



JEDC.org
612 West Willoughby Ave.
Suite A
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone 907-523-2300
Fax 907-463-3929

March 15, 2011

Honorable Cathy Munoz
State Capitol Room 403
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Representative Munoz:

The Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC) enthusiastically supports HB 131 that will found a permanent Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board.

Public transportation provides positive economic impacts in small communities. A 2010 study entitled "The Economic Effects of Bus Transit in Small Cities" showed that the presence of bus transit significantly lowers unemployment rates, lowers growth in family assistance and food stamp payments, and increases population and employment. These findings suggest transit increases low-income individuals' ability to get and maintain jobs.

JEDC staff conducted executive interviews with ten of Juneau's larger private employers to ask how public transportation issues impacted business operations in regards to their employees. Six of these organizations, including Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Fred Meyers, Warehouse Demo Services (an employer at Costco), Goldbelt Hotel, and Safeway reported a significant number of their employees use the bus. Public transit use estimates among employees in these organizations ranged from 30% to 75%.

Combined, these organizations have more than 350 employees using public transportation to get to work. Generally the business operations of these establishments, along with the work schedules of their employees, are highly impacted by public transit schedules and bus stop locations. These and other businesses, rely on public transportation to be successful in our community.

Our recent work with the City and Borough of Juneau, Southeast Alaska Independent Living, REACH, Southeast Senior Services and the Alaska Mobility Coalition to develop a coordinated transportation plan for Juneau has demonstrated that a collaborative, integrated effort to coordinate transportation resources is in the best interests of our state and its citizens.

Sincerely,


Kurt Fredriksson
Board Chair


Brian Holst
Executive Director

Cc: Senator Dennis Egan
Representative Beth Kerttula