

RE: Opposition to HB3556

Chair Tran, Vice-Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Lewis and Members of the Committee:

My name is Richard Goche, I am the owner of Aquatic Resources Inc and the Sacred Sea Tuna brand.

Thank you for taking your time to read and understand my opposition to HB3556, and any attempts, for that matter, to change the 70/30 Transient Lodging (TLT) split or any of the definitions around usage of those funds, as created by HB 2267 back in 2003.

I'm making you aware that my livelihood is connected to the money visitors bring into our community, even though I am not what someone would think of as a tourism business.

This is because our customers want locally sourced seafood. My customers come to the coast looking for local seafood as well. Since I sell both directly and through distributors, I believe that a reduction in people visiting our community and vacationing here could directly harm my business and personal financial standing. It seems shortsighted to me to use the tax generated by tourism for things other than promoting more tourism beyond the existing apportionment.

Please protect my livelihood. This conversation extends far beyond the tourism industry itself, as the new money brought here circulates throughout our community and will affect many businesses, such as mine.

Furthermore, it is becoming much more widely known that most coastal city and county general funds already keep much more than 50% of the TLT collected, due to grandfathered laws prior to the 2003 HB2267. They can already use their portion for services and infrastructure. We must protect our ability to ensure people do not forget our community is a great place to visit and spend their money in support of local family businesses like our 3 generation, tourism dependent, family business.

Richard (Rick) Goche

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