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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Let's come to order.

3 This public hearing is regarding Docket No. TS-041007
4 and Docket No. TS-040794, application in connection
5 with B-079276, in the matter of the application of the
6 Kitsap Ferry Company, LLC, doing business as Kitsap
7 Ferry Company. I'm Dick Hemstad. I'll be chairing
8 this evening, and with me is Commissioner Pat Oshie.

9 Our audience seems to be quite small tonight
10 so you don't need to have any limits on time as in a
11 typical case. We also have with us tonight a
12 representative of the state attorney general's office,
13 and are you going to make any description of the
14 events?

15 MS. WATSON: If you would like to me to, I
16 certainly could. My name is Lisa Watson. I'm an
17 assistant attorney general, and I represent Commission
18 staff in this matter to the Commission. This
19 particular matter of Kitsap County is seeking a
20 permanent certificate to offer passenger-only ferry
21 service between Bremerton and Seattle. They currently
22 hold a temporary certificate. As I'm sure you are
23 aware, they started operations, and it looks like
24 they've been operating since the first. So we are here
25 tonight to gather your input on whether you support or

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1 not support the application.

2 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: For your information,
3 since it's part of the permanent record for this
4 proceeding, the remarks will be recorded. So those of
5 you who wish to testify, the normal procedure is that
6 you will be sworn as a witness, and then if you would
7 give your name and address for the record and then
8 simply proceed to describe your position with regard to
9 the application that we have in front of us.

10 I'll proceed first by calling on State
11 Representative Pat Lantz.

12 MS. LANTZ: Thank you very much for calling
13 on me first. We thought there would be lots of people
14 so I would have to be forcing my way in front of a
15 line, but instead here we are in a very intimate group
16 of people.

17 My name is Patricia Lantz. I represent the
18 26th Legislative District, the legislative district
19 that begins at the Narrows Bridge and ends at the
20 Warren Street Bridge. My last name is spelled
21 L-a-n-t-z. I have to say that Dr. Hemstad is a former
22 law professor of mine, and it's always a delight to be
23 with him in our new role. I took a course from him on
24 government process, or legal process in general.

25 I'm here, as I'm positive almost everyone in

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1 this room is here, to cheer this project on. I'm
2 speaking in strong favor of the permanent certification
3 of the Kitsap Ferry Company's application for serving
4 the Bremerton-to-Seattle route as a passenger-only
5 ferry.

6 I'm doing this for a rather selfish reason.
7 I represent Bremerton. I represent the area from which
8 the ferry draws its passengers. I also represent
9 Southworth, another area very much in need of the same
10 sort of convenient, reasonable, environmentally benign
11 way of moving people from home to work.

12 This is the second, as you know, of two
13 applications, the first one being Kingston. Now we
14 have Bremerton, and we look forward to when we have one
15 from the South Kitsap and Southworth area as well. It
16 seems to me that there isn't much argument. We have an
17 opportunity to utilize a unique way of moving people
18 and a unique way that to us should just be commonplace,
19 and that is utilizing our water, which is a highway.

20 I know the 18th Amendment has been
21 interpreted to say that indeed the ferries are part of
22 our state highway system, but passenger-only ferries
23 have been left out of that formula. I think it's a
24 shame because actually, as you all know, we once had a
25 very active fleet of small boats that moved people very

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1 efficiently from point A to point B to point C to
2 wherever they needed to go, and it's certainly not
3 novel for us to start over again with that same idea.

4 The problem, of course, is the funding. We
5 struggle in the legislature as local government
6 struggles. I'm sure you will hear from the county and
7 the city about our financial struggles. We look for
8 various ways for funding these various kinds of
9 projects, and somehow, the taxpayers give and the
10 taxpayers take away, and those same taxpayers though
11 are crying for services and being hurt severely for the
12 lack of services that we can provide them.

13 We are going to have about a billion dollar
14 shortfall in the next biennium in funding
15 transportation. These are just urgent transportation
16 needs, so the passenger-only ferry system, which is not
17 declared essential in terms of our state constitution,
18 goes by the wayside. It's not been a profitable thing
19 for the state to run, and we've tried various and
20 sundry ways of getting that funding, so the fare box
21 recovery makes it possible to even stay in business.

