

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## HB 1511

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**C 24 L 25**  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning Washington state ferries captains.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Parshley, Fosse, Berry, Reed, Simmons, Leavitt, Fitzgibbon, Ramel and Paul.

**House Committee on Labor & Workplace Standards**  
**Senate Committee on Transportation**

### **Background:**

The Washington State Department of Transportation Ferries Division, or Washington State Ferries (WSF), operates and maintains ferry vessels; constructs, operates, and maintains terminals; and acquires vessels. The WSF maintains a fleet of 21 ferries that carry passengers on 10 routes between 20 terminals. The WSF has nearly 2,000 employees.

Washington State Ferries employees have collective bargaining rights and bargain with the state over wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment. The employer is the state for purposes of bargaining with the collective bargaining representative of ferry workers. The state is represented by the Governor or the Governor's designee.

The International Organization of Masters, Mates, and Pilots represents three WSF bargaining units: the mates, watch center supervisors, and captains (also called masters).

Captains are responsible for, manage, and are the ultimate authority on a state ferry vessel while it is in service. A captain's responsibilities include ensuring safe navigation of the vessel; following applicable federal, state, and agency policies and regulations; supervising crew; overseeing all aspects of vessel operations; satisfying performance expectations; and managing vessel arrivals, departures, and other operations.

### **Summary:**

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

References to managing or supervising the vessel under their command are removed from the WSF captains' duties. In addition to federal and state laws and regulations and agency policies, captains are responsible for following applicable international law and regulation.

If the majority of the captains in the captains' bargaining unit vote, by August 31, 2025, to consolidate with the mates' bargaining unit, the Public Employment Relations Commission must certify a combined bargaining unit. The new unit will become effective on July 1, 2026. If the units are consolidated, the state and the exclusive bargaining unit of the consolidated unit must negotiate a collective bargaining agreement.

If the captains do not vote to consolidate with the mates' bargaining unit, the employer and the captains' exclusive bargaining representative must continue to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement separately from the mates' bargaining unit.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	93	3
Senate	49	0

**Effective:** July 27, 2025