

San Juan County Council
350 Court Street No. 1
Friday Harbor, WA 98250
(360) 378 - 2898

Town of Friday Harbor
PO Box 219
Friday Harbor, WA 98250
(360) 378 - 2810



May 13, 2008

The Honorable Patty Murray, U.S. Senator
173 Russell Senate Office Building SR-173
Washington, D.C. 20510-4704

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senator
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building SD-511
Washington, D.C. 20510-4705

The Honorable Rick Larsen, U.S. Representative
107 Cannon House Office Building 107 CHOB
Washington, D.C., 20515-4702

Re: Border Checkpoint at Washington State Ferries' Anacortes Terminal

Dear Senators Murray, Cantwell, and Representative Larsen,

On April 22, 2008, the local officials of the Town of Friday Harbor and San Juan County met in joint session and discussed the increasingly frequent spot checks by the U. S. Border Patrol during local, non-international sailings. Both Councils were closely aligned in their concerns, which we would like to bring to your attention.

As a community of islands, we are entirely dependent upon the Washington State Ferry system for the transportation of goods and services, as well as all the activities that must be dealt with daily.

One concern we have with these Border Patrol checks is the lack of provision for anyone travelling for necessary medical attention, or for anyone dealing with an emergency while going through a checkpoint, an experience that has caused delays of an hour or more.

We are also concerned about economic issues. The year-round population of San Juan County is 16,000 people, but between late spring and fall we receive nearly 600,000 visitors, a tourist population critical to the economy of San Juan County and neighboring communities. These security checks may deter travelers who do not want to risk delays, or who feel intimidated by the militaristic appearance of the guards, or who have concerns about their civil liberties.

As well, many foreign residents and visitors in our communities are being subjected to higher levels of scrutiny, which some of our citizens view as harassment or racial profiling.

San Juan County has been receiving an abundance of negative publicity regarding this subject, including a recent front-page article in the Seattle Times and a story on National Public Radio. While we fully support the Border Patrol in their lawful mission, we urgently and respectfully ask your assistance in securing the following relief:

- Ensure that no actions of the Border Patrol impact negatively our local and regional economy;
- that medical and other emergencies are accommodated immediately;
- that there are equal and reasonable levels of security checks for everyone passing the checkpoint.

We thank you for your consideration of our concerns, and assure you that we will work cooperatively to find a balance between necessary security measures and important quality of life issues.

Sincerely,



Chair Howard Rosenfeld
District No. 3, Friday Harbor
San Juan County Council



Kevin M. M. Ranker, Member
District No. 1, San Juan South
San Juan County Council

OPPOSED

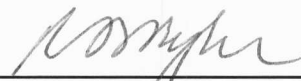
Rich Peterson, Member
District No. 2, San Juan North
San Juan County Council



Alan Lichter, Member
District No. 4, Orcas West
San Juan County Council



Gene Knapp, Vice-Chair
District No. 5, Orcas East
San Juan County Council



Bob Myhr, Member
District No. 6, Lopez/Shaw
San Juan County Council

David F. Jones
Mayor
Town of Friday Harbor

Carrie Lacher, Member
Position No. 1
Town of Friday Harbor

Christopher Wolf, Member
Position No. 2
Town of Friday Harbor

Kelley Balcomb-Bartok, Member
Position No. 3
Town of Friday Harbor

Liz Illg, Member
Position No. 4
Town of Friday Harbor

Carrie L. Brooks, Member
Position No. 5
Town of Friday Harbor

c: The Honorable Christine Gregoire
The Honorable Harriet Spanel
The Honorable Jeff Morris
The Honorable Dave Quall
Deputy Chief Joe Guiliano