22 So now we have before us a proposal that
23 represents, I think, the very creative and risk-taking
24 minds of both Kitsap Transit, who has supported this
25 with a great deal of enthusiasm, and the private

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1 investors. I want to wish them, as do all my
2 constituents, the very, very best of success. The
3 whole idea of being able to move from our island, and
4 that's essentially where we are. We live on an island
5 that we can only get off very soon by paying a
6 three-dollar toll or by paying whatever the fare box
7 recovery demands are on the ferry system.

8 I don't think there is going to be
9 competition between the car ferry and the
10 passenger-only ferry. I think they are going to
11 complement one another, and it will give yet another
12 way for people to get to where they need to off of our
13 island into the market of the east Puget Sound area.

14 There was a campaign, a slogan, when I first
15 ran for office eight years ago about, "Come on over.
16 It's easy." This was something that was run by the
17 Kitsap County realtors in an effort to market housing
18 on this side of the Sound, and indeed, it was almost
19 easy for a very short period of time when the fast
20 passenger-only ferry service was running and it looked
21 as if we were going to build another one in Southworth
22 but that, "Come on over. It's easy," is no more the
23 truth, and I would like it to be something that is a
24 reality of where we live. Probably spoken too long,
25 but I do speak with a whole lot of passion for why I do

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1 think this is a very positive step. Thank you very
2 much.

3 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Next I'll call on
4 Senator Betty Sheldon.

5 MS. SHELDON: Thank you very much. I'm Betty
6 Sheldon, state senator from the 23rd District, so I
7 serve the district just north of Representative Lantz,
8 so I have Bainbridge Island, Poulsbo, Kingston, and
9 part of Bremerton.

10 I'm sorting currently through three
11 generations of goods at my house, and I have brought a
12 show and tell, Money Magazine from September 1990 when
13 the community of Bremerton was declared the most
14 liveable city in America by Money Magazine, and it
15 truly is and it is still today. In fact, today is even
16 more exciting because we are really facing a
17 renaissance. We have some wonderful things happening
18 in downtown Bremerton.

19 But the thing that hasn't changed, that
20 hasn't gotten better over these past few years is our
21 transportation system, and I believe I've spoken to you
22 before about the fact that we have gone backwards. I
23 am embarrassed to tell you that in the 12 years I've
24 been in the senate, our ferry transportation is worse
25 than when I started, and that was one of my main

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1 issues.

2 We've had some challenges with the initiative
3 system, which has taken away our funding. We have an
4 opportunity now for a new public private project, one I
5 think is really going to take off and provide the
6 service that this community needs so that we can again
7 be the top place to live in the U.S., an idyllic urban
8 outpost close to a major metropolitan city. Thank you
9 very much.

10 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Thank you. I'll next
11 call on Lois McMahan, a member of the House of
12 Representatives. I'm calling on members first because
13 they have another meeting to attend so I'm trying to
14 accommodate that.

15 MS. MCMAHAN: Thank you very much. I'm Lois
16 McMahan, state representative from the 26th District,
17 which encompasses most of West Bremerton here. I want
18 to echo the thoughts of my colleagues who have talked
19 about what a good idea this is. I believe that almost
20 all of my constituents not only favor this proposal but
21 would like to have a similar proposal at Southworth.
22 So I really would like to recommend the approval of
23 this permanent application, the application for a
24 permanent ability to operate the passenger-only ferry.

25 It was well stated earlier that we live in a

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1 very unique area, and also, it's an area that is
2 growing where there will be more demand for
3 transportation. Several years ago, I think it was in
4 1995, the legislature was given the results of a survey
5 that was done between Kitsap and King County, and the
6 survey showed that 90 percent of the new jobs that
7 would be created between the two counties would be
8 created in King County, but 90 percent of the
9 population growth would be here in Kitsap County,
10 between the two counties, and of course, to me, that
11 demonstrates the need for people to get back and forth,
12 and I believe that these ferries would be a real asset
13 in promoting the transportation needs of the growing
14 population on this side and also their need for jobs,
15 because we know that a lot of the people that use the
16 ferries are the commuters that are going to their jobs,
17 to and from their jobs. So I would like to recommend
18 the approval of this application. Thank you very much.

19 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Thank you. I'll call
20 on Mayor Cary Bozeman.

21 MR. BOZEMAN: I'm Cary Bozeman, 705 Shore
22 Drive, and I am the mayor, and excuse my dress, but I'm
23 going for my walk right after this.

