

WHAT WE HEARD:

Cruise Engagement Session March 26, 2025



Summary:

GVHA hosted an online meeting to provide an update on the Victoria cruise industry in light of recent news articles about U.S./Canada relations.

Robert Lewis-Manning, CEO of GVHA, and Paul Nursey, CEO of Destination Greater Victoria, shared information about plans to warmly welcome cruise visitors in 2025.

Robert provided background on Bill 7, which was introduced in the Legislature of B.C. earlier in March, and America's Passenger Vessel Services Act (PVSA), which legislates that non-American vessels on the Alaska route are required to call at a Canadian port. GVHA's website has a page with background details.

Robert described GVHA's advocacy efforts so far, including feedback from cruise lines who, generally, have said little publicly about tariffs. He emphasized GVHA's commitment to educating multiple levels of government on the value of cruise to Victoria.

GVHA is advocating for a calm response to what is a complex situation. Robert mentioned he has explained the situation to multiple media outlets since the Alaska senator's comment about changing the PVSA requirements.

Paul spoke about DGV's new toolkit to help member organizations welcome visitors and address potential tensions. Paul indicated that the general situation in Victoria is positive, with strong hotel bookings and businesses enjoying a busy Spring Break.

DGV is also advocating broadly and working to keep the narrative measured and constructive.



Additional information included:

Robert spoke about the strength of the long historical relationship between Alaska and B.C.

He added that Bill 7 is expected to move quickly through the Legislature once Parliament resumes on March 31. However, there is significant opposition.

April 2 marks the end of the Trump administration's month-long delay on tariffs. We will monitor closely what happens around this date.

Themes from participants:

There was strong interest in understanding how GVHA and DGV are engaging with provincial and federal officials.

Participants shared thoughts about how to ensure U.S. visitors feel welcomed and supported.

Visitor traffic during Spring Break was reported as strong.

Participants want to be kept informed as the situation evolves.

Next steps:

GVHA will share updates through its cruise community page and arrange further engagement meetings.

GVHA, DGV, the Chamber of Commerce, and Downtown Victoria Business Association will continue to advocate collaboratively, working to ensure information reaches all levels of government.

GVHA will prepare a letter to send to the Province. It will be shared with partners, who will be encouraged to submit their own letters.

With cruise season starting on April 4, GVHA will provide a warm welcome to all cruise vessels.