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February 17, 2023

Commissioner Ryan Anderson
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500

Dear Commissioner Anderson:

On behalf of the 600 members of the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA), we are writing to encourage the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOTPF) to adopt an Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) summer sailing schedule by February 28, 2023. In the future, we encourage summer schedules to be published by October 1 for the reasons mentioned below.

Our industry relies on travelers being able to research and book experiences several months in advance of travel dates. Doing so informs hiring expectations and revenue forecasts and ensures predictability for business operations.

Additionally, our current research project indicates 39% of 2022 visitors to Alaska booked their travel over 7 months in advance. Without a current summer AMHS schedule on the website, travelers are making other arrangements which will limit visitor traffic, and associated revenue, to communities served by AMHS.

Lastly, Alaskans who use the AMHS for business or leisure transportation are in the same boat regarding planning their activity and travel for the busy summer season. Ordering building supplies or bulk retail inventories in advance now when items are available and likely cheaper is made more challenging without a summer sailing schedule in place.

We understand the challenges AMHS is facing in terms of staffing and maintenance, though we suggest having a schedule up sooner is better than nothing, prioritizing predictability over perfection.

We thank you for the work you do in support of Alaskans and the visitors to our beautiful state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Leonard".

Sarah Leonard
ATIA President & CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Jennison".

Craig Jennison, TEMSCO Helicopters
ATIA Board Chair