24 I think because of the initiative process in
25 this state, we are beginning to understand, A, that the

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1 level of service that we are going to be able to
2 provide citizens in this state is going to gradually
3 and maybe dramatically diminish. I think we have done
4 a pretty good job in government of camouflaging that
5 for the first five or six years. We've spent down our
6 reserves, but the real reality is probably soon to hit.

7 It did hit here. We had a passenger-only
8 ferry service that when it went into effect we saw real
9 estate increase and property values go up. It was
10 probably an old design boat that was a little big. It
11 used probably too much gas, and it caused wakes that
12 created legal problems for us, and for a variety of
13 reasons, that service went away, and it was pretty
14 dramatic for this community.

15 What's happened is that the service we have,
16 the auto passenger service, which we are thankful for,
17 thank God, the commute runs are cattle cars. I ride
18 them myself once in awhile. They are all absolutely
19 full. There is no food service. It will not help us
20 to attract young, new families who might want to come
21 here for affordable housing and good schools and where
22 they could easily commute back and forth to Seattle.
23 That's the market we are looking for. It's unfortunate
24 that we weren't able to get food service on these
25 ferries and that they are so full in their commute

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1 time.

2 But I think what I believe in government is
3 that government's there when it can't happen any other
4 way, and what we found was there is another way, and I
5 think because of good leadership and people who are
6 willing to be creative, we went out and tried to solve
7 the problem, and we did try to pass a tax increase in
8 this community to support the ferry system, and it was
9 soundly defeated, but I think because of people like
10 Dick Hayes, our transit leader, and some of the other
11 good people in this community, we put together what we
12 all love to call and are proud of called public private
13 partnerships, and in this case, we've put together a
14 public private partnership.

15 I hope you will support it. I think it's
16 what most communities can do when we actually run out
17 of funding and still want to keep trying to provide
18 service. The public is going to have to participate
19 because the fare fee is going to be a little higher
20 than it would be because there is no or little
21 government subsidy on this project, but I think it
22 shows initiative, creativity, and leadership. I think
23 it's what we owe the public to do when we are looking
24 for ways to provide services that have been cut because
25 of the cut in revenue support that we are seeing in

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1 this state.

2 So I applaud the people that put this
3 together, led by Dick Hayes and others. As a public
4 official, I think that's what we are supposed to do is
5 solve problems even when there doesn't seem to be
6 resources. In this case, that's what we've got. I
7 hope you will support it.

8 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.
9 I'll call on Patty Lent.

10 MS. LENT: I'm Patty Lent. I'm Commissioner
11 for District 3, Kitsap County. My home address is 1907
12 South Marine Drive. I also sit on the Kitsap Transit
13 board and am the chair this year. This is a project
14 that has been a long time in coming. When we did not
15 get funding through a tax initiative, we had to look
16 inward to see what we could do as a county and a
17 transit board to work with the private sector in
18 providing the service for our 20-thousand plus
19 commuters that travel each day from the Peninsula over
20 to Seattle and the other Sound.

21 But we also hope this grows into more than
22 just a commuter ferry. We would like it to be one for
23 activities that are generated on the other side. When
24 there are functions that can benefit both culturally
25 and support-wise, we would like to have this available

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1 for our citizens here in Kitsap.

2 It's going to be more than just a commute
3 ferry. It's something we've been looking forward to.
4 It has the backing of many, many citizens, and I can
5 speak also for the board of the commissioners as well
6 as the board of the transit. So hopefully, you will
7 consider positively to approve this as a permanent and
8 not just temporary licensing certificate. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Katie Walker, do you
10 wish to testify? I'll call on Gary Campbell.

11 MR. CAMPBELL: I'm Gary Campbell. My address
12 is 719 Sidney Avenue in Port Orchard. I'm not an
13 elected official and I don't have a meeting to attend,
14 but I'll keep this short anyway. I would just like to
15 agree and echo what everyone else has said. I just
16 found out this was a temporary permit, so I would like
17 to ask you to make it permanent.

