

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6513

As Passed House - Amended:

March 1, 1996

Title: An act relating to securing a permanent homeport for the U.S.S. Missouri.

Brief Description: Securing a permanent homeport for the U.S.S. Missouri.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Sheldon, Oke, Owen, Loveland, Heavey, Drew, Fairley, Prentice, Thibaudeau, Sutherland, Snyder, Bauer, Wojahn, Rinehart, Goings, McAuliffe, Cantu, Roach, Rasmussen and Kohl).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/22/96, 2/24/96 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 3/1/96, 97-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Huff, Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Vice Chairman; H. Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Valle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Carlson; Cooke; Crouse; Dyer; Foreman; Grant; Hickel; Kessler; Lambert; Linville; McMorris; Poulsen; Reams; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Silver; Smith; Talcott and Wolfe.

Staff: Jim Lux (786-7152).

Background: The USS Missouri has been moored at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton intermittently for approximately 30 years. The 877-foot long decommissioned battleship was the site of the Japanese surrender to the Allies at the end of World War II.

The Navy has placed the USS Missouri in its ship donation program. Through this program, the ship can be donated to a nonprofit group or governmental entity that will maintain it as an historic landmark. The city of Bremerton and Kitsap County have applied to the Navy to have Bremerton be the permanent homeport for the ship. The cities of San Francisco and Honolulu have also applied to the Navy for permanent moorage of the ship.

A public development authority has been formed to develop a plan for retaining the ship on the Bremerton waterfront. The public development authority plans to own and operate the ship as the USS Missouri Maritime Heritage Museum.

The initial one-time costs to provide permanent anchorage, prepare environmental assessments, secure permits, establish exhibits, and remediate some hazardous materials are estimated at approximately \$4.5 million. Annual operating expenses are estimated to be \$1.5 million.

Summary of Bill: An appropriation of \$3 million from the Puget Sound ferry operations account is provided to reimburse Kitsap County and the Port of Bremerton for construction of facilities supporting the permanent placement of the battleship USS Missouri. A sale and use tax exemption for marine fuel is provided to fund the \$3 million appropriation and ongoing costs attributable to increased passenger-only ferry service to the city of Bremerton expected from increased ridership because of the USS Missouri.

Appropriation: \$3 million from the Puget Sound ferry operations account to the Washington State Ferries.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Having the battleship USS Missouri moored on the waterfront of the city of Bremerton will provide the state with a cultural and historical tourist attraction. An economic and educational benefit will be available to the entire state.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Sheldon, prime sponsor.