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**Senator Dennis Egan**, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee, via Fax #907 465-2108

**Representative Peggy Wilson**, Chair, House Transportation Committee, via Fax # 907 465-3175

**Subject:** Public testimony on the Alaska Marine Highway System

Dear Senator Egan & Representative Wilson & Committee members,

Thanks for the opportunity to testify earlier today. I am unsure as to whether I was articulate enough to appropriately convey my thoughts on the current Ferry situation. I could not go to bed with clear conscience without at least trying to clarify my thoughts.

When I started the teleconference I went in upset at the heavy handedness of the Administration and convinced that the result was undoubtedly going to be inadequate replacement Ferry's. While listening it seemed clear to me that, by design the checks & balances in our political system were working. Proper decision making always needs to include critical thinking. It sounded like there was some sort of coup at the DOT and I for one am always praying for Government service delivery to become more efficient and effective. However, we are talking about public safety. The Fast Ferry's may seem like a wonderful State asset but I am confident that with a close examination they would quickly prove to be one of the worst decisions the AMHS has ever made. Please, do not let them do anything like that again...

I use the Ferry system probably 20 times a year. It would probably be 100 times a year if the scheduler had an adequate number of vessels to schedule. Smaller more agile ferry's make good sense to me... But they absolutely have to be made with good steel and not have open decks. I have seen grown AMHS passengers crying, as they feared for their life, because of winter storms. Please, make sure that DOT starts producing some documentation on what this change of course really means. It seems to me that the Alaska class Ferry design is quite similar to the LeConte and I would take that ferry anywhere.

Helping to establish a shipbuilding capability is also just plain smart. We could certainly use the employment and those skills. Whatever the final design ends up being please make sure that it is safe and built in our State. I do not particularly care where in Alaska it's built but Ketchikan seems most logical. Thank you very much for re-establishing public input and whatever happens please recognize that the need for more Ferry's is extremely urgent and the Alaska class Ferry design was quite well thought out...

Sincerely,

Ed Phillips

Owner