



CHUGACH STATE PARK CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

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December 26th, 2023

To: Honorable Members of the Alaska State Senate and House of Representatives:

The Chugach State Park Citizen Advisory Board requests your support of Senate Bill 127, which would require vehicle rental platforms, such as Turo, to collect and pay vehicle rental taxes on behalf of their vehicle owners, similar to AO No. 2020-55 as adopted by the Municipality of Anchorage in July 2020. There are currently two fund sources for the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation's operating budget: receipts from park fees and receipts from the state's vehicle rental tax. Our intent in supporting this proposed legislation is to increase the state's vehicle rental tax receipts and increase available funding for maintenance and operations of Alaska's state park system.

Every year since FY 2020, the legislature has appropriated money from the vehicle rental tax fund exclusively to the Department of Transportation and the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. This year, the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation received \$5,719.5 million from the vehicle rental tax fund, which represents 47% of the total appropriation. By increasing the tax dollars in the vehicle rental tax fund, a larger pool will be available to appropriate to the Division of Parks and Recreation.

Public use of state parks, including by independent tourists, has grown significantly without a commensurate increase in operating budgets. Chugach State Park, for instance, experienced a 47% increase in use between 2019 and 2021 and is Alaska's most visited public recreation destination. SB 127 would make sure the state collects all of these tourism tax dollars to help maintain and operate Alaska's state park system without the need for increased UGF. Alaskans love outdoor recreation and many recreate in the state park system, which is more accessible to most Alaskans than our national parks and refuges. Alaska's state parks are a significant draw for independent tourists and tourism is the 2nd largest employer in our state. We believe that adequately staffing our state parks and providing funding for basic needs, such as sanitation, is necessary for Alaskans' continued enjoyment of our state parks as well as to preserve and grow the state's tourism and outdoor recreation economies.

Please support Senate Bill 127 and help ensure that funding for our state park system keeps pace with the continued increases in public use.

Thank You,

Trond Jensen

Chair, Chugach State Park Citizen Advisory Board