

**Town of North Haven
16 Town Office Square
P.O. Box 400
North Haven, Maine 04853**

March 20, 2024

Bruce Van Note
Commissioner, Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Re: *North Haven*

Dear Commissioner Van Note,

Congratulations on the launching of the *Shay*, Maine State Ferry Service's newest vessel.

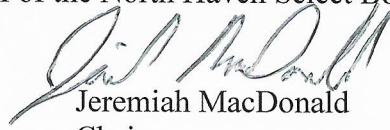
We are writing to ask that you work with us to create more year-round ferry capacity for North Haven. One idea we would like to discuss is assigning the *Shay* to regular runs between North Haven and Rockland. As you know, the *Burgess* is often over capacity. Large trucks frequently limit the number of passenger vehicles you are able to put on the *Burgess*. U.S. Coast Guard restrictions on carrying propane to the island make transporting this essential fuel especially problematic. Large trucks and propane transport create delays on both ends of the ferry runs. People stranded with groceries, young children, and pets because of backups on the Rockland side are especially troubling. This used to be solely a summer-season challenge, but now we are experiencing these disruptions in plans year-round.

Adding the *Shay* on a regular basis would provide more capacity and predictability for people travelling to and from North Haven. The Town would gladly coordinate reservations on the *Shay* to maximize the assignment of large vehicles. If this is not possible, we would like to discuss other ideas for eliminating the delays and disruptions in ferry travel.

For several years, we have asked for intermittent support during the summer, but crew shortages have severely limited the Ferry Service's ability to help. We are hoping that committing to regular year-round runs in the *Shay* would enable the Ferry Service to hire a permanent crew that could serve both North Haven and Matinicus.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to meeting with you.

On behalf of the North Haven Select Board,


Jeremiah MacDonald
Chair

Copy to:
William Geary, Director, MSFS
Jon Emerson, Jamie Lane Hersey, FSAB Members