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METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSION

Moulton: Baker is missing the boat in Lynn

THOMAS GRILLO | June 8, 2016



U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton piled on Tuesday and joined the Lynn delegation in criticizing the Baker administration's failure to fund the Lynn ferry that serves the North Shore.

"Reliable ferry service has been proven to help spur economic development," said the Salem Democrat in a statement. "That's why my team worked hard to secure funding for a new 149-passenger vessel ... It is therefore surprising that the Baker administration is no longer supporting ferry operations ... Continuity of service is key to building a sustainable, long-term ferry service, and critical

to the city's economic development plan. I hope the administration will reconsider."

Moulton's comments come on the heels of Monday's hearing before the Metropolitan Beaches Commission on Beacon Hill. Lynn lawmakers scolded Gov. Charlie Baker and his team for failing to come up with about \$700,000 to fund the third year of a ferry service that gave North Shore passengers a quick ride to Boston.

Of the 15,000 passengers who took the ferry in each of the two seasons, 20 percent were from Lynn and 80 percent came from surrounding North

Shore communities.

"We should be working together to make sure that Quincy, Salem, Lynn, Hull and Hingham have ferry service, particularly when the Seaport District is now where the people want to invest," Sen. Thomas M. McGee (D-Lynn) said at the hearing. "It recently took me an hour-and-a-half to drive to the Seaport District when it could have been a 30-minute ferry ride from my district. If we are talking about a congested and jammed up region, we can look to water transportation to be the answer. But I am very frustrated that this administration is not necessarily embracing what I believe we should be embracing."

On Monday, Carolyn Kirk, deputy secretary of the state's Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development, said the city's application for operating expenses for the ferry came too late, and the funds were exhausted for this fiscal year.

No one from the Baker administration was talking Tuesday.

In a statement, Paul McMorrow, a spokesman for the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, said, "The administration looks forward to working cooperatively with its local, state and federal partners to focus on the long-term sustainability of commuter ferry service in Lynn."