

HB 2378-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

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an excellent safety record and has commenced a long-term vessel procurement plan to ensure the replacement of older and outdated ferry vessels.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.

Finds that the balancing of interests described in this act 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.

Provides that, to further facilitate the balancing of interests described in this act, 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.

Provides that, if at any point there is only a single best-qualified proposer participating in the competitive design-build procurement process prior to the submission of bids in phase three, or if there is only a single responsive and responsible bid submitted in phase three, or if the current best-qualified proposers elect to jointly submit a single proposal, the department may negotiate a fair-value contract with the proposer or joint proposers.