18 I'm a commuter, and when Senator Sheldon
19 pulled out the Money Magazine, I remember she stole my
20 line, but she actually was referencing another Money
21 Magazine. I remember the one from, I think it was
22 April of 2002, that also mentioned Bremerton as one of
23 the top places in the country to live, and the specific
24 reason they listed it was the 40-minute fast ferry ride
25 to all the jobs in Seattle, and I think that was the

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1 same month that Washington State Ferries first started
2 talking about maybe getting rid of the passenger-only
3 ferry service. I wrote to Money Magazine and sent in a
4 newspaper article. They didn't write back.

5 It's not that I don't like the car ferries.
6 They are kind of fun. It's a really pretty ride. It
7 is a slower ride. I can't understand what the big deal
8 is about the difference between 40 minutes and 55
9 minutes, but I know that on a workday, it's a really
10 big difference, and I hope you join with, I assume,
11 everybody in the room in the hope that you can make
12 this a permanent permit. Thanks.

13 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Thank you. Next,
14 Cynthia Pekow.

15 MS. PEKOW: My name is Cynthia Pekow,
16 P-e-k-o-w, and I live on 1798 One Eagle Place Northwest
17 in Bremerton, and I just want to put a face on some of
18 the commuters that come through here. I moved to
19 Bremerton originally in 1990 because there was a
20 30-minute, at that time, passenger-only boat, and I
21 rode all the ups and downs of the long history of the
22 passenger-only boats coming and going and being slowed
23 down, and for me, it's a quality-of-life issue.

24 I actually cut back. I used to commute five
25 days a week, and the amount of time spent away from my

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1 family, mainly because of the commute -- I cut my
2 income and cut back to three days a week commuting just
3 because of that. I'm delighted that we have a faster
4 option. That's 40 more minutes I get to spend with my
5 kids each day, and I treasure that. So I hope you will
6 go ahead and expand and approve the permanent for this
7 company. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Thank you. Next I'll
9 call on Daren Nygren.

10 MR. NYGREN: My name is Daren Nygren. I
11 represent the City of Bremerton as the Bremerton City
12 council president, and my district is the one that will
13 be impacted, has been impacted by the ferry service,
14 and we have a lot of commuters. We have a close
15 proximity to the ferry terminal.

16 Let me thank you for coming out. We welcome
17 this opportunity, you coming to our community, so we
18 can share our thoughts with you, and it's much
19 appreciated. I know how much time you spend in these
20 meetings, and I just want to recognize that.

21 For the last two years, the City of Bremerton
22 has been working to revitalize our city. This process
23 has been a collaborative effort. Our partners include
24 the federal government; Kitsap County; our local
25 transit agency, Kitsap Transit; our county housing

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1 authority; our city housing authority, and numerous
2 private parties. These partners will have invested
3 over 200 million dollars to convert what was once
4 considered by many to be a ghost town. This is a good
5 start, but to continue this momentum, we need your
6 support.

7 I represent a district which is highly
8 dependant on passenger-only ferry service. We are
9 planning on converting a large part of the surplus navy
10 housing into 300 desperately needed new housing units.
11 In order to complete this revitalization, we need to be
12 able to provide a fast, affordable transportation
13 option for our current residents as well as those we
14 are trying to attract to Bremerton. As you may have
15 heard, we've heard very positive comments on the
16 private service in this first week of its operation.

17 With all the limitations our state is facing,
18 we don't see the state being able to fill this void. A
19 vote for this private service is a positive vote for
20 the success of Bremerton. Thank you very much.

21 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Next I'll call on Mark
22 Goldberg.

23 MR. GOLDBERG: Good evening. My name is Mark
24 Goldberg. I run a development company in Seattle, PMS
25 Developement Company. We are very involved in the

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1 redevelopment of downtown Bremerton. I would like to
2 talk about this issue from a different standpoint.

3 Being in the construction business, when I
4 was looking for affordable land to build on in Seattle,
5 the greater Seattle area, you cannot find a lot to
6 build on that would be \$250,000 in the City of Seattle.
7 All the construction that's going on is infill. The
8 only place that is affordable land in western
9 Washington is right here, and transportation is key.

10 If you just look at the history of the United
11 States, it was transportation that opened up areas.
12 The time has come that this area get opened up, and
13 having a transportation link is critical. If we put
14 that ferry in full time and increase its runs, it's not
15 maybe people are going to come here. They definitely
16 are going to come here. The issues of GMA are so
17 critical that we can't keep chopping down the forests.
18 That's not going to work, and we all know that, and
19 we've got a budget crunch in Olympia. We need to be
20 doing things that's going to promote development where
21 there is buildable, affordable land. That's critical.

