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**Sen. Murkowski: Need for King Cove Road Remains Indisputable**  
*Letter Details Emergency Medevacs After Secretary's Rejection of Life-Saving Road*

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, today sent a letter to Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell listing the medevacs carried out from King Cove, Alaska, in the 14 months since Jewell rejected an 11-mile, one-lane, gravel, non-commercial road that would have provided reliable medical transport to the all-weather airport in nearby Cold Bay.

“I was surprised and disappointed that you were not aware of the number of medevacs carried out from King Cove, Alaska, over the past 14 months,” Murkowski wrote in her letter to Jewell. “Compounding my frustration was your inability to name any concrete action that you have taken – or intend to take – to protect the health and safety of the nearly 1,000 Alaskans who live in this isolated community.”

Murkowski decided the letter was necessary after Jewell admitted during [questioning](#) before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee that she was unaware of the number of emergency medevacs carried out in King Cove since Dec. 23, 2013. A total of 23 medevacs – including seven by the U.S. Coast Guard – have been required for sick and injured patients since Jewell rejected a nearly 300-to-1 land exchange that would have allowed construction of the road.

Among the medevacs were a male in his 30s who dislocated both hips and fractured his pelvis after a 600-pound cod pot fell on him; an infant boy with RSV; a male in his 80s with sepsis; a female in her 50s with a displaced wrist fracture; and multiple patients with heart problems or gastrointestinal bleeding. Many had to wait hours – if not overnight – before a medevac could safely arrive.

Despite Jewell’s repeated promises to help the people of King Cove, she has continued to do nothing to improve their health and safety, even over the course of 14 months. As a result, Murkowski, chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, again called on Jewell to find a viable solution that will allow a community with no hospital or doctor to have reliable access to medical care in emergency situations. A life-saving road clearly remains the best and most obvious choice, and Interior still has not identified any alternatives that are superior to it.

“As Secretary of the Interior, you have authority and responsibility to ensure that King Cove’s residents have reliable medical transport during emergencies caused by illness or injury. The 23

medevacs that have taken place over the past 14 months reinforce the need for a real solution – as opposed to the status quo or half-measures that will force local residents to endure needless pain and suffering until help can arrive,” Murkowski wrote.

At the end of her letter, Murkowski again urged Jewell to make the protection of those who live in King Cove her top priority, and asserted that the resolution of this matter is “long overdue.”

To view the letter, click [here](#). In addition to a full list of medevacs, Murkowski also attached her previous letter outlining the infeasibility of permanently stationing a Coast Guard helicopter on the Alaska Peninsula to service King Cove – a flawed idea that Jewell has repeatedly mentioned, but taken no action to advance – as well as a cost estimate from the Coast Guard. Those letters are available [here](#) and [here](#).

More information about King Cove, the land exchange, and life-saving road can be found on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee’s [website](#).

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