

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1785

As Reported By House Committee On:
Transportation Policy & Budget

Title: An act relating to naming Washington state ferries.

Brief Description: Encouraging the public to submit names for state ferries.

Sponsors: Representatives K. Schmidt, Zellinsky and Wensman.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation Policy & Budget: 2/27/97, 3/4/97 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION POLICY & BUDGET

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives K. Schmidt, Chairman; Hankins, Vice Chairman; Mielke, Vice Chairman; Mitchell, Vice Chairman; Fisher, Ranking Minority Member; Cooper, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Buck; Cairnes; Chandler; Constantine; DeBolt; Gardner; Hatfield; Johnson; Murray; O'Brien; Ogden; Radcliff; Robertson; Romero; Scott; Skinner; Sterk; Wood and Zellinsky.

Staff: Jennifer Joly (786-7305).

Background: In 1982 the Legislature created local ferry advisory committees to obtain input about problems experienced by Washington State ferry (WSF) users. The advisory committees exist in counties with ferry terminals. The chairpersons of the several ferry advisory committees constitute an executive committee of WSF users. Currently, the executive committee meets twice each year with representatives of WSF to review ferry system issues.

Currently, by Department of Transportation (DOT) policy, the Transportation Commission adopts the names of all new WSF vessels via formal motion or resolution. The process by which ferry names are selected by the commission varies. Most of the existing WSF vessel names are derived from Pacific Northwest, Native American words. For example, the passenger-only vessel, Tyee, is Chinook jargon for "Chief." Kitsap was a war chief and medicine man under Chief Seattle; the name means "brave."

Summary of Bill: Washington residents may submit names for Washington State ferries to the executive committee of WSF users. Suggested names must be of Washington State historical or cultural significance and may not exceed three words. Suggestions should be accompanied by an essay of no more than 500 words explaining the suggested name's Washington State historical or cultural relevance. The executive committee shall convene as necessary to review conforming submissions for ferries that will be commissioned. The executive committee will forward no more than three selections to the Transportation Commission for the final determinations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 27, 1997.

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

Testimony For: This is a good idea, particularly forwarding the executive committee selections to the Transportation Commission for final determinations. Washington State Ferries hopes to have the opportunity to use the process set forth in this bill often.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Terry McCarthy, Deputy Director, Washington State Ferries.