22 One of the things that Mayor Bozeman and the
23 city council have done here, they are trying to create
24 a walkable community. In order to have a walkable
25 community, you have to have housing next to

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1 transportation. Just the jobs are not here. They are
2 on the other side of the water. So if we are going to
3 create jobs here, obviously, it's a chicken and egg
4 thing. You get a critical mass of people, the other
5 services, retail services will come.

6 So in my view of things, having this ferry
7 come and stay here is critical, and it's probably one
8 of the most important things that needs to happen for
9 Kitsap County. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Next I'll call on Jeff
11 Kerneen.

12 MR. KERNEEN: My name is Jeff Kerneen. I'm a
13 resident at 1334 Elizabeth Avenue in Bremerton. I
14 would like to thank you for coming out here, because as
15 you will probably experience later tonight or as you
16 experienced coming here, transportation on the
17 Peninsula is really getting pretty bad, from the point
18 to where we will pretty much have to pay some form of a
19 toll to get off of the Peninsula unless you go via
20 Route 3 through Shelton.

21 This passenger-only ferry, I've ridden it for
22 the last four days. It's a really great service. It
23 reminds me of going into a small business, Mom-and-Pop
24 operation, and they just want to serve their customers
25 and they just want to do a great job for their

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1 community. I can remember on Monday, they were passing
2 out cookies and little candy bars and everyone was very
3 happy. Every person who has ridden on this ferry has a
4 smile. They don't care that they are paying more
5 money. It's more relaxed. It's less stressful, and I
6 think those are just things that are very important.

7 The fact that I get home at 6:10 at night
8 instead of seven o'clock at night just due to
9 scheduling and timing of the ferries is a lot,
10 especially when you look at the clock and you realize
11 you get a whole two-and-a-half hours to make dinner,
12 eat dinner, spend time with your kids, help them with
13 their homework, maybe water the tomato plants. Next
14 thing you know, you've got to go to bed or else you are
15 not going to get up in the morning and go to work.

16 I think they are doing a great job. I think
17 a lot of the people testifying tonight will tell you
18 they are going a great job, and I think the next step
19 in this stage should be making their application
20 permanent and to seriously consider expanding or
21 supplementing the current carrier systems so that way,
22 people who can't make this time schedule we have now
23 will be able to make it and ridership will go up.
24 Thank you very much.

25 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Next I'll call on

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1 Deborah Cole.

2 MS. COLE: My name is Deborah Cole. I live
3 at 2014 Northeast Jensen in Bremerton. I've only lived
4 in Bremerton just a little less than two years. One of
5 the major reasons I purchased in Bremerton was I could
6 not afford to own a home in Seattle.

7 When they got rid of the passenger-only
8 ferry, it was really a blow. I was fortunate that my
9 employer was willing to accommodate a change in hours.
10 It was more than just the 40-minute ride versus the
11 55-minute ride. It's about options. It's about having
12 more ferries run so you don't stand and wait for 45
13 minutes for a ferry and then they are full. It's more
14 than 45 minutes. It's well over an hour, so we really
15 do need this service, if nothing else as a supplement
16 to what the state gives us.

17 I hope very much you will take into
18 consideration how much it means to us because I don't
19 think the state previously really looked at what it
20 meant to us to have that ferry. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Next, Roselea Duffy
22 indicating maybe. Do you wish to testify?

23 MS. DUFFY: I'm Roselea Duffy, 220 Shore
24 Drive. I moved to Bremerton six years ago when
25 passenger-only boats started back up, the Chinook, and

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1 putting aside the commuting, my fundamental issue with
2 this whole thing about a permit and whether or not they
3 are allowed to operate is to remind you that we live in
4 America and this is a free country, and if there is
5 somebody out there who wants to offer a better option
6 and better choices and better service, they should damn
7 well be able to because we live in America, and if
8 somebody wants to pay for it, they should pay for it
9 and that's fine.

10 There is affordable options with Washington
11 State Ferries, but you have a population over here that
12 desperately needs good transportation and is willing to
13 pay for it. You tell me where else in America you
14 would not be able to allow private enterprise to do
15 that, and one of the more successful things than to
16 have private and public venture today to create this
17 environment of choices and options. We live in
18 America. We have choices here.

