Thank you for the opportunity to share what tourism means to me and my family.

My name is Matt Boline and I am the manager of Bear Creek Outfitters, a locally owned guiding service that for 25 years has provided remote fly-fishing and bear viewing opportunities for visitors.

I've lived in Juneau now for more than 15 years. I've spent my winters as a UAS student, I have volunteered thousands of hours as a youth hockey coach, board President, and High school hockey coach. I met my wife here, my kids were born here, we bought our first home here.

I am very thankful for what started as a summer job as a seasonal guide has turned into permanent year-round employment, allowing my wife and I– who works at UAS – to raise our two children in this amazing community.

We can do this because Juneau's incredible setting, epic fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities, a thriving economy, and the Alaska experience that makes it such a special destination for visitors. Those visitors provide the economy that allows my family to live here.

Like other local tourism companies, Bear Creek's summer operations allow other businesses to operate year-round. In our case, because of the revenue from summer visitors, locally owned Ward Air can provide year-round charter service for local sportsmen, and remote transportation for AELP, the Forest Service and others.

Our company supports many other local businesses too, like Jerry's Meats, the Rookery and Breeze Inn - and we are totally committed to sustainability in everything we do.

When recent budget cuts threatened the University, my family was grateful for the stable employment tourism has given our community.

In my view, there are two things Juneau needs most – we need economic stability and we need sustainability. I believe that tourism is not the problem – but actually can be a big part of the solution.

As a father and community volunteer, I'm proud to be part of the planning process that will keep Juneau a thriving and wonderful community for families like mine for years to come.