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Subject: Tourism TaskForce
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EXTERNAL E-MAIL: BE CAUTIOUS WHEN OPENING FILES OR FOLLOWING LINKS

January 13, 2020

Dear Visitor Industry Task Force:

Embracing tourism and placing limits on its negative impacts are not mutually exclusive conditions. Resolution of the conflicts caused by the explosive growth of the cruise ship industry, indeed, requires an open and honest discussion if we are to continue to welcome visitors with open arms and smiling faces.

The balance of power and interests between the cruise ship industry and our community has dramatically shifted as waterfront acreage and other real estate and resources are gobbled up for seasonal use by visitors at the expense of year-round residents and merchants.

While I could make a list of the many positive attributes of the visitor industry to Juneau, those do not need addressing or solutions.

The following is my list of problems associated with the cruise ship industry from my perspective as a resident of Juneau since 1967 and a downtown [7th St](#) resident since 1990:

1. Air pollution – Each summer season, downtown Juneau is blighted with the thick blue haze of a half dozen floating cities generating power by burning fossil fuels.

This last season was noticeably better - perhaps as a result of the aggressive blanket of air quality monitoring sensors established by DEC. Clearly, the cruise ships have choices they can and must make about the quality of fuel they burn in SE.

Juneau should aggressively enforce air quality and encourage development of hydro capacity to plug ships into clean power while in port.

2. Noise pollution – tour boats, buses, airplanes, helicopters, cruise ship PA systems all contribute to the increasing ambient noise created by the cruise ship industry.

Scheduling cruise ship visits and tour flight times/corridors and fining cruise ships for PA noise violations in much the manner we monitor and fine them for air pollution might help.

3. Water pollution – the cruise ships and their myriad associated smaller vessels have a cumulative impact on our marine aquatic systems. Most improvements in water quality performance came as a result of an Alaska voter initiative that has since been substantially eroded by Gov's Parnell and Dunleavy.

The CBJ should lobby the State to ensure that water quality standards are monitored and protected and prohibit ships from port with demonstrated records of indifference to regulations. As well, Juneau should leverage cruise ship revenues to expand wastewater facilities to accommodate the industry's waste and keep it out of the ocean.

4. Wildlife impacts – conflicts and impacts on marine mega-fauna are increasing as smaller tour boats crowd around wildlife and cruise ships more frequently strike and kill whales. Such issues fall under Federal regulations and should be monitored and spoken-to by City leaders.

5. Visual pollution – along with the unsightliness of cruise ship air pollution, most cruise ships also pollute the viewscape with giant outdoor 300 sq ft video screens advertising their destination products or other visuals not intended for locals.

These intrusive video billboard are not allowed for use by local merchants as they are a violation of the CBJ sign ordinance. The use of such screens should not be allowed while in port as they degrade the viewscape and quality of life for year-round residents and sets-up differing standards for on-shore businesses and floating businesses.

6. Landfill capacity – Cruise ships nearly double our daily landfill tonnage when in port. Juneau’s landfill capacity is already critical, due in large part to the impacts of years of cruise ship waste. Cruise ship related revenue should be leveraged to help solve Juneau’s solid waste crisis.

7. Emergency services – Juneau’s hospital, emergency responders and search and rescue resources are placed under considerable extra stresses as a result of our nearly doubled population each day in summer. Cruise ship related revenue should be considered and included in funding discussions regarding costs to the city for these services.

8. Congestion – pedestrian and vehicular conflicts are becoming increasingly frequent and dangerous. Crossing guards help at the cross walks but do nothing for those who cross or stand in streets in other places. Tourism related vehicular and pedestrian traffic should be more tightly regulated and restricted from density sensitive areas.

9. Dozens of seasonal jewelry stores with their sidewalk signs and hawkers are tacky and do not reflect the character of our year-round business community. The City should place limits on the types and behaviors of all seasonal businesses in the downtown sector - like they do for bars.

10. Unfair business practices onboard cruise ships as cruise ships routinely blacklist local merchants and promote those with pockets deep enough to afford their endorsement. The City should exclude ships from port that demonstrate this kind of bad-faith extortion with our local merchants.

11. CBJ tax breaks for in-port sales on cruise ships may have been an olive branch to the industry, but CLIA didn’t waste any time taking the City into expensive and fruitless litigation. Taxes should be fairly enforced for commerce on land or floating in the harbor.

The combined testimony of Juneau residents point to the need for strong leadership from the City in addressing the sustainability of a healthy tourism industry in Juneau. Visitors want to visit communities that welcome them. The present density of cruise ships, passengers and their

collective behaviors make our collective welcome increasingly difficult.

TBMP does a reasonably good job of addressing problems associated with tour operators, but TBMP is inadequate to address issues directly related to cruise ships. As it is presently configured, TBMP serves as an organ of the cruise industry – not of the community at large.

It is my personal desire that the city empower a standing committee or ombudsman office that replaces TBMP and seeks residents' perspectives and develops meaningful regulations to mitigate the growing number of negative impacts on our community.

Thank you for your work on behalf of the residents of Juneau to help us retain the aspects that make this a great place to live as well as visit.

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