



King County

Department of Transportation

201 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104-3856

January 25, 2005

Marilyn Showalter, Chairwoman
Richard Hemstad, Commissioner
Patrick Oshie, Commissioner
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
1300 South Evergreen Park Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

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STATE OF WASH
UTIL. AND TRANS.
COMMISSION

Re: Docket No. TS-042184

Dear Commissioners:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) postpone consideration of the application by Pacific Boat Enterprises d/b/a Mosquito Fleet (#TS-042184) for the authority to provide passenger ferry service between Southworth and Seattle.

The current passenger-only service operated by the Washington State Ferry (WSF) system between Vashon and Seattle is an important transportation link for Vashon residents commuting to Seattle. Up to 50 percent of the riders on this service are currently transfer passengers from Southworth. King County is concerned that the establishment of a separate passenger-only ferry route between Southworth and Seattle will substantially reduce the ridership and productivity of the current Vashon passenger-only service to the point it must be discontinued. Without this service in place, Vashon residents' only option will be to use the WSF auto ferry service to Fauntleroy in West Seattle, increasing the use of private automobiles and negatively impacting the West Seattle community and traffic congestion in the area.

We feel that the transportation needs for these two communities are interconnected and that it is important for the Legislature to have the opportunity this year to evaluate the best option for providing passenger-only ferry service benefiting both Southworth and Vashon residents. At this time, the County is not advocating for the operation of this service by either WSF or private operators, only that it would be unfortunate for some of the more favorable service options to be eliminated even before they can be considered by the Legislature this session. This would occur if the UTC moves ahead now and issues Pacific Boat Enterprises the authority to provide this service.

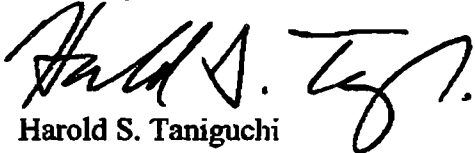
King County has recently hired a consultant to conduct a Waterborne Transit Policy study to look at the demand for passenger-only ferry service in King County. This work will be performed over the next several months.

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If the Commission agrees to delay consideration of this application, then the Legislature will have information from both the Washington State Ferry's 10-Year Passenger Strategy for Multimodal Ferry Transportation system and King County's Waterborne Transit Policy study for its evaluation of the best service options for these two communities.

We appreciate your consideration of this request to delay granting authority for this route until the Legislature has had the opportunity to evaluate the most effective long-term solution to this issue in conjunction with studies done by Washington State Ferry and King County.

Sincerely,



Harold S. Taniguchi
Director, King County Department of Transportation

cc: The Honorable Ron Sims, King County Executive
The Honorable Dow Constantine, King County Council