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Sent: Thursday, April 9, 2020 9:32 AM
To: Economic Stabilization <economic-stabilization@juneau.org>
Subject: Long term stability

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Greetings all,

I am happy to see that the city is trying to get a handle on how they can help the local economy. The short term solutions are indeed quite necessary as it appears that many of our smaller businesses are more fragile than one might have thought. While many of us would likely first want to say that the best way for government to help is to simply go away I think we all realize that in the current situation the government is best situated to help with short term emergency help.

In the long term I think we need to immediately be focusing on our position in the region and what our real economic drivers are and how we could help to diversify this so as to not to be so drastically devastated when one industry such as tourism collapses.

We also have the responsibility as the regional hub to be looking out for the health of our surrounding communities. All these things we need to be looking at all depend on our transportation system. Many of you are aware of the issues of cost and availability in transporting goods and people in southeast but most folks don't realize just how much we are impacted by the virtual monopoly that exists in the barging industry. The breakdown in the ferry system illustrated the flaws that many of us have been harping about and hopefully the appointed task force will take to heart the comments made by those at First Things First. Basically we need to be looking at a few more roads and a shuttle system that we can afford to operate. These things translate over to the barging issue also. If we had a road connecting Juneau and Skagway the situation would change dramatically. I have conferred with folks I know in the long haul trucking industry and we believe that the ability to truck from the lower 48 would not only greatly enhance the market possibilities for our seafood producers, we feel it would force the barging rates to drop dramatically.

Given the possibility of stimulus monies becoming available for infrastructure projects I feel it would be in the cities' best interest to allow a subcommittee to put together an overview of the economic and environmental benefits of following the transportation plan put forth by ADOT a few years ago that would build the road to Skagway and build the road from Sitka across the island and strategically use shuttle ferries and barges to economically move goods and people around the region.

It is my opinion that if we do not follow this course of action, all of southeast is doomed to wither on the vine and become a rural retirement community with no tax base and no incentive for young people to stay.

Respectfully yours,
Dave Hanna