



March 17, 2020

Rep. Zack Fields, Co-Chair
House State Affairs Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins, Co-Chair
House State Affairs Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Via email: representative.zack.fields@akleg.gov and representative.jonathan.kreiss-tomkins@akleg.gov

Dear Co-Chairs Fields and Kreiss-Tomkins,

On behalf of the Petersburg Borough Assembly, I am writing with regard to HB 74, an act repealing the Ocean Rangers program.

Petersburg supports continuation of the existing Ocean Rangers program until a more effective program can be put in place. The idea of electronic monitoring as contained in HB 74 has some merit to test. There are many questions and procedures to work out and one system will not work for all ships.

The Borough Assembly is concerned about addressing wastewater discharge in our waters and harbors. We feel more, not less, oversight is needed on this industry and this issue. This should include verified baseline and onsite water sampling in the waters traversed by the cruise lines. There is also a need for a much better system of testing and compliance.

Maintaining water quality is hugely important to Alaskans around the state, not just for general recreation and visitation, but well beyond. Alaskans rely on clean water to support healthy and economically critical subsistence, personal use, sport and commercial fishing activities. As of the latest McDowell Group report documents, about 56,800 workers are directly employed by Alaska's seafood industry, which in 2016 had a total ex-vessel value of \$1.7 billion and a first wholesale value of \$4.2 billion. Similarly, a 2007 study found that spending associated with sport fishing in Alaska supports more than 15,800 jobs and has an estimated economic impact of \$1.4 billion annually.

Safeguarding Alaskan waters has always been and will always be a priority for Petersburg.

Thank you for consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Mark Jensen
Mayor

Cc: Senator Bert Stedman
Nils Andreassen, Alaska Municipal League

Borough Administration
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