



**MARK OZIAS, District 1, Chair**  
**RANDY JOHNSON, District 2**  
**BILL PEACH, District 3**

# Board of Clallam County Commissioners

223 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 4  
Port Angeles, WA 98362-3015  
360.417.2233 Fax: 360.417.2493  
Email: [commissioners@co.clallam.wa.us](mailto:commissioners@co.clallam.wa.us)

**Rich Sill, County Administrator**

April 28, 2020

Senator Maria Cantwell  
511 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Patty Murray  
154 Russell Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Derek Kilmer  
1410 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for the Black Ball Ferry Line

Dear Senator Cantwell, Senator Murray and Representative Kilmer:

This joint letter requesting financial support for the Black Ball Ferry Line comes from the cities of Forks, Sequim, Port Angeles, the Port of Port Angeles, Clallam Economic Development Council, Clallam County and our 24<sup>th</sup> District State Legislators. The locally owned Black Ball Ferry Line is an economically critical service in Clallam County which has been forced to curtail operations due to COVID-19 restrictions in both Canada and Washington State. Unfortunately, we fear that without federal support, that Black Ball Ferry Line will not be able to maintain operations.

A 2019 economic study detailed that the Black Ball Ferry Line directly employs 91 people with generous family wage jobs, supports nearly 1000 jobs in our rural County, and has a financial impact of over \$60 million annually in our community. The MV Coho sailing between Victoria and Port Angeles is one of the Olympic Peninsula's iconic images.

Black Ball carried over 450,000 passengers leading to about 135,000 overnight stays in our area. These passengers purchase lodging from hotels and motels, B&B's, purchase food and beverages, go to our museums and visit our scenic attractions. The Black Ball Ferry Line brings many tourists to our area to enjoy our festivals including Sequim Lavender, Juan de Fuca, and the Crab Fest. Black Ball passengers also stay on the Peninsula to bike the Olympic Discovery Trail, visit Olympic National Park and join guided tours throughout the County.

Black Ball has been in operation for over sixty years without a subsidy and has been integral to bringing both visitors and commercial goods to Washington State and Vancouver Island. We would not usually make such a request, but these are unusual times. The importance of Black Ball's success extends through our entire region. The service is a conduit for west coast supply chains for the U.S. and Canada. The ramifications of their continued operation are similar to that provided by an

international airport. Every effort must be made to protect this very important economic driver for our regional economy.

We therefore request that you give a financial priority to this extremely important financial engine for Clallam County and the entire Olympic Peninsula. This is vitally important for our entire region.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
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Mark Ozias, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Randy Johnson

  
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Bill Peach

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Kate Dexter, Mayor

CITY OF FORKS

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Tim Fletcher, Mayor

CITY OF SEQUIM

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Charlie Bush, City Manager

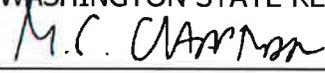
CLALLAM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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Colleen McAleer, Executive Director

PORT OF PORT ANGELES

  
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Steven Burke, Commission President

WASHINGTON STATE REPRESENTATIVE

  
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Mike Chapman, 24TH Legislative District

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Steve Tharinger, 24TH Legislative District

WASHINGTON STATE SENATOR

  
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Enclosures:

Letter – Tourism Coordinating Council

Letter – Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau

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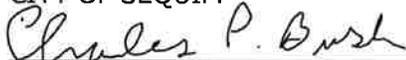
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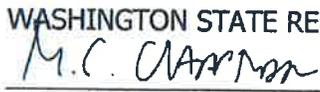
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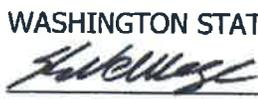
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2023 E. Sims Way – Suite 308 | Port Townsend, WA 98368  
www.EnjoyOlympicPeninsula.com | TCC@EnjoyOlympicPeninsula.com | 360.440.7006

April 23, 2020

To: The Clallam County Board of  
County Commissioners

Attn: Mr. Randy Johnson  
Clallam County Commissioner  
223 E 4th St #4  
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Ref: Jefferson County Tourism Coordinating Council letter in support of Clallam County  
Commissioners request for Federal Assistance on behalf of Coho Ferry Service.

Dear Clallam County Commissioners,

The Jefferson County Tourism Coordinating Council would like to offer our support in Clallam County's efforts on behalf of the Coho Ferry in obtaining Federal supporting assistance during the Coronavirus Virus outbreak.

Our Tourism Council feels that the Coho Ferry Service is an important part of the Tourism infrastructure providing travel services that relate to the whole Olympic Peninsula. The economic importance of this service affects both Clallam and Jefferson Counties in many ways and must be supported as an integral part of the Olympic Peninsula's economic wellbeing.

Our Jefferson County Tourism Commission is in complete support of this Clallam County Commissioner's endeavor to obtain Federal Funding for the Coho Ferry in this time of need.

Thank You,

  
William Roney

Chair: Jefferson County Tourism Coordinating Council



618 South Peabody Street, Ste. F  
Port Angeles WA 98362  
800-942-4042 or 360-452-8552

[www.olympicpeninsula.org](http://www.olympicpeninsula.org)

April 27, 2020

Board of Clallam County Commissioners  
Attention: Commissioner Randy Johnson  
223 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 4  
Port Angeles, WA 98362

RE: Support for Request for Federal Financial Assistance for the Black Ball Ferry Line, Port Angeles, WA

Dear Commissioners Johnson, Ozias and Peach:

This letter is sent on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau, in support of your joint letter to U.S. Senators Cantwell and Murray and U.S. Representative Kilmer, regarding the request for federal financial assistance to the Black Ball Ferry Line to help maintain operations of this critical service. The Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau is in full support of this request.

Like many other transportation services, such as air carriers, the Black Ball Ferry Service has been adversely impacted by the current coronavirus epidemic and the subsequent business disruption caused. All service ceased as of March 31. As the destination marketing organization for the region, we are keenly aware of the immense economic contribution made to our region by the Black Ball Ferry Line. Over its sixty years of continuous service, it conveys not only vital tourism traffic, but also critical flow of important commercial goods between Washington and British Columbia.

As stated in your joint letter from our county's leadership, Black Ball Ferry Line has demonstrated significant economic impact to our rural communities. The ferry service they provide on the MV Coho, connecting Port Angeles and Victoria, B.C. is vital to the continuance of a healthy, sustainable tourism sector. Not only do they directly influence regional visitor participation in our area's events and outdoor activities (which in turn supports lodging, food services, retail, and other area businesses), but they also offer a major incentive for out-of-state and international visitors to experience a "Two Nation Vacation", which has long proved to be a significant draw for those higher spending market segments.

In short, the health of our local economy is closely tied to the healthy operation of the Black Ball Ferry Service. We join with the Board of Clallam County Commissioners and other area leaders in requesting our federal legislators give a financial priority to securing federal financial support to this critical transportation company.

Sincerely,

Marsha Massey  
Executive Director

Cc: Pam Dahl, President, Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau Board of Directors