



June 18, 2018

Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly
144 North Binkley
Soldotna, AK 99669

Dear Assembly Members,

As a longtime partner and lodge operator in the Kenai Peninsula Borough, the Kenai Princess Wilderness Lodge has been supportive of the Borough's vision to grow visitor numbers and revenues. We are concerned about the ordinance proposing the implementation of a bed-tax and believe that raising the costs of our operations will actually do the opposite of growing tourism.

Raising taxes on one sector of the tourism industry, without providing any tangible benefit to that sector, will be detrimental to the goal of increasing traffic to the community as a whole. The best way to increase tax revenues is to grow business instead of increasing taxation.

The Kenai Princess Wilderness Lodge would be one of the largest payers of bed taxes in the Kenai Peninsula Borough. Although owned by a larger entity, the KPWL operates as a standalone business, and makes business decisions accordingly. We feel strongly that raising targeted taxes will do nothing but hurt the bottom line of the lodge, limiting the ability of the lodge to draw visitors to the region, and thusly hurt tourism in the region.

Guests that stay at the Kenai Princess Wilderness Lodge, as well as Holland America and Princess guests that stay at other properties within the Borough, are all part of a larger itinerary—most of which include stays near Denali National Park. We spend a tremendous amount of time and money marketing Alaska and the KPBL receives a huge benefit from these efforts. Itineraries are constantly being examined and tweaked, and raising the costs for one section of the itinerary does nothing to enhance our ability to get more visitors to come to the Borough.

We respectfully request that you reject the proposal to raise the bed tax in the Kenai Peninsula Borough and instead implement policies which would enhance growth in the lodging sector of the tourism economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph Samuels", written over a horizontal line.

Ralph Samuels
VP, Government & Community Relations
Holland America Group
Serving Princess Cruises, Holland America Line, Seabourn, and P&O Australia

From: Kenai Peninsula Borough [<mailto:webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>]
Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2018 9:27 PM
To: BoroughAssembly <Borough-Assembly@kpb.us>
Subject: New Public Comment to Assembly Members

Your Name: H S Norwood
Your Email: rohobawr@alaska.net
Subject: 6;19/2018 Meeting Bed Tax Public Comments
Message:

A list of things tourists can do on the KPB that have nothing to do with fishing. AND THEY SHOULD PAY A BED TAX.

Visit Museums (Pratt, Isle and Ocean Center, little one in Cooper Landing, etc)

Watch the free movies at the Kenai Wildlife Refuge Center and attend their programs. Like learning how to use Bear Spray. That was a good one!

Visit Sea Life Center in Seward.

Walk up to Exit Glacier in Seward. Walk right up to it. No need to pay \$25 for a boat ride as is needed in Portage.

Go on the Garden Tour in Homer.

Visit the Farmers Markets on Wed and/or Sat in Soldotna, Homer, and Kenai.

Go on the Fire Island Boat Tour in Seward. Or one that goes out further to see whales.

Hike the Cooper Landing trails. Pick your strenuous level from Russian River to Skyline.

Go River Rafting on Mile 6 Creek or Float on Upper Kenai River.

SUP in many of the waterways on the Kenai ... whichever one you dare.

Hike the Hope Trail out to the Rock. Eat at the funky Seaside Restarant or whatever it is called.

Observe the residents of Alaska at the mouth of the Kenai River dip netting.

Visit Old Town Kenai ... including the Russian cemetery.

Eat lunch at any of the Senior Centers for \$6.00.

Attend the Wed night in the Parks in Soldotna.

Canoe the Swanson in Sterling.

Enjoy the Spit in Homer. Walk or bike the trails they have put in using the \$50 head tax on cruises. Need to potty in Homer? Not a problem. There are now spiffy bathrooms all over the place BECAUSE OF CHARGING THE TOURISTS!

Hike in Kachemak Bay State Park... bears willing.

Eat at the Saltry if you can afford it.

Observe 4th of July in Seward or Seldovia.

Visit all the Visitors Centers in each city.

Enjoy the funky town of Moose Pass.

IN SUMMARY: There's LOTS to do on the Kenai that has NOTHING TO DO with fishing. If that word is not getting out than hire whoever runs the equivalent KMPTC in Mat Valley because apparently they have no problem attracting visitors. And it goes without saying the KENAI has a lot more to offer than MAT VALLEY!

From: Kenai Peninsula Borough [<mailto:webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>]

Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2018 2:29 PM

To: BoroughAssembly <Borough-Assembly@kpb.us>

Subject: New Public Comment to Assembly Members

Your Name: H S Norwood

Your Email: rohobawr@alaska.net

Subject: 6/19/2018 Bed Tax Discussion

Message:

Tonight the Assembly will hear testimony to the effect that the imposition of a bed tax will result in Alaskan visitors visiting other areas of Alaska. At that point I would appreciate it if someone on the Assembly would inquire where these lost visitors will go in Alaska that does not already have a bed tax.

If the public comment leads toward the argument "if there is a bed tax then there won't be money to spend on souvenirs" be certain to point out that Seward has a bed tax as does Anchorage and Mat Valley and there has not been any report of decreased visitors to these areas.

And as always ... never ever ever forget ... we residents of the KPB UNIQUELY must pay the effective rate of 25 cents per kwh for electricity 24/7 twelve months of the year and thus we more desperately need visitors to start paying for the resources they use.

Extending the sales tax for 3 more months is another tax on the residents of the KPB. Niniichik restaurant owner has already testified that the visitors are here 3 months out of the year; there is no shoulder season.