

From: [Gordon Wrobel](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: HB 72 Approp: Operating Budget/Loans/Funds Testimony-Alaska Marine Highway System
Date: Friday, March 27, 2015 6:29:23 PM

While we are experiencing a perceived need for draconian budget cuts it should be remembered that we simply cannot cut our way out of this temporary condition. Critical infrastructure such as the Alaska Marine Highway is a key driver in the state's economy. Drastic cuts to the AMHS budget will have profound deleterious impacts on the state's economy. These cuts will also result in increases in longterm costs as much needed maintenance will be delayed and the extent and cost of repairs will increase dramatically. The proposed cuts will result in reductions in service that will render the whole system ineffective. AMHS has already made significant modifications to its budget and services. The current model is operating at a bare minimum required to keep the system competitive.

AMHS has already prepared and provided the Finance Committee with detailed budget reductions, operations modifications and a very lean budget request. These recommendations were based upon an extensive assessment of the critical needs in the region. The scheduling of maintenance layups cannot be overlooked without risking creating even more expensive repairs in the future.

I encourage the Committee to look carefully at the AMHS proposed budget requests and to support the full funding of the critical items in this budget request.

Sincerely,
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