# Lack of Kodiak Representation on Ferry Board Draws Criticism

Monday, 29 June 2009

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/090629.mtab_reax.mp3{/audio}

Erik Wander/KMXT

When Governor Sarah Palin named two new members to the Marine Transportation Advisory Board last week, Kodiak once again remained unrepresented in spite of its prominence within the state ferry system.

Juneau's Patrick Owen and Fairbanks' Seth Church were named to the 11-member board charged with advising the state on Marine Highway issues.

Kodiak Island Borough Assemblywoman Pat Branson Thursday expressed frustration at the absence of a Kodiak representative on the board.

-- (Board 1 15 sec. "We do not, and I check ... Kodiak on that advisory board.")

Branson said that although she doesn't know why Kodiak hasn't been represented on the board to date, its lack of representation is something that needs to be remedied as soon as possible. She said it's an issue she has tried to call attention to in the past.

-- (Board 2 11 sec. "We've brought it up ... someone from Fairbanks appointed.")

The appointee Branson was referring to was Church, the first Fairbanks resident appointed to the panel. Church took one of two seats designated for residents of communities not served by the ferry system. The other is John Mark Eliason of Anchorage.
She said Kodiak has plenty of qualified people to fill a seat on the board and hopes to encourage them to step up when future openings evolve.

-- (Board 3 12 sec. "We're a hub for Southwest ... to

put their name forward.")

The board was created by Palin in 2007. According to the administrative order that created it, one board member represents Southwest Alaska, including Akutan, Chignik, Cold Bay, False Pass, Homer, King Cove, Kodiak, Port Lions, Sand Point, Seldovia, and Unalaska, including Dutch Harbor. That seat is currently held by Shirley Marquardt (MAR-kwart), the Mayor of Unalaska. Other current M-TAB board members are from Cordova, Skagway, Sitka, Ketchikan, Angoon and Haines.

###