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The Honorable Sean T. Parnell
Alaska State Capitol Building, Third Floor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

23 March 2010

Dear Governor Parnell:

On behalf of the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) and its approximately 3,500 domestic travel agency firms, I applaud and strongly support your recent proposal to reduce the state "head tax" on cruise ship passengers from \$46 to \$34.50.

Travel agents are responsible for over \$14 billion in annual cruise sales--approximately 80% of all cruise travel sold. As part of its advocacy mission on behalf of the travel agency community and the travelling public, ASTA supports the reduction of regulatory and tax barriers that make travel more expensive.

The predictable effect of a tax reduction such as the one you have proposed will be an increase in the number of cruise passengers visiting your state—a welcome result for passengers, travel agents, and Alaska-based businesses alike. We look forward to working with you to help this measure to become law.

Thank you for your leadership on this and other issues affecting the travel industry.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Russo", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Russo
President and Chair

CC: Sen. Lyman Hoffman, *Co-Chairman*, Senate Finance Committee
Sen. Bert Stedman, *Co-Chairman*, Senate Finance Committee
Rep. Mike Hawker, *Co-Chairman*, House Finance Committee
Rep. Bill Stoltze, *Co-Chairman*, House Finance Committee
Rep. Jay Ramas, *Chairman*, Special Committee on Economic Development,
Trade, & Tourism