

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5289

As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

Title: An act relating to an addition to the scenic and recreational highway system.

Brief Description: Adding a certain ferry route and roads to the scenic and recreational highway system.

Sponsors: Senators Ranker, Haugen, Swecker, King, Marr, Jarrett, Hargrove and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 3/19/09, 3/24/09 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill (As Amended by House)

- Designates all Washington State Ferry routes and certain county roads in Anacortes and San Juan and Island counties as state scenic byways.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Liias, Vice Chair; Rodne, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Campbell, Driscoll, Eddy, Ericksen, Finn, Herrera, Johnson, Klippert, Kristiansen, Moeller, Morris, Rolfes, Sells, Shea, Simpson, Springer, Takko, Upthegrove, Wallace, Williams and Wood.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Cox.

Staff: Teresa Berntsen (786-7301)

Background:

The federal Transportation Equity Act (Act) for the 21st Century of 1998 established a national scenic byway program. This Act and the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005 provided

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funds for scenic byways to be administered by state departments of transportation. Federal grants may be awarded in eight areas: development of the corridor, corridor management planning, safety improvements, facilities, access to recreation, resource protection, interpretative information, and marketing programs.

A state scenic byway program was subsequently created under the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Any person may nominate a roadway, path, or trail for inclusion in the program. The WSDOT must submit its recommendations to the Washington State Transportation Commission (Commission). The Commission may designate, on an interim basis, state scenic byways. In order to become permanent, the Legislature must approve the designation.

In February 2008 the San Juan Islands County Council passed a resolution recommending that the Washington State Ferries Anacortes/San Juan Islands route and certain county roads on Orcas and San Juan Islands be designated as a state scenic byway. The WSDOT granted the corridor interim scenic byway status, and the Commission recommended that legislation be introduced to add the recommended roads and ferry route to the scenic byway system.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The following are designated as a state scenic byway: the Washington State Ferries Anacortes/San Juan Islands route and certain county roads on Orcas and San Juan islands as described in San Juan County Council Resolution Number 7, adopted February 5, 2008; and all Washington State ferry routes.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

All Washington State ferry routes are designated as part of the scenic and recreational highway system.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This designation means the roads and ferry route will be advertised as a scenic byway, which will increase economic drivers by attracting tourism. The designation also makes the byways eligible for federal grants.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Ranker, prime sponsor; and Dick Ford, Washington State Transportation Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.