

To members of the Juneau Mayor's Visitor Industry Task Force:

Thank you for taking the time to address these issues, which are so important to many Juneau residents. Having lived in downtown Juneau for over 20 years, I've seen the impacts of tourism on our town and I'm concerned at how continued unrestricted growth of the cruise industry and associated businesses will affect both our quality of life and the quality of our visitors' experience.

You've heard the concerns:

- *In summer, it's the crush of people in downtown's core, shopping at mostly industry-owned businesses, which are then boarded up and abandoned over winter.
- *It's the impact on air quality from the ships' smokestacks and tour bus exhaust.
- *It's wastewater dumping in marine waters, noise pollution from helicopters and ships, and impacts on wildlife, etc.

Change occurs incrementally, making it easier to accept a burgeoning industry in our midst. But twenty years ago, had we known how the local enjoyment and vitality of our downtown would suffer, how lines of tour buses belching exhaust would crowd Egan Drive, how some of our favorite places to enjoy wildlife and quiet would be overrun, would we have happily looked forward to these changes?

Premier tourist destinations in Europe are finding that severe overcrowding is bad for residents and tourists alike. They are trying after the fact to recover some balance between quality of life and industry needs. If we don't anticipate what lies ahead and exert some control over the industry's growth, we will see our quality of life continue to erode and we'll find, like the Europeans, how much harder it is to stem the tourist hordes than to attract them in the first place.

Thank you for your time,

Anne Sutton
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