
Transportation Committee

SSB 5729

Brief Description: Expanding considerations in setting ferry fares.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Rockefeller, Oke, Regala, Spanel, Sheldon, Shin, Poulsen, Jacobsen and Kohl-Welles).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- In setting ferry fares, the Department of Transportation may consider additional factors: the prepurchase of multiple fares, whether for a single rider or multiple riders; and the effect of proposed fares on frequent users who live in ferry dependent communities.

Hearing Date: 3/21/05

Staff: Beth Redfield (786-7347).

Background:

For the Department of Transportation, the Tariff Policy Committee reviews state ferry fares on an annual basis. In each odd numbered year, the Tariff Policy Committee submits to the Transportation Commission the results of its review together with recommended changes to the ferry tariffs for the ensuing biennium. After a series of public meetings, the Transportation Commission adopts the tariff in the Washington Administrative Code.

In making its review, the Tariff Policy Committee may consider a number of factors:

- The amount of subsidy available to the ferry system for maintenance and operation;
- The time and distance of ferry runs;
- The maintenance and operation costs for ferry runs with a proper adjustment for higher costs of operating outmoded or less efficient equipment;
- The efficient distribution of traffic between cross-sound routes;
- The desirability of reasonable commutation rates for persons using the ferry system to commute daily to work;
- The effect of proposed fares in increasing walk-on and vehicular passenger use;
- The effect of proposed fares in promoting all types of ferry use during non-peak periods;
- The estimated revenues that are projected to be earned by the ferry system from commercial advertisements, parking, contracts, leases, and other sources;
- Such other factors as prudent managers of a major ferry system would consider.

Summary of Bill:

In setting ferry fares, the Department of Transportation may consider additional factors: the prepurchase of multiple fares, whether for a single rider or multiple riders; and the effect of proposed fares on frequent users who live in ferry dependent communities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.