



April 23, 2018

Mayor Charlie Pierce  
Kenai Peninsula Borough  
144 Binkley St  
Soldotna, AK 99669

Dear Mayor Pierce:

I am writing on behalf of The Homer Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center's 495 business members, Board and Staff. Our Board appreciated you and your Chief of Staff visiting with us during our Board retreat and we are looking forward to your presentation at our May Chamber Luncheon. We are writing a letter to you, the Senate Finance Committee and Governor Walker imploring both the Borough and the State of Alaska to continue to invest in Tourism Marketing.

Regardless of a business' tax id designation, we are all in tourism together. A charter captain goes to a dentist. A camp cook rents an apartment. My family shops at Ulmer's Drug and Hardware. Tourism dollars support families and are a strong economic driver in Homer.

Homer does a great job marketing Homer but we are a small Chamber with limited reach and budget. We depend on the Borough to help increase that reach by bringing people to the Peninsula. It continues upwards as we depend on the State to further increase that reach by marketing Alaska, especially to our International visitors.

While we like to think that people just know that Homer exists we are continually shocked by how many people from our own state, and as close as Anchorage have not visited the End of the Road. If marketing budgets at the State and Borough level continue to be cut within 3 years we will see a decrease in visitors and in turn a decrease in sale tax collection. Please consider continuing to fund tourism marketing on the Peninsula at levels that would keep us competitive to other areas of Alaska with million dollar budgets.

Cordially,

  
Debbie Speakman  
Executive Director

CC: Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

201 Sterling Highway, Homer, Alaska 99603