

From: [Norm Carson](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: AMHS Funding/Operating Budget
Date: Sunday, March 29, 2015 1:49:23 PM

Senate Finance Committee
Senators Kelly and MacKinnon Co-Chairs
Senator Micciche Vice Chair
Respective Committee Members

Dear Senators:

I apologize for communicating via email; I have been traveling out of state and this is the only means possible during this time.

I request the Committee recognize the importance of the AMHS to the economy of Southeast Alaska and all Alaska as well. My wife and I reside just outside the coastal community of Pelican; we own and operate a sport fishing charter business, Pelican Charters. I also serve as President of the Pelican Chamber of Commerce, we have a membership of twenty businesses.

Our community is one with a long history of commercial fishing and now more recently charter fishing. The commercial fishing industry is still the basic economic engine in our town. We have worked hard as a community to strengthen our infrastructure to incentivize private business development. Recently, a home grown fish processing business signed a three year lease on the former salmon/crab plant. Yes, for the past few years this business has been steadily buying and processing fish and growing their operation. The ability to ship their product out on the State ferry is crucial.

Our local lodges and b&b's rely on dependable marine transportation to bring supplies to the town and some of the clients as well. The AMHS transports well over 75% of food to the community. There is new home and re-modeling occurring in the town and just outside the city limits. There are approximately twenty lots the DNR auctioned off and people want to build on them. The AMHS is not a convenience to our town; it is a necessity.

So please keep our economy in mind. We need the Malaspina running on the summer schedule in Northern Lynn Canal; this boat brings tourists and their vehicles to the Northern Southeast terminus of the ALCAN Highway. In October and November the Malaspina is the second mainliner in Southeast; it allows our major communities to receive service twice per week, that does not seem like a convenience.

I am certain the coastal communities in Prince William Sound, Kodiak, and out the "Chain" would echo the need for a minimum basic ferry service; it is also their lifeline to mainland Alaska.

Please keep the funding to the AMHS that the agency requires to provide a basic transportation service. The AMHS has taken several budget cutting measures already; it does bring in revenue. It really does not make sense to reduce service during the busy summer months when the majority of the revenue is raised.

We all can not live on the rail belt and Alaska would not have the same character even if it were possible. You have the ability to eliminate many coastal communities or to provide us the possibility to grow our economies; we think the latter is the best choice.

Sincerely,

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