FINAL BILL REPORT
HB 1356

C 296 L 03
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Updating utilities and transportation commission regulatory fees.

Sponsors: By Representatives Dunshee, Sommers, DeBolt and Alexander; by request of Utilities & Transportation Commission.

House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Highways & Transportation

Background:

Companies regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) pay the cost of regulation through annual fees. Fees are based on a percentage of each company's gross annual operating revenue from intrastate operations. The minimum fee amounts are set in statute. The WUTC may adjust the fee rates as a part of its rate setting process but may not exceed the maximum rates set in statute.

The fee rates vary by category of company:

·   For public utility, telecommunications, and certain transportation companies regulated by the WUTC, the fee is limited to a maximum of one-tenth of 1 percent on the first $50,000 plus two-tenths of 1 percent on any amount over $50,000. No fee may be less than $1.

·   For auto transportation companies, the fee is limited to a maximum of two-fifths of 1 percent. No fee may be less than $2.50.

·   For commercial ferry companies, the fee is limited to a maximum of two-fifths of 1 percent. No fee may be less than $5.

·   For solid waste collection companies, the fee is limited to a maximum of 1 percent. No fee may be less than $1.

The amount collected from the fees must reflect the reasonable cost of regulating the companies. The WUTC may not waive minimum fees set out in statute.

Summary:

The statutorily set minimum fees that the WUTC must charge regulated companies are

removed. The WUTC is given rulemaking authority to set minimum fees charged to regulated companies, not to exceed the cost of collecting the fees. The WUTC also may, by rule, waive part or all of the minimum fees.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 89 0
Senate 49 0   (Senate amended)
House 91 0   (House concurred)

Effective: July 27, 2003