

**Alaska Municipal League
Resolution #2020-18**

Considering unacceptable the reductions to funding for the Alaska Marine Highway System in FY20 and the changes to the winter schedule; opposing any further reduction to the System's budget and supporting reform that is sustainable and responsive to the needs of coastal communities.

WHEREAS, the Alaska Marine Highway System is a fundamental and critical method of transportation for Alaska's coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, State investment in the AMHS produces a return on State funding almost two to one, facilitating both economic and community development; and

WHEREAS, State government does not experience that return without a broad-based tax, but local tax bases rely on an active and fully functioning ferry system; and

WHEREAS, the reductions in FY20 revenue and the corresponding winter schedule, which eliminated service in some communities for as much as six to eight months, creates a health, safety and economic crises in those communities; and

WHEREAS, local governments have little say in the structure of the ferry system, and are not in a position to act in the State's stead; and

WHEREAS, it remains the fact the local governments feel incredible responsibility for the lives and livelihoods of residents, for whom the winter schedule is untenable; and

WHEREAS, while the State works toward long-term solutions, local governments have demanded that funds be appropriated such that communities see continued service; and

WHEREAS, until the State has finalized a negotiated, long-term solution that includes local governments, further reductions to the system are clearly detrimental to the well-being of Alaskans; and

WHEREAS, local governments recognize the challenges facing the ferry system, but dismantling it further will not result in a viable future; and

WHEREAS, there is not a scenario in the future economy and communities of coastal Alaska that the ferry system does not play an integral part.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska Municipal League considers unacceptable the reductions to funding for the Alaska Marine Highway System in FY20 and the changes to the winter schedule for many ferry-dependent communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Municipal League opposes any further reduction to the System's budget and supports reform that is sustainable and responsive to the needs of coastal communities.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE ON THE 22nd DAY OF NOVEMBER 2019.

Signed: 

President, Alaska Municipal League

Attest: 

Executive Director, Alaska Municipal League