



December 21, 2009

Honourable Darrell Dexter
Premier of Nova Scotia
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Dear Premier Dexter:

We are writing to express our great concern over the announcement by Bay Ferries to discontinue Service between New England and Yarmouth. We understand this announcement was made based on the decision by your government to not provide assistance for the 2010 operating year.



Access into Nova Scotia is a critical issue for the tourism industry. This particular access point has long served as a key entry into the province and still holds tremendous potential for growth. Although we have seen declining numbers over the past few years for a number of reasons, the US market is still one of Nova Scotia's greatest opportunities for growing the visitor economy.



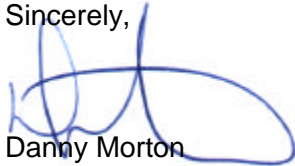
Our greatest concern is that there has been no strategic discussion around transportation issues and the impact on tourism and trade. Whether we can support sustainable ferry service should be a topic for broad consultation and all options should be considered including viable alternatives to the current service. This decision appears to be reactionary with little regard or understanding of the broad economic impact this loss will have that extends well beyond the actual service.

Since the announcement, we have attempted to ascertain the business case for your decision. The focus appears only on the upfront expense with no understanding of the return on the investment. TIANS supports government's efforts to look at responsible investment and strengthen the overall economy however; we believe this decision did not consider the full economic implications and the far reaching impact on tourism.

Since 1997, this service has brought more than 1.5 million people into Nova Scotia. As a result, the economic activity generated new investment in accommodations; refurbishment of existing facilities; strengthened main street businesses in rural Nova Scotia and supported hundreds of jobs.

TIANS urges the province to reconsider its position for the 2010 operating year and undertake a strategic approach to viable ferry service into Nova Scotia. We offer our assistance and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Danny Morton
Chair, TIANS



Darlene Grant Fiander
President, TIANS

cc: Honourable Percy Paris, Minister, Tourism, Culture & Heritage
Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister for the Atlantic Gateway
Honorable Dianne Ablonczy, Minister of State for Tourism
Randy Williams, President, Tourism Industry Association of Canada
Regional Tourism Industry Associations