

Resolution 7A

FERRY SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL AND SMALL TOWN NOVA SCOTIA **PASSED**

⇒ Region of Queens Municipality

WHEREAS rural and small town Nova Scotia is facing severe difficulties in maintaining its population with viable businesses; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government ceased financial support for the CAT ferry service between Yarmouth and Portland/Bar Harbour, USA in December 2009 resulting in cancellation of that ferry service; and

WHEREAS the Digby to Saint John, New Brunswick ferry service is perceived to be under threat due to various issues including aging infrastructure; and

WHEREAS the tourism, fishery, forestry, manufacturing, distribution and other industries depend upon these connections to access their markets; and

WHEREAS the economic sustainability of rural and small town Nova Scotia rests on these vital transportation links;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities make representation to the Provincial Government and to the Federal Government through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, to ensure the Yarmouth to United States and Digby to Saint John ferry connections are in place providing the required financial support.

Forwarded to:
Premier's Office
&
Federation of Canadian Municipalities

RESPONSE:

In my capacity as Minister of Economic and Rural Development, I am responding to your letter of November 16, 2010, on behalf of Premier Darrell Dexter

The Government of Canada has recently announced funding to support an additional three years of ferry service for the Digby-Saint John route. Transport Canada owns and maintains the service through a contract with Bay Ferries Limited. The Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have provided financial support to offset operational costs for the past four years. Transport Canada has approached both provinces with a request to continue with this arrangement for the next three years. Discussions are ongoing.

The Province had originally subsidized the Yarmouth to USA ferry service as a temporary measure in hopes the decline in ridership would return to profitable levels. Unfortunately, this did not happen. The Yarmouth Area Industrial Commission has issued a Request for Proposals for a ferry service to operate out of Yarmouth. If a commercially viable option was created for Yarmouth, the Province would be prepared to look at what we could do to help.

*The Honourable Percy A. Paris
Minister—Economic & Rural Development
December 16, 2010*