

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

SENATE BILL 5550

68th Legislature
2023 Regular Session

Passed by the Senate March 1, 2023
Yeas 45 Nays 3

President of the Senate

Passed by the House April 10, 2023
Yeas 91 Nays 7

**Speaker of the House of
Representatives**

Approved

Governor of the State of Washington

CERTIFICATE

I, Sarah Bannister, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SENATE BILL 5550** as passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.

Secretary

FILED

**Secretary of State
State of Washington**

SENATE BILL 5550

Passed Legislature - 2023 Regular Session

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Senators Liias, Randall, Valdez, Lovick, C. Wilson, Lovelett, Kauffman, Shewmake, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser, Nguyen, Nobles, Robinson, and Van De Wege

Read first time 01/25/23. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to addressing workforce development issues,
2 including cultural issues, at the Washington state ferries;
3 reenacting and amending RCW 47.60.005; and adding a new section to
4 chapter 47.60 RCW.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 47.60
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) The legislature finds that the maritime sector in Washington
9 state is currently facing historic labor challenges. The legislature
10 further finds that the Washington state ferry system is an essential
11 component of the transportation system. Therefore, the legislature
12 intends that Washington state ferries implement the recommendations
13 of the joint transportation committee study on workforce planning,
14 completed in December 2022.

15 (2) Washington state ferries shall adopt a formal strategy to
16 implement diversity, equity, and inclusion directives to address
17 issues including, but not limited to, recruitment, employee
18 development, retention, and agency branding for workforce marketing
19 materials. The strategy may address specific goals and objectives of
20 diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, training and development of

1 staff, and key performance indicators to track effectiveness of the
2 strategy.

3 (3) (a) On an annual basis, Washington state ferries shall conduct
4 an employee survey of employees' feedback on workplace conditions
5 either via the department-wide survey or utilizing a third-party
6 consultant. The results of the survey shall be used at a minimum to:

7 (i) Perform an in-depth cultural assessment;

8 (ii) Identify any issues of concern among the Washington state
9 ferries workforce; and

10 (iii) Form the basis of an action plan to remediate any cultural
11 issues identified.

12 (b) Washington state ferries shall submit a summary of survey
13 results and corresponding action planning to address cultural issues
14 to the transportation committees of the legislature and the office of
15 financial management at the time of Washington state ferries'
16 biennial budget submissions, beginning with the 2025-2027 submission.

17 (4) Washington state ferries shall continuously seek methods to
18 improve workforce development and career advancement for all
19 employees with a focus on vessel engine room and deck, terminal, and
20 Eagle Harbor maintenance facility tradespeople. In consultation with
21 labor partners, Washington state ferries shall develop programs for
22 employees to gain maritime credentials and marine pilotage required
23 by the United States coast guard, as well as transferring knowledge
24 through formalized mentorship, work shadow, or apprenticeship
25 programs. Washington state ferries shall adopt a formal policy to
26 assist applicants to gain required United States coast guard
27 documentation and maritime credentialing necessary for entry level
28 positions. Assistance to perspective employees may include both
29 financial and technical assistance.

30 (5) When possible, Washington state ferries shall partner with
31 maritime academies and training facilities to offer instruction,
32 including electronic learning, internships, or apprenticeships, to
33 current or perspective employees.

34 (6) Washington state ferries shall continuously evaluate
35 management practices concerning recruitment and hiring, staffing
36 levels, scheduling practices, compensation, and agency technology
37 needs, to optimize system and administrative performance. The
38 evaluation must include a strategy to develop or modify a staffing
39 model to forecast staffing needs and succession planning for future
40 biennia and set a target level of operational overtime.

1 (7) At the time of Washington state ferries' biennial budget
2 submissions, beginning with the 2025-2027 submission, Washington
3 state ferries shall report staffing progress for deck, terminal,
4 maintenance shop, and engine room employees, identifying:

5 (a) The approximate number of employees eligible for promotion;

6 (b) The number of employees eligible for retirement;

7 (c) The number of employees who have utilized on-the-job programs
8 to gain maritime credentials or fulfill marine pilotage requirements;
9 and

10 (d) A forecast of all staffing needs and changes for the
11 subsequent biennia.

12 **Sec. 2.** RCW 47.60.005 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 14 s 1 are each
13 reenacted and amended to read as follows:

14 The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter
15 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

16 (1) "Adaptive management" means a systematic process for
17 continually improving management policies and practices by learning
18 from the outcomes of operational programs.

19 (2) "Capital plan" means the state ferry system plan developed by
20 the department as described in RCW 47.06.050(2), reviewed by the
21 commission, and reported to the transportation committees of the
22 legislature by the department.

23 (3) "Capital project" has the same meaning as used in budget
24 instructions developed by the office of financial management.

25 (4) "Commission" means the transportation commission created in
26 RCW 47.01.051.

27 (5) "Fixed price contract" means a contract that requires the
28 contractor to deliver a specified project for a set price. Change
29 orders on fixed price contracts are allowable but should be used on a
30 very limited basis.

31 (6) "Improvement project" has the same meaning as in the budget
32 instructions developed by the office of financial management. If the
33 budget instructions do not define improvement project, then it has
34 the same meaning as "program project" in the budget instructions. If
35 a project meets both the improvement project and preservation project
36 definitions in this section it must be defined as an improvement
37 project. New vessel acquisitions must be defined as improvement
38 projects.

1 (7) "Life-cycle cost analysis" means an analysis of the full net
2 present value cost of constructing and operating a vessel over its
3 life span, including capital costs, financing costs, operation and
4 maintenance costs, decommissioning costs, and variable costs
5 including fuel.

6 (8) "Life-cycle cost model" means that portion of a capital asset
7 inventory system which, among other things, is used to estimate
8 future preservation needs.

9 (9) "Maintenance cost" has the same meaning as used in budget
10 instructions developed by the office of financial management.

11 (10) "Preservation project" has the same meaning as used in
12 budget instructions developed by the office of financial management.

13 (11) "Route" means all ferry sailings from one location to
14 another, such as the Seattle to Bainbridge route or the Port Townsend
15 to Keystone route.

16 (12) "Sailing" means an individual ferry sailing for a specific
17 route, such as the 5:00 p.m. sailing from Seattle to Bremerton.

18 (13) "Travel shed" means one or more ferry routes with distinct
19 characteristics as determined by the department.

20 (14) "Washington state ferries" means the ferry division within
21 the department, as described in RCW 47.60.015.

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