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ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL 1012

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State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Representatives Mitchell, Fisher, Poulsen, McDermott, Ogden and  
Dunn

Read first time 01/10/2001. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to allowing Washington state ferry fares to be  
2 increased in excess of the fiscal growth factor; amending RCW  
3 47.60.326; creating a new section; and declaring an emergency.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 47.60.326 and 1999 c 94 s 27 are each amended to read  
6 as follows:

7 (1) In order to maintain an adequate, fair, and economically  
8 sound schedule of charges for the transportation of passengers,  
9 vehicles, and commodities on the Washington state ferries, the  
10 department of transportation each year shall conduct a full review  
11 of such charges.

12 (2) Prior to February 1st of each odd-numbered year the  
13 department shall transmit to the transportation commission a  
14 report of its review together with its recommendations for the  
15 revision of a schedule of charges for the ensuing biennium. The  
16 commission on or before July 1st of that year shall adopt as a  
17 rule, in the manner provided by the Washington administrative  
18 procedure act, a schedule of charges for the Washington state

1 ferries for the ensuing biennium commencing July 1st. The schedule  
2 may initially be adopted as an emergency rule if necessary to take  
3 effect on, or as near as possible to, July 1st.

4 (3) The department in making its review and formulating  
5 recommendations and the commission in adopting a schedule of  
6 charges may consider any of the following factors:

7 (a) The amount of subsidy available to the ferry system for  
8 maintenance and operation;

9 (b) The time and distance of ferry runs;

10 (c) The maintenance and operation costs for ferry runs with a  
11 proper adjustment for higher costs of operating outmoded or less  
12 efficient equipment;

13 (d) The efficient distribution of traffic between cross-sound  
14 routes;

15 (e) The desirability of reasonable commutation rates for  
16 persons using the ferry system to commute daily to work;

17 (f) The effect of proposed fares in increasing walk-on and  
18 vehicular passenger use;

19 (g) The effect of proposed fares in promoting all types of  
20 ferry use during nonpeak periods;

21 (h) Such other factors as prudent managers of a major ferry  
22 system would consider.

23 (4) If at any time during the biennium it appears that  
24 projected revenues from the Puget Sound ferry operations account  
25 and any other operating subsidy available to the Washington state  
26 ferries will be less than the projected total cost of maintenance  
27 and operation of the Washington state ferries for the biennium,  
28 the department shall forthwith undertake a review of its schedule  
29 of charges to ascertain whether or not the schedule of charges  
30 should be revised. The department shall, upon completion of its  
31 review report, submit its recommendation to the transportation  
32 commission which may in its sound discretion revise the schedule  
33 of charges as required to meet necessary maintenance and operation  
34 expenditures of the ferry system for the biennium or may defer  
35 action until the regular annual review and revision of ferry  
36 charges as provided in subsection (2) of this section.

37 (5) The provisions of RCW 47.60.330 relating to public

1 participation shall apply to the process of revising ferry tolls  
2 under this section.

3 (6) Under RCW 43.135.055, the transportation commission may  
4 increase ferry tolls included in the schedule of charges adopted  
5 under this section by a percentage that exceeds the fiscal growth  
6 factor.

7 NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. Upon any increase of ferry tolls in excess  
8 of the fiscal growth factor as provided for in section 1 of this  
9 act, the department of transportation shall use no more than ten  
10 thousand dollars of the revenues generated by the increased fares  
11 to conduct a study of the local roadway and parking impacts of  
12 vehicular ferry traffic on municipalities in which ferry terminals  
13 are located. The department shall report its findings and make  
14 recommendations for mitigating the identified impacts to the  
15 legislature on or before January 1, 2002. The department shall  
16 issue its report electronically, posting it on the department's  
17 web site for the public, and transmitting the report to the  
18 legislature through the use of electronic mail.

19 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. This act is necessary for the immediate  
20 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of  
21 the state government and its existing public institutions, and  
22 takes effect immediately.

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