship or independent travelers. There are the charter companies whose clients come and stay in town and fish with that Captain for several days. Then there are the Big Boys, the lodges, some of these are multimillion dollar operations. It's the lodges and their clients that take the vast majority of fish out of South East Alaska.

In the reading of this proposal, the way it is worded, it makes it sound like this is a growth industry that needs to be controlled. In actual fact it is not, the number of individually owned charters is actually in slow decline. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game monitors active charter boats and you can check the records and decline with them, I would have had the numbers for you if I'd had more notice of this House Bill. So with this decline it would seem to make this Task Force unnecessary.

The intention or unintentional effect of this proposal is to harm smaller companies by making it harder, if not impossible for new companies start and older companies to be able to sell. This directly benefits the multi-boat Lodges.

I understand that SEAGO (South East Alaska Guides Organization) is the organization that is promoting this House Bill. When SEAGO was founded, it truly represented the all the Guided industry and their interests, unfortunately as time has gone on the Lodges have been able to assert their influence on the lobbying efforts of this group, it is not as representative as it used to be. As an example, I am a member

of SEAGO through my organization, which is made up of smaller operators, we were never asked for input, nor received notice of this proposal till yesterday. That is not good.

I also understand the members of this task force should it pass, would consist of variety of twelve individuals, three of whom would be SEAGO appointees to represent the entire charter industry. This would not be representative of the charter fleet as a whole and seems to be self-serving. If the Task Force goes forward I would ask you to make sure that at least one of those three seats goes to charter company/individual that is not directly associated with SEAGO to make sure it more accurately embodies the entire charter fleet.

Sincerely,

Capt. Chris Conder

Rum Runner Charters

Dear Representative Louise Stutes,

My name is David Dentinger, I'm a charter captain in Ketchikan, I'm writing today on behalf of no one but myself. I've been a charter captain for 6 seasons in Ketchikan, and I've hired and trained dozens of captains on how to run boats in the waters of the Inside Passage. I'm writing to express my opposition to HCR1.

When I look at HCR1, I don't see a proposal to sustain fisheries or to promote economic growth within our state. I see established business owners slamming and locking the door behind them to ensure healthy competition can't threaten their business models. To me, this proposal is nothing less than protectionism, building a legal framework for nepotism rather than hard work and innovation. NMFS and the Alaska Board of Fish are watching the fisheries and taking action to protect stocks. This proposal goes around those safeguards to create an additional

These fish belong to all of us. My fear with limited entry is that we would establish a permit system and grandfather in the current operators, creating a new asset class that gives ownership of the sport fishery to a privileged few who just happened to be operating in the late 2020s. This same thing happened when halibut permits were issued, and this proposal advances the cause of regulatory capture by established businesses in the state.

When closures come, we adapt, emphasizing to our guests that the value of a day on the water in Alaska is not defined by the weight of animals slaughtered during the experience. We serve guests their fresh catch as a culinary experience, we look for whales, we target pink salmon! The future of this industry is not shipping home hundreds of pounds of fish, but in celebrating biodiversity and targeting abundant species.

I came to the state in 2018, my wife and I started charter fishing together in 2019. We bought our first home with the income from charter fishing, and we're about to have our first child next week. Newcomers to this industry *are not* all seasonals, my captain friends and I are here year-round. They come here because they love this place, and many of them choose to make Alaska home. These are good jobs, they pay enough to thrive in some of

our most remote communities, and they provide tax revenue. This proposal is a first step toward preventing growth in that industry.

I humbly ask, what kind of state do we want to live in? One that welcomes people into our rural communities to work and to start businesses, or a coastline of vanishing towns locked down by unassailable dynasties.

-David Dentinger

Dear Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the formation of a task force to address a Limited Entry program for the charter industry in Southeast Alaska, as prescribed in HCR1. The implementation of such a program would have devastating long-term consequences for small business owners, new entrants, and the future of the industry as a whole.

A Limited Entry system would only serve to benefit larger operators and lodges while making it nearly impossible for young families or new entrepreneurs to enter the industry. We are already living with the severe limitations imposed by the Charter Halibut Permit program, which has proven to be a nightmare for independent operators. This system not only restricts new business opportunities, but also creates significant challenges for aging operators looking to retire, as the resale market for these permits is severely constrained.

Furthermore, our industry is already declining in the number of operators and has been for some time. The challenges of operating a charter business - rising costs, regulations, and existing permit restrictions - have led to fewer and fewer businesses in the industry. Implementing yet another barrier to entry will only accelerate this decline, ultimately harming not only charter operators but also the local economies that rely on a thriving tourism and fishing industry.

The charter industry thrives on free enterprise, not government-imposed limitations that stifle competition and innovation. The best way to ensure a healthy and sustainable industry is to allow the market to dictate necessary adjustments, rather than implementing artificial barriers that benefit only a select few.

