



**PUBLIC PETITION NO.**

**PE01192**

### **Name of petitioner**

Donald Ewen Darroch

### **Petition title**

Promotion of independent vehicular ferry routes

### **Petition summary**

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to state how it is supporting and promoting independent vehicular ferry routes between the islands and the mainland and how the planning system is playing a constructive role in supporting the economic and social future of such routes.

### **Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition**

The Islay & Jura Ferry Co Ltd has had protracted correspondence between Historic Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Argyll & Bute Council and the Scottish Government in an attempt to resolve the many and various concerns which a proposed new vehicular ferry route application appears to have provoked with these bodies. Mr. Jamie McGrigor MSP and Mr. Alan Reid MP have raised questions with these bodies on behalf of the Principals. The responses have for the most part been negative. Mr. Jim Mather MSP has been made aware of the problem.

### **Petition background information**

Based on the first hand experience of trying to start a new ferry service the Islay & Jura Ferry Co Ltd believe that the Scottish Government (Executive), the statutory bodies and the planning authorities show little regard for the benefits and improvements independent ferry operators could make to the islands by the introduction of short sea vehicular crossings.

In particular the Scottish Government appears apathetic in support of new independent routes. There appears to be a presumption that the state owned operator is the only group who has the know-how to operate ferry routes.

Some of the statutory consultees are inflexible and unrealistic in their demands for Environmental Audits, which may well be more demanding than those imposed on other industries.

It appears that financial assistance or support is not as readily available to independent ferry operators as it is to the state owned group. Indeed it appears that independent ferry operators may be precluded from support which would be available to new ventures in other business sectors.

Council authorities (our experience is based solely within Argyll & Bute) show a lack of vision on how to improve the ferry services to the islands. Council officers and elected members seem unable to comprehend the benefits of short and frequent ferry routes.

Lack of support for the independent ferry operators and lack of governmental vision is curtailing the economic and social growth of all areas within the Scottish coastal regions.

**Unique web address**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/PE01192>

**Related information for petition**

**Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?**

NO

**How many signatures have you collected so far?**

1

**Closing date for collecting signatures online**

N/A

**Comments to stimulate online discussion**