

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5716

As of February 20, 2025

Title: An act relating to expanding the locations where a person can be guilty of unlawful transit conduct to include the Washington state ferries.

Brief Description: Expanding the locations where a person can be guilty of unlawful transit conduct to include the Washington state ferries.

Sponsors: Senators Krishnadasan, Chapman, Cortes, Hasegawa and Liias.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/20/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds Washington State Ferries as a qualifying transit authority to enforce misdemeanor crimes for unlawful transit conduct.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Jenna Forty (786-7755)

Background: Unlawful transit conduct is defined in statute as including the following activities that occur on or in a transit vehicle or station: smoking, littering, disruptive behavior including spitting or defecating, consuming alcohol or other hazardous substances, defacing property, or falsely impersonating a transit employee. Persons found in violation are subject to a misdemeanor crime, which is punishable by up to 90 days in jail or a fine of up to \$1,000, or both. Transit authorities are defined as city and county transportation authorities, metropolitan municipal corporation transit systems, public transportation benefit areas, unincorporated transportation benefit area, and any special purpose district formed to operate public transportation. Washington State Ferries is not considered a transit authority for purposes of the unlawful transit conduct statute.

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.

Washington State Ferries has a passenger code of conduct for riders, and any violations are subject to a no trespass order from law enforcement.

Summary of Bill: Washington State Ferries is added to the definition of transit authority, expanding unlawful transit conduct to apply to the system's stations and vehicles, and making violations subject to a misdemeanor crime.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There are many ferry employees in my district and I would just like ensure that they are safe. Transit safety is a concern given recent events, we must ensure transit is safe for all riders.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Deborah Krishnadasan, Prime Sponsor; Rebeca Daniels.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.