

Denman WORKS!

P.O. Box 99, Denman Island BC, V0R 1T0
www.denmanworks.com : denmanworks@gmail.com

Mr. Gordon Macatee,
B C Ferries Commissioner.

October 15 2011

Dear Commissioner,

The Society, of which I am President, is charged with improving the socio-economic health of Denman Island & its residents. You may read all about us and our Strategic Plan on our website, which is DenmanWORKS.com

In the course of my interaction with various island groups and individuals working to make a living on Denman, one consistent concern is the cost of our ferry service.

I would judge the economic impact of ferry fares to now be so great that it is a disincentive to living on the island, where once being a ferry ride removed from the outside world was an attraction. The rise in ferry fares has negatively impacted tourism on Denman and added significantly to the cost of goods being brought over or shipped out for sale. In a word the economy is being slowly strangled.

Mr. Commissioner, I recently traveled on a Norwegian Hurtigruten ferry which serves communities far more remote than any within the BC Ferries network. In Norway, remote villages are considered part of the national fabric, fares are affordable and subsidized by the government as necessary.

In reviewing the BC Coastal Ferries Act, it is critical to the continuing viability of our island community, and doubtless all others, that you recommend fares be frozen for a time, having risen far more than the cost of living over the past few years, and that future increases be constitutionally linked to some consumer index.

The islands may not have politically significant populations, but they do have the right to an affordable link to the rest of Canada, whether it be by road or by ferry.

We look to you to ensure that affordable link, long term, for the sake of BC's islands.

Your Sincerely

Simon Palmer - President

cc BC Government & BC Ferries Corporation
Denman & Hornby Ferries Advisory Committee