19 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Next I'll call on
20 Heather Stroup.

21 MS. STROUP: Good evening. My name is
22 Heather Stroup, and I live at 1607 Trenton Avenue in
23 Bremerton. I'm a long-time commuter on Washington
24 State Ferries, and I was very fond of the foot ferries.
25 They were very convenient. I was able to ride them

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1 most days when they were in service, so when we lost
2 those in September, it had a major impact on the number
3 of hours I commute per day for myself and for many
4 others.

5 I would also like to comment that on this new
6 private service, it has been run very professionally
7 and has made a difference in my commute week just this
8 week, but the 15 and 20 minutes they are trying to
9 characterize isn't really accurate because the
10 Washington State Ferries do not leave on time ever. We
11 were running on a regular basis 20 minutes late each
12 evening, so if you add the 20 to the 20 difference and
13 the fact that it's much easier to embark and disembark
14 a small vessel, I'm now getting home one hour earlier,
15 and for a dollar-something extra a passage, it's
16 clearly worth it to me to have that hour back with my
17 family and for myself, and I appreciate the opportunity
18 to give this input to you folks tonight. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: There are several
20 people that have signed up but indicated they would
21 rather not testify. At this point I'll ask, is there
22 anyone, whether you signed up or not, who would wish to
23 testify at this time? Please, towards the back, come
24 forward. I'll get to you in a second.

25 MR. KOSUSKO: Good evening. My name is

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1 Andrew Kosusko, K-o-s-u-s-k-o, and I live at 220 Shore
2 Drive in Bremerton, also a member of the planning
3 commission and an architect that works in downtown
4 Bremerton, and one thing that nobody has spoken about
5 this evening is very important. We've talked about
6 commuters and cutting down on their commute time, which
7 I used to do. The other important thing is the
8 service, this passenger-only service will provide to
9 businesses of Bremerton.

10 In our architecture firm, we work extensively
11 with consultants and clients on the other side of the
12 water, and currently -- well, up until the beginning of
13 the week -- we had very limited options to get over to
14 see our clients and our consultants, and I'm sure
15 that's the same for a lot of other businesses in our
16 community. With this passenger-only service option, we
17 are able to serve our clients better. We are able to
18 meet with our consultants on a more timely basis, and I
19 think that will be very critical for the business
20 climate of our region. Thank you very much.

21 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Next? I believe
22 someone else wished to testify. Please come forward.

23 MS. SCHMIDT: My name is Laurie Schmidt. I
24 live at 5265 Northwest Windjammer Court in Bremerton,
25 and the passenger-only ferry has really, I just am

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1 reiterating what others have said, has made a
2 difference in my time schedule, and not only that, I
3 find it's such a nice boat to take. It's clean. The
4 people are always around. "Can we help you? Can we
5 carry your bag? Can we do this? Can we do that?" On
6 the Washington State Ferries, I rarely see a crew man
7 or woman except for boarding, and then at the other
8 end, I see a different crew person. What they do in
9 between, I have no idea. They don't clean the boats,
10 but whenever they do, it's nice we have an option that
11 has service.

12 I think that's very important to commuters.
13 We work all day. I work nine hours a day. I have a
14 four-hour, at least, commute. I'm going 14, at least,
15 hours a day, and to have somebody care about my comfort
16 on the way to and from work is really, really nice. So
17 I do hope you give them permission and that they up
18 their runs with more boats, because the options are
19 there. The people are wonderful, and as a commuter,
20 that is so important. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Is there anyone else
22 who would like to testify? Please come forward.

23 MR. MORRIS: My name is Tre Morris, 29411
24 Rocky Point Road in Bremerton. I've been commuting on
25 ferries for about seven years, and I'm quite certain I

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1 don't understand all of the issues as to why they have
2 a temporary permit for this passenger ferry and why it
3 wasn't permanent to begin with, but I can say that for
4 me, and I'm bringing a lot of people here, is it boils
5 down to quality of life.

6 My time is very valuable to me. I have two
7 small children that I brought with me today, and to
8 basically save that time or to pull that time out of my
9 commute -- granted, it's not wasted time. I can sit on
10 a Washington State Ferry and work for an hour, or I can
11 sit there and pay bills, but I certainly can't sit
12 there and enjoy the company of my children or enjoy
13 being at my home.

