

**RCW 47.60.8241 Findings—Single proposal process for new ferry vessel construction.** The legislature finds that the Washington state ferry system has an excellent safety record and has commenced a long-term vessel procurement plan to ensure the replacement of older and outdated ferry vessels. The legislature further finds that the current vessel procurement process must move forward with all due speed, balancing the interests of both the taxpayers and shipyards. The commencement of construction of new vessels is important not only for safety reasons, but also to keep skilled marine construction jobs in the Puget Sound region and to sustain the capacity of the region to meet the ongoing preservation needs of the ferry system fleet of vessels.

The legislature further finds that the balancing of interests described in this section may necessitate the department of transportation to consider in the department's current new 144—auto ferries request for proposals a single proposal submitted jointly by the current best-qualified proposers. The department may, therefore, consider and accept or reject in the department's discretion such a single proposal, and the current best-qualified proposers may meet and confer to discuss matters that are reasonably necessary to determine whether to submit such a single proposal and to implement a single final contract if the proposal is accepted by the department. Discussions may address the terms of any agreement that may be entered into between the best-qualified proposers for purposes of submitting a single proposal, as well as any agreement that may be entered into with the department. Discussions may also address cost and price information and division of work under the request for proposals. The current best-qualified proposers shall each expressly declare in writing to the department, their intent, if any, to jointly submit a single proposal within thirty days of May 14, 2007, and shall further provide within the thirty-day period information that may be required by the department including, but not limited to, information regarding the proposed shipyard organizational structure and responsibilities of each participant. If at the end of the thirty-day period the proposers have not declared such an intent and provided the information required by the department, or if the department, in its discretion, determines that the joint venture, other legal entity, or organizational structure, or division of responsibilities intended by the joint proposers are unacceptable and not in the best interests of the state, the proposers will be deemed as proposing separately to the request for proposals, and further discussions related to the request for proposals shall not be allowed between the proposers.

To further facilitate the balancing of interests described in this section, the department of transportation may, in its discretion, make revisions to the request for proposals that the department deems necessary or appropriate to balance such interests. [2007 c 481 § 1.]

**Effective date—2007 c 481:** See note following RCW 47.60.824.