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Governor Mike Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

March 9, 2021

The Honorable Peter Micciche
Senate President
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 111
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear President Micciche:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18, of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill repealing the Alaska Marine Transportation Advisory Board and establishing the Alaska Marine Highway Systems Operation and Planning Board.

In 2019, I established the Alaska Marine Highway Reshaping Working Group to deliver recommendations that would allow for the Alaska Marine Highway System to provide essential ferry services to Alaskan coastal communities in the future while reducing state General Fund support.

The Alaska Marine Highway Reshaping Working Group suggested starting fresh with the new Alaska Marine Highway Systems Operation and Planning Board. This restructured Board can provide the skills and experience of long-term operators, with an enhanced ability to increase revenue and reduce costs. Upon initial appointment, these members would serve staggered terms of one to five years. These terms will help the new board create and maintain institutional knowledge, as board membership could not be completely changed in a single administrative term after the members' initial appointment. This Board would also have a new duty – to prepare a long-term operations plan and provide an annual report on its implementation to the governor, the legislature, and the public. The annual reports will address financial information, scheduling, maintenance, regulatory compliance, and other matters. The long-term operations plan should cover long-term marine transportation system objectives, planning assumptions, a timeline for major operations milestones, and new initiatives. The focus will be on initiatives that provide strategic and operational guidance for transportation systems of a similar size and complexity.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Mike Dunleavy, written in a cursive style.

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

Enclosure