



To the Finance Committee and the Assembly,

It has recently come to our attention that you will be discussing potential financial aid for medical transportation companies supporting southeast Alaska. As an Alaska owned and operated medevac company also working out of Juneau it is encouraging to hear of the Borough's commitment to the communities of southeast Alaska and to ensuring the viability of the companies that supply such a vital service to them. Despite also seeing a significant reduction in our flight volume and operating revenue due to COVID-19 we are dedicated to ensuring we can continue to provide medevac service in Juneau, the surrounding communities and throughout Alaska. Any funding that could be provided through this Task Force would be crucial to our ongoing commitment to providing this service.

For those on the Committee who are unfamiliar with us, LifeMed Alaska is a non-profit medical transportation company headquartered in Anchorage and has bases in Anchorage, Juneau, Fairbanks, Soldotna, Bethel, Palmer, Dutch Harbor and Kodiak. We provide 24/7 critical care air ambulance services throughout Alaska with full-scope transports for adult, pediatric, neonate (utilizing Neonatal Nurse Practitioners) and high-risk obstetric patients. We also are CLIA certified to carry blood products to meet the critical needs of patients during transport. In the event of the need to transport Covid-19 cases we have an ISO-POD in Juneau to be used if needed to protect both our patients and our crews. In our efforts to provide lifesaving service to all of Alaska we utilize jets, turboprops and helicopters to meet the various needs of our communities on and off the road system. In Juneau we use the Learjet 31 to provide timely transport throughout Southeast Alaska and to Washington state or other lower 48 hospitals for patients needing a higher level of care. We are accredited at the highest level for patient care quality and transportation safety by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS). Our clinical staff regularly sponsors training opportunities for many clinicians around the state. Recently our staff provided training in Juneau for the Capital City Fire/Rescue personnel in regard to Difficult Airway situations. In October we will also be offering training for the Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP) course taking place in Juneau.

Just like many small businesses in Alaska we have been significantly affected by recent developments. For the last few months we have seen a decrease in our flight volume of over 30% from 2019 levels and our June volume was down by 62.5 % compared to 2019. Clearly both the Alaska-specific COVID-19 impact and the significant reduction in tourism this year are taking a toll. Based on previous years we have seen a concurrent increase in funding requirements, mostly due to the need to provide significantly more personal protective equipment for our clinicians and pilots to avoid the spread of the virus. We have taken urgent steps to keep our costs down by suspending capital expenditures that can be put on hold and cancelling or reducing discretionary spending as much as possible

while maintaining patient care and safety standards. Even though we have no plans to reduce our operations, any funds would be vital to maintaining the viability of our organization as we continue to see such significant losses.

I and my staff in Juneau can be available for comment at any time and would be grateful for the opportunity to address this issue with you all in person at your convenience. Thank you for your consideration regarding LifeMed Alaska's current situation and ongoing contributions to meeting the medical transportation needs of those communities in Southeast Alaska. I am hopeful that we can be a part of future discussions about this matter.

Respectfully,

Russ Edwards



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