14 I'm an electrical engineer, and the job
15 market here in Bremerton is such that I can't change
16 the location that I work, so I do work in Seattle, and
17 I would elect to commute there no matter what. What
18 I'm asking is that you take that into consideration,
19 not only for me but for the other people who probably
20 want to be able to spend more time with their children
21 and with their families, so thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Is there anyone else
23 who would like to testify? If not, perhaps it would be
24 helpful, in view of a couple of the comments made, that
25 I would provide a bit more background information about

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1 the process we are going through and the role and
2 function of the Washington Utilities and Transportation
3 Commission in making this decision.

4 What we want to do pursuant to state law is
5 to issue a franchise, which is a permanent franchise
6 that authorizes a franchisee to provide service, and
7 that is a monopoly service that excludes others from
8 offering similar service or competing service. It's
9 done pursuant to state law. In order to make the
10 franchisee able to be profitable or having the
11 opportunity to be profitable in the operation, we have
12 the authority to issue a temporary permit if the
13 conclusion is there is an emergency need for the
14 service. We made that determination earlier; hence,
15 the temporary permit.

16 We are now in the process of considering
17 whether it should be permanent, and in doing that, we
18 look at the financial capability of the operator to see
19 if they have the financial wherewithal and the skills
20 in order to operate the service and the overall impact
21 of the service on the community. Historically in this
22 state, we have the state ferry system, which has a
23 monopoly on providing the service in the areas within
24 which the state ferry system operates, and so the state
25 ferry system has the authority to, pursuant to

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1 direction from the legislature, to provide
2 passenger-only service, but as I think you are all well
3 aware, the financial difficulty the state
4 transportation system is currently facing ended up with
5 the state ferry system terminating the passenger-only
6 service; hence, with authority from the legislature,
7 then opening the opportunity for private services to be
8 provided; hence, the application that we have in front
9 of us to provide the service here now, and we have been
10 considering this one, and of course, we have considered
11 the one that will go from Kingston to Seattle and have
12 approved that going through the same process we are
13 going through here now.

14 I hope that will provide you some background
15 information about it. If you have any other questions
16 about the process itself, we would be happy to try to
17 answer those after we adjourn the meeting here. I see
18 I have another sign-up sheet, and there is at least one
19 person, Arnie Hobbs, who would like to testify. Would
20 you please come forward?

21 MR. HOBBS: Thank you. I'm Arnie Hobbs, and
22 I'm currently a monthly pass owner or I have a monthly
23 pass on the new passenger-only service, and I've got to
24 say it's made a huge difference in my life. I'm saving
25 an hour a day, which works out to 21, 22 hours a month

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1 that I can now participate in my local community, and
2 by having this transportation option, that means that
3 it better assists me in bringing the high wages that I
4 earn in Seattle back to this community and spending
5 them in this local community, and I want to support
6 this effort, especially if it means more flexibility.

7 I've been riding the ferry ever since I moved
8 to Bremerton a couple of years ago, and the contrast in
9 service between what I've experienced on state ferries,
10 particularly the deterioration of service in the state
11 ferries in the last couple of years, not only the
12 frequency but cleanliness, attitude of the crew,
13 over-crowdedness, particularly the 5:30 run from
14 Seattle, which I just came off of, has made that
15 experience not nearly as pleasant as it used to be. So
16 I strongly urge the approval of the permanent
17 application for the Kitsap Ferry Company.

18 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Thank you for your
19 comments. Lanette Duchesneau indicated perhaps. Do
20 you wish to testify?

21 MS. DUCHESNEAU: My name is Lanette
22 Duchesneau. I live here off of 11th Street here in
23 Bremerton, but I work for the Seattle Mariners, and I
24 think it would be great to get this boat going and
25 working around Mariner events as well. It is very

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1 difficult with Washington State Ferries change in their
2 schedule. I miss the 10:30 ferry every night by three
3 minutes and I have to commute to Bainbridge Island, and
4 I would like to see the efforts go great with this boat
5 and increase the runs to immediately affect us so we
6 can stay here in the Bremerton area instead of
7 traveling to Bainbridge to make our job.

8 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Thank you. Is there
9 anyone else? One more person in the back.