I urge you to reject HCR1 and any efforts to impose further restrictions on this industry. Instead, let's focus on policies that promote opportunity, economic growth, and fairness for all operators, regardless of their size or longevity in the business.

Additionally, it seems inappropriate and highly concerning that this resolution allows for a full one-quarter of the task force to be made up of SEAGO-appointed or recommended

individuals. This would not be representative of the entire Southeast Alaska charter industry and instead demonstrates that this entire recommendation is self-serving. A task force designed to shape the future of an entire industry should not be disproportionately influenced by a single organization with its own interests.

Thank you for your time and consideration, I appreciate your commitment to policies that support hardworking Alaskans and the future of our charter industry.

Adrienne Swan, Charter Captain

John Lane
Alaska Bucket List Adventures
Juneau, AK 99801

House Fisheries Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

Representative Louise Stutes, Chair
Representative Bryce Edgmon, Vice Chair
Representative Rebecca Himschoot
Representative Chuck Kopp
Representative Kevin McCabe
Representative Sarah Vance
Representative Bill Elam

Subject: Opposition to HCR1 and the Formation of a Task Force on Limited Entry for the Charter Industry

I own and operate a small fishing charter based out of Auke Bay, Alaska, since 2019. I am writing to express my strong opposition to the formation of a Task Force to address a Limited Entry program for the charter industry in Southeast Alaska, as prescribed in HCR1. The implementation of such a program would have devastating long-term consequences for small business owners, new entrants, and the future of the industry as a whole.

As a recent entry into the charter fishing industry I know first hand how difficult it is to enter the industry. I don't see how a Limited Entry system would benefit young families or new entrepreneurs to enter the industry. We are already living with the severe limitations imposed by the Charter Halibut Permit program, which has proven to be a nightmare for independent operators. From my personal experience this system seems to restrict new business opportunities.

The challenges of operating a charter business—rising costs, regulations, and existing permit restrictions—have led to fewer and fewer businesses in the industry. Implementing yet another barrier to entry will only accelerate this decline, ultimately harming not only charter operators but also the local economies that rely on a thriving tourism and fishing industry.

Additionally, it seems inappropriate and highly concerning that this resolution allows for a full one-quarter of the task force to be made up of SEAGO appointed or recommended individuals. A task force designed to shape the future of an industry should not be disproportionately influenced by a single organization with its own interests.

I urge you to reject HCR1 and any efforts to impose further restrictions on this industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your commitment to policies that support hardworking Alaskans and the future of our charter industry.

Sincerely,

John Lane, Owner
Alaska Bucket List Adventures

Dear representatives and house chair,

I have 6 charter boats here in Juneau Alaska and provide many jobs to so many locals and spend a tremendous amount here locally in Juneau.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the formation of a Task Force to address a Limited Entry program for the charter industry in Southeast Alaska, as prescribed in HCR1. The implementation of such a program would have devastating long-term consequences for small business owners, new entrants, and the future of the industry as a whole. A Limited Entry system would only serve to benefit larger operators and lodges while making it nearly impossible for young families or new entrepreneurs to enter the industry. We are already living with the severe limitations imposed by the Charter Halibut Permit program, which has proven to be a nightmare for independent operators. This system not only restricts new business opportunities but also creates significant challenges for aging operators looking to retire, as the resale market for these permits is severely constrained. Furthermore, our industry is already declining in the number of operators and has been for some time. The challenges of operating a charter business—rising costs, regulations, and existing permit restrictions—have led to fewer and fewer businesses in the industry. Implementing yet another barrier to entry will only accelerate this decline, ultimately harming not only charter operators but also the local economies that rely on a thriving tourism and fishing industry. The charter industry thrives on free enterprise, not government-imposed limitations that stifle competition and innovation. The best way to ensure a healthy and sustainable industry is to allow the market to dictate necessary adjustments, rather than implementing artificial barriers that benefit only a select few. I urge you to reject HCR1 and any efforts to impose further restrictions on this industry. Instead, let's focus on policies that promote opportunity, economic growth, and fairness for all operators, regardless of their size or longevity in the business. Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your commitment to policies that support hardworking Alaskans and the future of our charter industry.

Additionally, it seems inappropriate and highly concerning that this resolution allows for a full one-quarter of the task force to be made up of SEAGO-appointed or recommended individuals. This would not be representative of the entire Southeast Alaska charter industry and instead demonstrates that this entire recommendation is self-serving. A task

force designed to shape the future of an entire industry should not be disproportionately influenced by a single organization with its own interests.

Thank you, Grant

Captain Grantley Moore

Owner, Juneau Charters LLC

Juneau, Alaska 99801

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