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Encompassing the Coastal Communities of Ocean Falls, Bella Bella, Denny Island, Oweekeno and the Bella Coola Valley

15 October 2013

Honourable Todd Stone, M.L.A.
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
PO Box 9044, STN Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

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Dear Minister Stone

BC Ferries and Coastal Communities

On behalf of the Central Coast Regional District Board of Directors, we are writing to express concerns over the Ministry of Transportation's decision to once again consult the public on BC Ferries service.

The Board are asking the Ministry of Transportation to; instead, present the public with a savings plan before consulting again. More general discussion about ferry services will only be frustrating for residents and undermine trust in the BC Ferry Corporation, and the Ministry. There has already been a large amount of recent consultation, which has provided little to no results. Further consultation may only continue to alienate the coastal communities who depend on BC Ferries.

We appreciate BC Ferries needs to find \$26 million to balance its budget but must find additional savings/efficiencies to support the necessary capital investment in the fleet. It is our understanding consultations to date have identified numerous options to meet this financial challenge. Realistically, BC Ferries will require an integrated strategy implementing a mix of available options to achieve its goals.

Our Board would like to see the Ministry of Transportation and BC Ferries create a public plan for finding these cost savings, and then consult on the plan's options. As the provincial government is again leading this consultation, our tax dollars are best spent on consultation that will seek public feedback on viable

options that have an execution timeline. Continued consultation without proposing a solution will be frustrating for those involved.

The Central Coast Regional District advocates the development of a transportation solution that also meets the needs of smaller coastal communities. The BC Ferries are our "highway" to Vancouver Island and larger communities. It simply cannot be stressed enough how vital connecting smaller coastal communities is socially and economically. The time has come to be specific about how that connection will be accomplished in a responsible, affordable and sustainable manner.

In closing, the Board sincerely hope this letter will be given due respect for its appeal. We appreciate doing what is right is not always easy. And, we remain hopeful the Ministry of Transportation and BC Ferries will see this as an opportune time to do the right thing for our smaller coastal communities, when considering solutions.

Yours sincerely
CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darla Blake".

Darla Blake
Chief Administrative Officer