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MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT // SKEENA—BULKLEY VALLEY



Central Coast Regional District

Hon. Lisa Raitt
Minister of Transport
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ont. K1A 0A6

10 July 2014

Dear Honourable Minister,

I am writing you today regarding the cancellation of the Discovery Coast ferry between Bella Coola on British Columbia's central coast and Port Hardy on Vancouver Island. This ferry is a vital link in the Discovery Coast Circle Tour and the cancellation of the ferry will have wide-reaching negative impacts not only on businesses in the community of Bella Coola but all along Highway 20 in the communities of Hagensborg, Anahim Lake, Alexis Creek and Williams Lake as well. It is estimated that almost half of the tourism-based businesses between Bella Coola and Williams Lake will be run out of business as tourism plummets, and the resulting closures will have devastating ripple effects for businesses and communities across the region.

The provincial government justified the route's cancellation as a cost-saving measure, but according to the Tourism Industry Association of BC the province actually saw a surplus once tax revenues from the businesses along the route were applied to the operating losses incurred by the ferry service.

As we know, raising costs and shuttering services is a poor model for any business – particularly for one that provides such a crucial service, and which generates government revenues – but unfortunately that is the reality for the communities and businesses that rely on the Discovery Coast ferry. With the viability of several coastal businesses and communities in the balance, I encourage you to explore options to help the region maintain appropriate levels of ferry service and work towards reinstating the Discovery Coast ferry.

With best wishes,

Nathan Cullen
MP Skeena—Bulkley Valley

NC/hplc CLC232

Board Meeting
SEP 11 2014
CCRD ITEM FLC