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Kitsap Transit Board of Directors,

BY: _____

January 6, 2015

Is the Rich Passage 1 too expensive and possibly unsafe at hydrofoil operational speeds?

I am not speaking against the idea of a fast foot ferry to Seattle. I support the idea, if we can provide *safe* and *cost effective* service.

The RP1 has had only limited testing and the list of problems has grown with almost every sailing. Just a few examples of system failures for this troubled boat are: hydrofoil falls off; extensive stress cracks in foil; excess vibration; cavitations present when boat operates at hydrofoil speeds; diesel motor mount failure causing redesign and retrofit; exhaust falling off; damage to saltwater systems because of dissimilar materials being used in design; repairs and replacement of jet drives; diesel motor warranty and repair work; and special painting needed because the wrong material was used in strut design; I ask you, based on this dismal track record alone, can we afford to put this boat into full service?

Furthermore, the RP 1 has serious safety problems that, in my opinion, will put both operating crew and passengers in danger. The foil/strut deficiency that I am talking about are the cracks that have shown up in both parts. What if these cracks get worse to the point of a partial breakdown of the foil or strut at high speed causing a catastrophic accident?

We have all seen what happens when a hydroplane hits a wave wrong or one sponson digs into the water. The hydroplane disintegrates in milliseconds. Keep in mind all that destruction was caused by a sudden high-speed loss of control!

In the same way a, partial failure of the RP1 foil or strut will cause part of it to dig into the water. This will cause the same type of sudden loss of control, resulting in a violent change of direction. Passengers and crew would be thrown around the cabin like rag dolls, causing injuries and loss of life.

I have worked on the Navy Hydrofoil programs. I recognize the inherent dangers with this design. These stress cracks are indicators of bigger problems to come.

I am confident that each of you will consider safety and the high maintenance and operating costs before you take the vote that could put the RP 1 and boats like it into service.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tim Matthes