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From: Minister, STSB STSB:EX
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2013 1:43 PM
To: Transportation, Minister TRAN:EX
Subject: 222068 FYI / Update: BC Small Business Accord
Attachments: 100897 Stone BC Small Business Accord.pdf

Please find attached your copy of a letter from the Honourable Naomi Yamamoto.

Thank you.
Office of the Minister



Ref: 100897

November 21, 2013

Honourable Todd Stone
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
PO Box 9850 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Colleague:

It is my pleasure to reacquaint you with the BC Small Business Accord (Accord). The Accord was developed by engaging with the small business community between November 2012 and February 2013. This engagement included community consultations, on-line surveys and a successful Twitter town hall, with over 35,000 individuals participating in the process. In March 2013 the Accord was released to ensure that government is doing all that it can to support small business.

Under the Accord, government commits to operate within the following principles:

- consider the needs and impacts of small businesses in policy and program decisions to enhance business certainty, access to qualified labour, access to capital and technology adoption;
- foster a regulatory environment that small business can access, navigate and influence effectively and efficiently;
- design government programs and resources affecting small business so that they are well developed, accessible, properly funded and effectively communicated;
- foster thoughtful collaboration among all levels of government, including First Nations;
- deploy educational and training programs that are future-focused and aligned to meet the changing needs of small business and the labour talent it develops; and,
- create long-term growth opportunities for small business through government procurement.

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As part of the Accord development process, several key actions for government were identified to support British Columbia (BC) in being the most small business-friendly jurisdiction in Canada. These actions include the development of a small business awareness strategy, encouraging provincial/municipal collaboration in the adoption of the small business accord principles, developing a mobile trainers program for remote communities, reducing barriers to government's procurement process, supporting an integrated small business mentoring program, and supporting additional skills training.

I would like to highlight that October was Small Business Month and provided us with a dedicated time to recognize small business contributions to the province. It also provided an opportunity to support the Accord by creating awareness of small business.

At this year's Union of British Columbia Municipalities Annual Convention we announced the finalists and winners of the 2013 - Open for Business Awards, an awards program that recognizes communities that support small business through local government measures aligned with the Accord. This program supports delivery of the Accord action to encourage more provincial and municipal collaboration.

The Accord is a living document. It will evolve and change to meet the ongoing needs and interests of the small business community in BC. To learn more about the Accord, I encourage you to visit the following website: www.jtst.gov.bc.ca/sbaccord/.

Small business in BC is a major employer and an important component of the BC Jobs Plan. A key economic driver in the province, small business accounts for 98 percent of businesses, 55 percent of private sector jobs, and 26 percent of BC's Gross Domestic Product.

I look forward to continue working with you to support the implementation of the Accord and to support British Columbia small businesses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Naomi Yamamoto', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Naomi Yamamoto
Minister



Don McRae, M.L.A.
Comox Valley

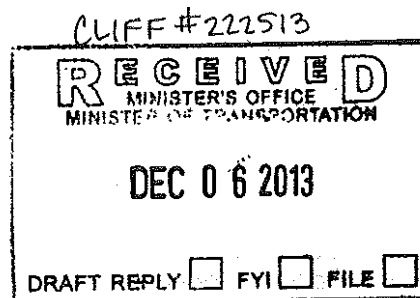


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November 26, 2013

Attention Todd Stone,



As per our previous conversations regarding the Denman Island Ferry, you are aware that both myself and many constituents have concerns over the proposed cable ferry project between Buckley Bay and Denman Island West. As you know, I have little maritime expertise, but I feel the issues raised by residents, particularly retired s22 do cause me to have their concerns answered before the project goes ahead.

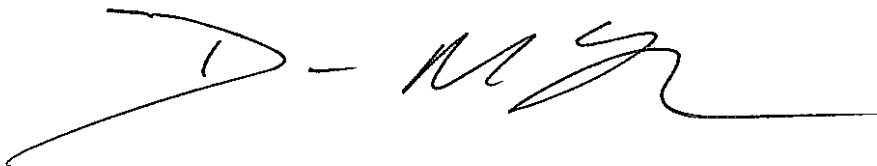
While I am under the impression that the cable ferry design has not been finalized, please let me summarize the concerns expressed to me by s22

1. The mould depth/draft is 2 metres for this vessel, with only 1 metre actually in the water. Assuming this is true, this will result in large amounts of spray and unstable deck conditions in less than ideal conditions. Wave conditions in Baynes Sound often exceed .6m and if the cable ferry is underbuilt conditions for passengers and ferry workers will be unacceptable. Residents believe, based on data they have gathered, that cars will potentially slide on the vessel deck if waves reach or exceed .6m. Design of the vessel must take in to account the actual weather the ferry must work in. According to s22 the ferry being built for the Arrow Lakes has a greater draft than the ferry being built for Baynes Sound, can you confirm this?
2. s22 believes there is incredible discrepancy between the weather, particularly, wind measurements data taken by the consultant and the actual ferry log. Discrepancy in wind measurements, according to the s22, vary by more than 50%. Why does BC Ferries put more credence into the consultant's data than that legally recorded into the ship's log?

3. s22 states that the Quinitsa can only serve the Vesuvius/Croft run and that the BC Ferry's Marine Superintendent, in contradiction of the engineers, is not supportive of the Quinitsa working on other runs due to its size, speed, and other factors. Specifically, what runs will the Quinitsa be expected to work on and is the marine superintendent in agreement?
4. I can find no other jurisdiction in Canada with a cable ferry that does not have an alternate route available to residents, this will make Denman/Hornby unique to the nation. If the cable ferry is unable to run, for either weather conditions or mechanical reasons, both islands will be effectively without ferry service. Furthermore, even though the docks will be operational for at least 7-10 years, which would allow the Quinitsa to serve on a temporary basis, I believe that residents need to know the long term plan to replace the cable ferry when down for refit or maintenance. This aspect has not been made public.

Unlike most communities in British Columbia, BC Ferries plays a major role in the lives of the residents of the Comox Valley. I am under no illusions that with decreased ridership and increased operating cost, combined with the need to balance both the budgets of the province and that of BC Ferries, that tough decisions need to be made. That being said, and with the qualifier that I have minimal maritime expertise, I ask that you reconsider, even at this late date, the decision by BC Ferries to operate a cable ferry between Baynes Sound and Denman Island. Furthermore, I also ask that you find time to spend ½ hour with s22 while his arguments will be rather technical, he does an excellent job calling in to question many aspects of this project.

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don McRae', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Don McRae, MLA
Comox Valley