

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5259

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Highways & Transportation, March 4, 2003

Title: An act relating to vehicles boarding ferries.

Brief Description: Regulating ferry queues.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen, Oke, Spanel and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 2/20/03, 3/4/03 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5259 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Horn, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Esser, Finkbeiner, Haugen, Jacobsen, Kastama, Mulliken, Oke, Prentice and Spanel.

Staff: Tami Neilson (786-7452)

Background: Under current law, blocking a residential driveway is not a violation.

Summary of Substitute Bill: It is a traffic infraction for a driver of a motor vehicle intending to board a Washington State ferry to: (1) block a residential driveway while waiting to board the ferry; or (2) move in front of another vehicle in a queue already waiting to board the ferry without the authorization of a state ferry system employee. Vehicles qualifying for preferential loading privileges are exempt from these requirements. For a vehicle which moves in front of another vehicle, there is an additional penalty that requires the driver to move his or her vehicle to the end of the ferry queue.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The Washington State Department of Transportation does not need to mitigate problems associated with lengthy ferry queues by implementing appropriate and feasible procedures and infrastructure changes, as in the original bill.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Problems associated with ferry queues are particularly prevalent in rural areas. Local law enforcement will have authority under this legislation.

Testimony Against: The Washington State Department of Transportation has worked with the Washington State Ferry System for years on this issue and has made many improvements. It is unclear how the Washington State Department of Transportation will mitigate problems associated with ferry queues.

Testified: Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, prime sponsor (pro); Toby Rickman, Washington State Department of Transportation (con).