

From: [Anne Volk](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: AMHS the trickle down effect of further cuts
Date: Wednesday, April 01, 2015 11:30:26 AM

Thank you for taking the time to read our comments. As a 35+ year resident of Petersburg, raised 4 children and have 30 years working in the travel industry, I have seen, first hand, the effects of lack of ferry service and the great benefits of having the ferry system in our area.

As an isolated community that has Alaska Airlines service twice daily we are thoroughly blessed to have air service here, but when weather or a mechanical cancel a flight, the first action is to look at the ferry schedule, if they overhead, your kids, elderly parents, etc. could be flying alone and are now stuck in Ketchikan, Juneau, Wrangell for example. Its not always possible but having the chance to hop on a ferry to get home or make a connection in a larger town is the first choice when the weather is bad.

Our children have learned to travel as a result of using the ferry to compete in sports or attend functions in neighboring communities. It is affordable and reliable. With less service, the groups/teams will be gone longer, housing becomes a burden, finding chaperones and coaches that can afford to miss work gets difficult and additional spending money for the parents to supply for the children adds up even more. Not to mention extended time out of the classroom. Our children learn valuable lessons as they compete in sports, live with other families, and make life long friends in the other communities, as a result of being able to travel affordably on the ferry. As our high school teams travel, college prospects are being considered and opportunities from recruiting is possible. It is imperative that healthy activities for our youth such as this be held in high regard for our state.

Our company, Viking Travel and Alaska Ferry Vacations has been confirming summer 2015 reservations since November. Clients tell us – “its our trip of a lifetime” , my “bucket list”, we are moving, we are military. They have fully paid for their reservations, plans have been made. Hotel reservations, 100% non-refundable airfare, rental car and tour bookings. It can be a very detailed, complicated itinerary, with multiple stops in S.E. that will change their “trip of a lifetime” in to a disaster. The ripple effect will be wide spread. Loss of revenue for multiple businesses, valuable time used to reschedule, rebook, exchange airline tickets, essentially doubling the work already done. We are a private business, we don't get paid, just because we show up to work that day. This is not just a SE Alaska problem, as many of these tourists are also traveling further north.

It was a mere blip to see a fare increase that was implemented this year. Why not really raise fares? The Whittier –Bellingham run has been sold out for car space till August since the end of January. It is obviously a big seller. The 21' and over rate went from \$105.00 up to \$109.70 per foot. Why not raise it to at least an even number???? The closures of the gift shop

and the bar showed little imagination or innovation, was there any thought of doing something different, that would increase revenue instead of just shutting it down?

We are certainly prepared to deal with schedules that have to be cut, but the commitments have already been made for summer of 2015.

Thank you for your time.

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