



Washington State Legislature

January 26, 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

Re: Docket # TS-042184 and #TS- 050127

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing today to respectfully request that you delay consideration of the referenced applications by Pacific Boat Enterprises d/b/a Mosquito Fleet and Aqua Express to provide passenger-only ferry service between Southworth (Port of Bremerton's Harper Dock) and Seattle.

The 2005 legislature will be deciding whether to continue or indeed expand State-funded, passenger-only ferry (POF) service in the West Sound. State law directs the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to consider the effect of any new private service on public agencies eligible to operate POF service. According to the Washington State Ferry system, a new *private* service between Seattle and the Southworth area would effectively close out the state's option to offer POF on this route, and could even lead to the demise of the existing state-funded Vashon-Seattle POF route.

Last year, the legislature directed the Washington State Ferry system to develop a 10 year passenger strategy for the state's multimodal ferry transportation system. Their presentation to the Transportation Commission last month concluded the Southworth-Vashon-Seattle route presented an exciting and economically viable opportunity for the State to offer POF service, due to expected growth in South Kitsap County.

Whether privately or publicly funded, POF service enjoys strong support in the Legislature. In 1986, passenger-only ferry service was deemed necessary by the Legislature. Until the late 1990s and the passage of Initiative 695, the service was funded

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and operated by the state ferry system. In 2003, seeking to continue its commitment to the service, the Legislature approved statutory changes to encourage private POF service.

This summer you acted very quickly on two applications by commercial ferry companies to provide passenger-only ferry service. However, in the present cases, a quick process on your part would effectively preempt the legislative policy discussion of state-funded POF service. In addition, until the state funding issue is decided, you cannot adequately consider the effects on a public agency of certifying a private company to serve the route.

For these reasons, we ask that you wait until the Legislature makes its decision before making a determination in these cases. In all likelihood, we will make funding decisions in the spring.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters.

Sincerely,



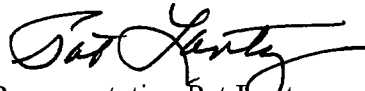
Representative Eileen Cody
34th District
Seattle



Representative Joe McDermott
34th District
Seattle



Representative Derek Kilmer
26th District
Gig Harbor



Representative Pat Lantz
26th District
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Representative Sherry Appleton
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