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STEPHANIE KUSIE, M.P.
CALGARY MIDNAPORE

The Honourable Marc Garneau, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Transport
House of Commons
Ottawa, Canada K1A 0A6

September 11, 2020

Dear Minister Garneau,

As you know, as of September 30, 2020, Transport Canada is rescinding a temporary measure granted to BC Ferries meant to prevent the spread of COVID-19 that has allowed passengers to stay in their vehicles on enclosed ferry decks.

Ferries are an essential mode of transportation in British Columbia, and many passengers are affected by this decision. At a time when COVID-19 cases are rising again, and many Canadians are anxious and concerned about a second wave, this is not the time to end measures meant to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

Indeed, the Government of British Columbia is strongly opposed to Transport Canada's decision to end this temporary measure. Premier Horgan has gone so far as to call this decision that would force passengers to mingle on upper decks, "an unwelcome intrusion by the federal government," at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a major concern for British Columbians.

I am concerned that this decision was imposed on British Columbians, and by reports that Transport Canada is unwilling to entertain any discussions with BC Ferries on this matter. Canadians expect the federal government to work in collaboration with the provincial and territorial governments to put in place measures that minimize the risks of COVID-19 while balancing the other health and safety measures that Transport Canada is responsible for regulating. The provinces and Canadians need answers as to why this exemption was accepted for months but is now considered not safe enough.

In order for Canadians to feel safe and secure as we recover from the pandemic, your government must work with provincial and territorial governments to find solutions that work in each situation, instead of applying an Ottawa-knows-best approach.

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I look forward to your response, and hope to be updated on a resolution to this issue.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Kusie
Shadow Minister for Transport