10 MR. BENDER: My name is Todd Bender. I've
11 been a ferry commuter now for 15 years, started on the
12 passenger-only service with the Tyee, came on with the
13 Snohomish, Chinook, and I'm very much obviously in
14 favor of that. I think the level of passion is here
15 from folks about how really needed the service is, so
16 clearly, that's not an issue. The issue is, does the
17 Kitsap Ferry Company provide the service in a way that
18 should be made exclusive, and it's my belief, and I've
19 done a lot of travel around on ferries, some good, some
20 not so good. It's my belief that Kitsap Ferry Company
21 has done a very good job and that the service is
22 actually a public service, and I want to talk about
23 public service for just a second.

24 I work for the environmental protection
25 agency. It's my job to do public service in the area

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1 of transportation issues. It should be the Washington
2 State Ferries as well as the state agency, and I think
3 it's pretty clear that when they pull the boats
4 sometime ago, they did a public disservice. Decreasing
5 flexibility, increasing the amount of time we spend
6 from 30 to 31 trips a day to and from Bremerton down to
7 14, eliminating passenger boats and ferries. What part
8 of that can we lock in now? I think a vote for making
9 the permit a permanent one would be a public service,
10 and I would encourage you to do the public service.
11 Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Thank you. I believe
13 there is one more person.

14 MS. WALKER: My name is Katie Walker. I live
15 at 2403 Trenton Avenue in Bremerton. I wasn't going to
16 get up and speak because I would basically say the same
17 thing everyone else has said until you talked about
18 giving a company the right to provide a service and
19 just that company, and I felt like I needed to get up
20 and let you know that the Washington State Ferry, the
21 auto boat I'm taking currently, the service is
22 unbelievable.

23 I watched a lady yesterday when a kayak
24 tipped over and the ferry had to come to a stop, I saw
25 a ferry worker take the life ring and hold it and

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1 looked at the people. There was a lady with a canoe
2 trying to pull -- I don't know if it was two boys or
3 how old they were, but she was trying to pull them out
4 of the way of the boat, and she's working, and this
5 ferry worker came out with this life ring, and we were
6 aways away from them, pretty far away, and you could
7 tell the life ring wasn't going to do a whole lot of
8 good, and the lady stood up and took the life ring and
9 picked it up and went.... Looked around, held it up and
10 tossed it, and as soon as she tossed it, it was like,
11 What good did that do that I threw it? It doesn't do a
12 bit of good, and I thought, Well, what are you doing?
13 Isn't your job to protect, to keep us safe, to keep the
14 water safe, to take care of us, to get us back and
15 forth? It's public transportation.

16 This morning on the Kitsap Ferry Company when
17 I was getting off the off-ramp, the guy looked at me
18 and said, "Be careful on this ramp with your shoes.
19 You don't want to get caught." What a difference. I
20 ask for paper towels on the Washington State Ferry
21 every single morning because there are no paper towels,
22 none. If I'm in the galley eating my breakfast, which
23 I do every day, and I spill something, I have to get up
24 and go to the pursers office, knock on the door
25 repeatedly and ask them for napkins, and they finally

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1 give them to me. I have walked out of that bathroom
2 hundreds of times with toilet paper to wipe up the mess
3 because I have nothing else.

4 Another issue I've had is that they need to
5 keep track of how many people are on the boat for
6 safety reasons. I don't believe for a second they know
7 how many people are on that boat because they stand
8 there with clickers watching us walk by. I can't
9 imagine it's accurate, but yet there are times when it
10 sells out and you can't get on the boat, and I was
11 standing there, and my children are sitting in day care
12 that closes and I can't go get them. I can't get on
13 the boat. That doesn't make sense to me, how a company
14 can stay in business, but it's state run. It's going
15 fine.

16 The company that has put together the runs
17 with the Spirit of Adventure vessel, they are
18 wonderful. They are taking surveys. They care what we
19 think. They ask us, "What can we do? What can we do
20 to bring money over to Kitsap County," and I know for
21 myself, I go to Seattle every day and I make money and
22 I come home. I take care of my house and I'm
23 self-sufficient and I need that ferry. I cannot make
24 the money I make over in Bremerton. I cannot do it.
25 Thank you.

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1 COMMISSIONER HEMSTAD: Thank you for your
2 comments. With that, I think we are at the conclusion,
3 and therefore, I will conclude this meeting and thank
4 you all for coming and attending and providing your
5 testimony.

6 (Public hearing concluded at 6:56 p.m.)

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