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## M/V Columbia To Remain In Ketchikan

(Juneau) — The M/V Columbia, which experienced a generator malfunction during its northbound sailing from Bellingham, will remain in Ketchikan for repairs, the Alaska Marine Highway System said Sunday.

It is unclear how long it will take to make the necessary repairs to the Columbia, but the AMHS has activated shore-side support staff to accommodate the travel plans of its passengers.

“The safety and comfort of our customers are our primary concern right now and we are going to do everything possible to give these folks options to get them where they need to go,” said Capt. John Falvey, AMHS General Manager. “We have ships going north and south all week and so we hope the disruption in their travel plans is only temporary.”

The Columbia is carrying 380 passengers and 100 vehicles. It experienced a generator malfunction in Canadian waters at about 3 a.m. on Saturday. It was later cleared to sail to Ketchikan, where it arrived Sunday morning and a more complete assessment of its mechanical problems were performed.

AMHS staff are providing meals and lodging aboard the Columbia while passengers wait for alternate sailings out of Ketchikan. Several passengers and vehicles have already boarded the M/V Taku on its sailing to Prince Rupert, B.C., on Sunday. More passengers are expected to leave as AMHS ships arrive in Ketchikan during their scheduled stops.

The Columbia is a mainline ferry with capacity to carry 499 passengers and 134 vehicles. It has been in the AMHS fleet since 1974. It underwent a 6-week scheduled overhaul in March 2006.

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For more information, contact Chief Communications Officer Mike Chambers at 465-8994 or by cell at 321-6656.