

Alaska State Legislature



Alaska House Majority

March 2, 2020

Michael J. Dunleavy, Governor
3rd Floor, Alaska State Capitol
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811

John MacKinnon, Commissioner
Alaska Dept. of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 112500
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Dunleavy and Commissioner MacKinnon:

We write today with grave concerns over your response to a growing crisis affecting all Alaskans: the lack of ferry service.

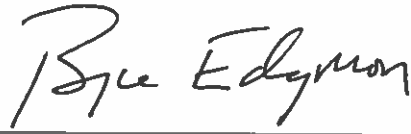
Since this past September, Alaskan communities have been cut off from essential goods and services, healthcare, and the rest of the state. Make no mistake, this emergency is having very negative impacts on the health and safety of our residents.

Further compounding the problem, 10 of 12 State ferries are currently inoperable. During last Thursday's trip to Vigor's Ketchikan Shipyard by the House Transportation Committee Chair, Rep. Louise Stutes, it became apparent that poor maintenance, management, and communication by AMHS is, in large part, responsible for the current state of disrepair. The legislature cannot fund maintenance requests that are never brought forward, nor can repair dollars be used effectively without good communication and planning. Regardless of the causes, the mothball status of our fleet is unacceptable to House Leadership just as it is to the residents of Alaska.

When the legislature passed a \$5 million increase to AMHS operations during the last special session, you vetoed the funding, calling it "premature." Further, the budget you recently submitted maintains and validates current AMHS service levels, proposing to again isolate communities. Finally, significant capital investments are needed to restore our fleet to operational status. Where is the request for more operational dollars? Where are the estimates and funding requests for the needed capital dollars?

We applaud your swift action to address the coronavirus in Alaska and implore you to demonstrate the same leadership for our ferry system by instituting a paradigm shift within AMHS management, producing a funding request to restore our fleet, and sparing further operational increases from a veto.

Sincerely,



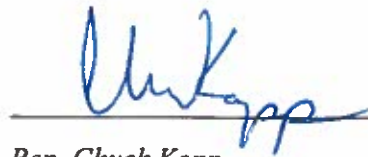
*House Speaker Bryce Edgmon
(I-Dillingham)*



*Rep. Louise Stutes
(R-Kodiak)*



*House Majority Leader Steve Thompson
(R-Fairbanks)*



*Rep. Chuck Kopp
(R-Anchorage)*



*Rep. Neal Foster
(D-Nome)*



*Rep. Jennifer Johnston
(R-Anchorage)*



*Rep. Dan Ortiz
(I-Ketchikan)*

