
HOUSE BILL 1701

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Representatives Rockefeller, Haigh, Jackley, Eickmeyer, Quall, Lantz, Woods, McDermott, McIntire, Murray, Barlean and Poulsen

Read first time 02/01/2001. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to ferry fares; and amending RCW 47.60.326.

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

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

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

9 (2) Prior to February 1st of each odd-numbered year the department
10 shall transmit to the transportation commission a report of its review
11 together with its recommendations for the revision of a schedule of
12 charges for the ensuing biennium. The commission on or before July 1st
13 of that year shall adopt as a rule, in the manner provided by the
14 Washington administrative procedure act, a schedule of charges for the
15 Washington state ferries for the ensuing biennium commencing July 1st.
16 The schedule may initially be adopted as an emergency rule if necessary
17 to take effect on, or as near as possible to, July 1st.

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

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

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

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

10 (d) The efficient distribution of traffic between cross-sound
11 routes;

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

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

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

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

20 (4) In adopting a schedule of charges for passenger-only ferry
21 service, the department in making its review and formulating
22 recommendations and the commission in adopting a schedule of charges
23 shall consider the factors in this subsection (4) in addition to those
24 factors enumerated in subsection (3) of this section. The department
25 and the commission shall take into account the public benefit derived
26 from encouraging the availability and use of passenger-only ferry
27 service, including but not limited to:

28 (a) The long-term environmental and economic benefit from providing
29 a reliable, reasonably priced alternative for moving people over
30 Washington's navigable waterways and the resulting reduction in
31 automobile traffic;

32 (b) The necessity for up-front investment to build the passenger-
33 only ferry service into a viable component of the transportation
34 choices available to Washington's citizens;

35 (c) The potential savings to the state from avoided investment in
36 cross-sound vehicular transportation; and

37 (d) The stimulus to balanced economic development to western Puget
38 Sound and island communities served by the ferry system.

1 (5) If at any time during the biennium it appears that projected
2 revenues from the Puget Sound ferry operations account and any other
3 operating subsidy available to the Washington state ferries will be
4 less than the projected total cost of maintenance and operation of the
5 Washington state ferries for the biennium, the department shall
6 forthwith undertake a review of its schedule of charges to ascertain
7 whether or not the schedule of charges should be revised. The
8 department shall, upon completion of its review report, submit its
9 recommendation to the transportation commission which may in its sound
10 discretion revise the schedule of charges as required to meet necessary
11 maintenance and operation expenditures of the ferry system for the
12 biennium or may defer action until the regular annual review and
13 revision of ferry charges as provided in subsection (2) of this
14 section.

15 (~~(5)~~) (6) The provisions of RCW 47.60.330 relating to public
16 participation shall apply to the process of revising ferry tolls under
17 this section.

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