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**SENATE BILL 5750**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators J. Wilson and Lovelett

Read first time 02/20/23. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to the operating and maintenance deficit of the  
2 Wahkiakum county ferry; and amending RCW 47.56.720.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 47.56.720 and 1992 c 82 s 1 are each amended to read  
5 as follows:

6 (1) The legislature finds that the ferry operated by Wahkiakum  
7 county between Puget Island and Westport on the Columbia river  
8 provides service which is primarily local in nature with secondary  
9 benefits to the state highway system in providing a bypass for state  
10 route 4 and providing the only crossing of the Columbia river between  
11 the Astoria-Megler bridge and the Longview bridge.

12 (2) The department is hereby authorized to enter into a  
13 continuing agreement with Wahkiakum county pursuant to which the  
14 department shall pay to Wahkiakum county from moneys appropriated for  
15 such purpose monthly amounts not to exceed ~~((eighty))~~ 85 percent of  
16 the operating and maintenance deficit ~~((with a maximum not to exceed  
17 the amount appropriated for that biennium))~~ to be used in the  
18 operation and maintenance of the Puget Island ferry, commencing July  
19 1, 1992.

20 (3) The annual deficit, if any, incurred in the operation and  
21 maintenance of the ferry shall be determined by Wahkiakum county

1 subject to the approval of the department. If (~~eighty~~) 85 percent  
2 of the deficit for the preceding fiscal year exceeds the total amount  
3 paid to the county for that year, the additional amount shall be paid  
4 to the county by the department upon the receipt of a properly  
5 executed voucher. (~~The total of all payments to the county in any~~  
6 ~~biennium shall not exceed the amount appropriated for that~~  
7 ~~biennium.~~) The fares established by the county shall be comparable  
8 to those used for similar runs on the state ferry system.

9 (4) Whenever, subsequent to June 9, 1977, state route 4 between  
10 Cathlamet and Longview is closed to traffic pursuant to chapter 47.48  
11 RCW due to actual or potential slide conditions and there is no  
12 suitable, reasonably short alternate state route provided, Wahkiakum  
13 county is authorized to operate the Puget Island ferry on a toll-free  
14 basis during the entire period of such closure. The state's share of  
15 the ferry operations and maintenance deficit during such period shall  
16 be (~~one hundred~~) 100 percent.

17 (5) Whenever state route 4 between Cathlamet and Longview is  
18 closed to traffic, as mentioned in subsection (4) hereof, the state  
19 of Washington shall provide temporary rest room facilities at the  
20 Washington ferry landing terminal.

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