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Dec. 4, 2013

Tamera Leighton
Del Norte Local Transportation Commission
1301 B Northcrest Drive No. 16
Crescent City, CA 95531

Re: U.S. Highway 101/Last Chance Grade

Dear Director Leighton,

Del Norte Ambulance wishes to be on the record as supporting an effort to move U.S. Highway 101 between Crescent City and Klamath away from Last Chance Grade. We support your continued efforts to have an economic impact study done by the State of California as soon as possible.

As we all know, this section of highway is destined to collapse, just as it has in the past. The millions and millions and millions of dollars spent over the past several decades trying to secure U.S. 101 to the side of a mountain will be lost; hopefully, this future slide will not take any unsuspecting motorists and passengers with it into the Pacific.

When the highway collapses again, Del Norte County will be crippled. The economic impact will be devastating. This matter is well documented by others, and I will not belabor the point.

However, I would like to address another issue --the loss of emergency services to the community of Klamath, as well as other medical services to the Del Norte County community as a whole.

With U.S. Highway 101 gone at Last Chance Grade, the quickest emergency medical service to Klamath will have to come from Arcata-Mad River Ambulance. This will mean individuals in need of ambulance services during a medical crisis will have to wait approximately one full hour before a help arrives. It will take another hour to transport the patient back to a Humboldt County hospital.

For seriously ill or injured patients, a negative outcome -- including death -- will be guaranteed.

Likewise, patients at Sutter Coast Hospital in need of higher levels of medical care unavailable locally will find their options limited and very expensive. Pelican Bay State Prison, and the Del Norte County Mental Health Department, often requests ambulance services literally on a moment's notice. U.S. Highway 101 is a daily life link in these situations. And it is worth noting that should Last Chance Grade give way during a natural disaster, U.S. Highway 199, and even U.S. Highway 101 north may also be lost.

Work needs to begin as soon as possible, before Last Chance Grade collapses once more.

Sincerely,

Ron Sandler
President/Paramedic
Del Norte Ambulance



"Dedicated to Serving"



Del Norte Ambulance
Rescue Raccoon