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To the Visitor Industry Task Force,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

I have lived in Juneau for over 30 years and appreciate the important role tourism plays in our local economy. I recognize that many local businesses, families, and jobs depend on a healthy visitor industry. However, I believe the balance has shifted too far away from the needs of the people who live here year-round.

Increasingly, it feels as though decisions are being made to accommodate visitors first, while the impacts on residents are treated as secondary considerations. During peak cruise season, many residents adjust their schedules, avoid downtown when possible, and accept levels of congestion and disruption that would not otherwise be considered reasonable in a community of our size.

I am not opposed to tourism. What concerns me is the continued focus on growth without a clear understanding of what level of visitation Juneau can realistically absorb while maintaining the quality of life that makes this community such a special place to live.

I would encourage the Task Force to consider not only visitor numbers and economic impact, but also resident experience. Are our streets, sidewalks, public facilities, transportation systems, and neighborhoods functioning well for the people who live here? Are residents still able to comfortably access and enjoy their own community during the busiest months of the year? These questions deserve to be measured and considered alongside economic data.

I would also encourage the City to identify a sustainable carrying capacity for tourism in Juneau. More visitors are not necessarily better if the result is a diminished experience for residents and a gradual erosion of the character that makes Juneau unique.

At the same time, I want to acknowledge that some improvements have been noticeable. As one example, the crossing guards downtown this season have done an outstanding job managing pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Efforts like these demonstrate that thoughtful planning can reduce impacts and improve the experience

for both residents and visitors.

As the Task Force develops its recommendations, I hope resident quality of life remains at the forefront of the discussion. Tourism is an important part of Juneau's future, but so are the people who call Juneau home. The goal should be a sustainable balance that supports our economy while ensuring our community remains livable, accessible, and enjoyable for residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Robin Cassell  
Juneau Resident

 Robin Cassell, your friendly Alaska REALTOR ®

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