



805.967.2500 | www.SBSCChamber.com
Mailing Address: 5662 Calle Real #204, Goleta, CA
Visitor Center: 120 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA

4/8/2024

Mayor Rowse and Santa Barbara City Council
City of Santa Barbara
735 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Santa Barbara Cruise Ship Program

Dear Mayor Rowse and Councilmembers:

The Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce, representing businesses from Goleta to Carpinteria, would like to express our support for cruise ship visitation and the cruise ship program. One primary focus of the Chamber is the continued economic development and success of our regions, and to make the South Coast a place where our local businesses and community members can thrive. Santa Barbara's cruise ship program has been and continues to be an important part of that success. We would like to stress that the direct economic impact of cruise ships to Santa Barbara has been supported by various studies, which have shown \$4 million in economic benefits to the city annually.

We ask that you do not establish an annual limit on cruise ships. Establishing a limit is nothing but an arbitrary restraint, as it does not account for the varying sizes of cruise ships and passenger counts. Not only would this create uncertainty around cruise ship revenue for the City, but it would also create uncertainty for many businesses who have come to rely on cruise ship visits. These local businesses, especially on the waterfront, plan their staffing according to cruise ship visits, with steady cruise ship visitation. A limit on cruise ships could mean the difference between part-time and full-time employment for the various employees at these local businesses. Additionally, an annual limit would create issues regarding the cruise line itineraries, impacting scheduling, potentially leading to an even greater loss of cruise ship visitation.

As a key partner to local businesses, the Waterfront, and cruise lines, the Chamber continues to increase awareness of, and accessibility to, the economic benefits of cruise ship visitation. We do so through our Visitor Center Manager, our Visitor Center staff, our volunteers, our Visitor Center Advertising Manager, and our Tourism and Communications Manager. The Chamber is in close contact with our members, which we promote to cruise ship visitors, guaranteeing that the goods and services we highlight to visitors are relevant and available. Both businesses and visitors consistently give positive feedback regarding cruise ship visitation. The positive feedback from cruise ship visitors on their experience in Santa Barbara is often exceptional, leading to return visits and invaluable word of mouth to bring future visitation to the City which will in turn support additional businesses, as well as an increase in TOT.



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This is not only an issue regarding local economic impacts. This is not an issue of one-time transactions and the bottom line of businesses. This is about local people who have made a career out of offering memorable experiences to the people who choose to spend their free time in our community. Those same experiences, while partially supported by visitors, are the same experiences that make us all so proud to call Santa Barbara home. Support for an unhampered cruise ship program is support for local businesses, local jobs, local experiences, and the City's revenues.

Please acknowledge the important economic benefits cruise ships offer, as well as the businesses whose livelihood they support, when considering these actions. Thank you for your support of the continued success of Santa Barbara's cruise ship program, which plays an important role in the economic success and reputation of Santa Barbara.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristen Miller".

Kristen Miller
President & CEO
Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce