**[Leo Simmons](https://www.facebook.com/groups/200035166755564/user/535906494/?__cft__%5b0%5d=AZVIZfAJvB9LF3coy_njUBN7U8xfOkkhpvhBIyZwSZ9MVQdeSevk7OMIyYqVWV6QopdYVMTV_mphdzRsY9Rm7pqapnc98TPtS8c2bGugK-P-HiKKO8V3Bc22Kf7tJQGEwhe8YD6xzdxyy9AK9DYXuj8x&__tn__=-UC%2CP-R) FB, DIBB, Aug. 4/22**

The response received this morning from Josie Osborne's office. I presume all email correspondents received the same thing, but I'm copying it here for all to see:

....................................................................

Thank you for reaching out to MLA Osborne’s office to share your input on the challenges related to the Denman Island and/or Hornby Island ferries. As MLA Osborne’s assistant, I am reaching out today on her behalf to share an update and talk about the steps our office is taking to advocate for better services on the Denman and Hornby Islands (otherwise known as BC Ferries Routes 21 and 22).

I do want to start by clarifying that BC Ferries operates independently from the government, under the oversight of its Board of Directors and its shareholder, the BC Ferry Authority. While our government does not have direct oversight over BC Ferries, MLA Osborne feels strongly that it is important that our office does whatever we can to ensure residents concerns are heard, acknowledged and most importantly, addressed by BC Ferries.

Recent data tells us that Routes 21 and 22 are two of the poorest performing routes in the current BC Ferries system. Our office has consistently received complaints from residents about the summer capacity issues on Hornby ferry, and we know that the downgrading of the Kahloke has only added to these challenges. We’ve also heard clearly about the long-standing concerns around the suitability and reliability of the Baynes Sound Connector.

Last week’s breakdowns and disruptions in service – during some of the hottest days of summer – were incredibly frustrating for so many people. We also acknowledge that these disruptions create a number of challenges, including missed medical or legal appointments, increases in delivery costs of supplies and materials, traffic congestion and speeding (particularly on Denman Island), just to name a few.

We want to acknowledge the efforts of your Island-based elected officials (both trustees and CVRD Director Arbour) for their consistent advocacy and help, as well as the hard work of local representatives of the Ferry Advisory Committee and several organizations based on both Denman and Hornby Islands. It is very meaningful for MLA Osborne to have a direct line of contact with these folks, as they are able to effectively communicate the concerns of the community.

Since this past Spring, our office has seen an increase of letters and communication on this issue, and we have taken a number of steps to seek answers from BC Ferries and the Ministry of Transportation. After a formal meeting with Denman and Hornby Island representatives in March 2022 (which included representatives from the Ferry Advisory Committee, DICES, first responders on both Islands, homecare society, HIRRA, HICEEC etc), we arranged a meeting between a small delegation and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Rob Fleming, at the Legislature in Victoria. This was very effective and we are grateful to the delegates as it was extremely helpful to have Minister Fleming hear about these concerns directly from those who are most impacted. In addition, just a few days before his departure in July, MLA Osborne was able to meet with Mark Collins, then-CEO of BC Ferries to specifically discuss the challenges on Routes 21/22.

After hearing from residents and delegates, one of our priorities right now is to do everything we can to see improved communications between BC Ferries and the Ferry Advisory Committee, to better ensure that residents and ferry users have accurate, timely, information and can be confident that the input they provide is constructively heard. Other steps we are taking include:

* MLA Osborne has requested a meeting with the new leadership at BC Ferries to follow on her recent meeting with Mark Collins (just a few days prior to his departure) to discuss solutions for Routes 21 and 22 as well as addressing some of the frustration she has heard about communication and ensuring a constructive and meaningful relationship with the Ferry Advisory Committee.
* We are in the process of planning roundtable events in late September on both Denman and Hornby Island. Part of this planning is working to have a representative(s) from BC Ferries at these roundtables. Once we have dates/times and a location for each roundtable confirmed, we will be advertising these events.
* We are asking that anyone contacting the Ministry of Transportation or BC Ferries about these issues, to please copy our office at josie.osborne.mla@leg.bc.ca, which will help us collate all feedback and perspectives to ensure that MLA Osborne can reference this input in any future meetings with the Ministry of Transportation and/or BC Ferries.

I also want to point out that BC Ferries is developing a submission to its regulator, the BC Ferries Commission, regarding its capital and service plan as well as funding requirements for the four-year period beginning 2024. The plan will be submitted by September 30, 2022. Once submitted the Commission will publish it on its [website](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fnam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%2F%3Furl%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.bcferrycommission.ca%252Fabout%252F%26data%3D05%257C01%257C%257C038de49f3d174e1d960608da762e1a97%257C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%257C1%257C0%257C637952237642428771%257CUnknown%257CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%253D%257C3000%257C%257C%257C%26sdata%3D9o5TK1wg%252BavBXjGlltnag7eSw0bdFHa%252B0Alfmt2dj%252B4%253D%26reserved%3D0%26fbclid%3DIwAR07cQNNbFNFpWwPWVH06SLfGHG3JgxGkexbQE8y9Loy6i7bUS7QWPUKj9w&h=AT2qtz8disFoQcDyNnt5hQ9gjdVsbqEA-yBgOGc7iuxujj7k-Dwb_evgPhkGFT0RaLDSA325KXBHjvc02SkGhNovHK06OKzYIhF9fS771Lmi4i-nRJimXWI6Y0rriuaeQQ&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT1N2fuBG1rnA-Id6_kfcS1ITTb0VCxzbOnLh7c6aC9U3MkzYajwy0zEqV02PQrMxDuk7PD6slQaW-M9V2USJeS7fCRMlko72aeJkN5xsmDur7Z32k4LBoFOc1NtgnYyCGilQ1DCwB6VBrSi-ozS0t8BzejgZkKqR3g) and seek public input. Concerns regarding service levels and service reliability can be raised during this process, or at any time, with the BC Ferry Commission.

We recognize that Islanders rely on BC Ferries for both essential and non essential travel, the same as many of us rely on our highways. Based on our recent conversations with the Ministry of Transportation and BC Ferries, I can confirm that both remain committed to seeking ways to improve services, and MLA Osborne remains committed to helping in any capacity she can. The last thing I wanted to mention was our encouragement that residents do their best to work as two Islands together. We recognize that some of the issues are unique to one particular Island, but ultimately the united voices from both islands are stronger together.

Thank you again for sharing your thoughts with our office. If you wish to provide input directly to BC Ferries, I have included the contact information below – and please remember to copy our office in your correspondence.

* BC Ferry Authority [Contact Us – B.C. Ferry Authority (bcferryauthority.com)](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fnam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%2F%3Furl%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.bcferryauthority.com%252Fcontact-us%252F%26data%3D05%257C01%257C%257C038de49f3d174e1d960608da762e1a97%257C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%257C1%257C0%257C637952237642428771%257CUnknown%257CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%253D%257C3000%257C%257C%257C%26sdata%3DxyAylb6bIjg3GRiYD5VAXSM2jBd0MzktzGTC5F5lYRM%253D%26reserved%3D0%26fbclid%3DIwAR3jCcUtm0RWvHvBJHGlcMLFMZjMPPLqTU5J6GL6argY0xto3VN1X-0qWtI&h=AT1JksPxR33f-Ctu7tD2TPSAbjtgkV2hNCGN5mWDP1ENNlUZjhI1TQKWfwjI9ozDcnyWGWSLASHWPlK3PkKcosgh_lmJ5Pzn2aWkBNuFYyUztzrx3DZL0A9gzEdatGJ9ww&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT1N2fuBG1rnA-Id6_kfcS1ITTb0VCxzbOnLh7c6aC9U3MkzYajwy0zEqV02PQrMxDuk7PD6slQaW-M9V2USJeS7fCRMlko72aeJkN5xsmDur7Z32k4LBoFOc1NtgnYyCGilQ1DCwB6VBrSi-ozS0t8BzejgZkKqR3g) or 250-381-1401
* BC Ferries General contact information [Contact Us | BC Ferries](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fnam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%2F%3Furl%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.bcferries.com%252Fcontact-us%26data%3D05%257C01%257C%257C038de49f3d174e1d960608da762e1a97%257C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%257C1%257C0%257C637952237642428771%257CUnknown%257CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%253D%257C3000%257C%257C%257C%26sdata%3Da9XByaWdtPiksGdC%252FnqkNDtxUNk%252Fak%252Fh71Ov48GcbnQ%253D%26reserved%3D0%26fbclid%3DIwAR2s7ConyAr8F4HRk0CEu4uTGeqyTJ1piuZJqiGnF4O8uQi17t6RexSHltk&h=AT0NN7yZSIADqfC_voxXGL4pDJLsynpiEw59ATZo-b6KJTV0IXZjc6Y5Mv3g7602q9xaMCTniKeQA2NZegZNKbo-nj42HXcX-b3JawkvThSqshj53YbiZN7oFWYLE37mkg&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT1N2fuBG1rnA-Id6_kfcS1ITTb0VCxzbOnLh7c6aC9U3MkzYajwy0zEqV02PQrMxDuk7PD6slQaW-M9V2USJeS7fCRMlko72aeJkN5xsmDur7Z32k4LBoFOc1NtgnYyCGilQ1DCwB6VBrSi-ozS0t8BzejgZkKqR3g)

Regards,

**Britt Chalmers |**Constituency Assistant

office of **Josie Osborne, MLA**

Mid Island-Pacific Rim

*(pronouns: she/her/hers)*

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