

## **Statement from MP Kent MacDonald**

### **Securing a Reliable Two-Ferry Service for Eastern Prince Edward Island**

Securing a reliable, two-ferry service for eastern Prince Edward Island has been one of my top priorities since becoming your MP for Cardigan because this link is essential to our economy, our communities, and our long-term resilience.

I have been consistent in raising concerns with federal government department officials about the operational reliability of the NFL Wood Islands–Caribou ferry service, including dredging challenges, environmental impacts, and the need for long-term infrastructure planning, including port infrastructure. In September 2025, I formally raised these issues with the Minister of Transport and have continued to press for solutions as public and commercial demand for a reliable service continues to grow.

The Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce has been clear: without a reliable and predictable ferry service, exports, jobs, and investment in our region are at risk. Their commissioned report from November 2025 confirms what local businesses already know, the ferry service contributes approximately \$39 million annually to the regional economy.

I have also met directly with Northumberland Ferries Limited to better understand the operational realities of the ferry service. With the Government of Canada's reduction in fares on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, the NFL had a strong performance during the 2025 season. Nearly 379,000 passengers, which is an increase of more than 95,000 over the previous year. When reliability and capacity improve and transportation becomes more affordable, people and businesses respond accordingly.

I continue to advocate for concrete action: expanding daily sailings to better support commercial traffic, advancing the replacement of the *MV Confederation* with a modern vessel comparable to the *MV Northumberland*, upgrading terminal infrastructure to improve interoperability, and committing to long-term shoreline protection through a breakwater at MacLeod's Beach.

A dependable two-ferry system is not just about convenience, it is about economic growth and ensuring eastern PEI has a strong and resilient connection to the mainland. I will continue working closely with the Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce, Northumberland Ferries Limited, and Transport Canada to ensure this vital service meets the needs of our region today and into the future.