
Transportation Committee

HB 2455

Brief Description: Concerning the expiration of monetary value of fare media.

Sponsors: Representatives Appleton, Hudgins, Hasegawa, McIntire, Nelson and Rolfes.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prevents the expiration of the monetary value of any fare media for Washington State Ferries.
- Requires the Washington State Ferries to allow for the refund or exchange of any remaining monetary value on any fare media.

Hearing Date: 1/23/08

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Ferries Division operates and maintains ferry vessels and terminals, constructs terminals, and acquires vessels. The system serves eight Washington counties and one Canadian province through a fleet of 28 vessels and 20 terminals. The Washington State Ferries (WSF) also operates a maintenance facility at Eagle Harbor.

Beginning in 2007, the WSDOT was required to review fares and pricing policies annually using data from a current survey of users and input from affected ferry users. Beginning this year, fares and pricing policies must be developed so that they: (1) recognize that each route is unique; (2) use data from a current customer survey; (3) are developed with input from affected ferry users; (4) generate the amount of revenue required by the biennial transportation budget; (5) consider impacts on users, capacity, and local communities; (6) keep fare schedules as simple as possible; and (7) consider options for using pricing to level vehicle peak demand and increase off-peak ridership.

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

The Washington Transportation Commission is required to adopt the WSF's fares and pricing policies, and may not raise ferry fares until the fare rules contain the new pricing policies described above, or September 1, 2009, whichever is later.

Pursuant to rule, fare media allowing for multiple rides on the WSF system are valid for 90 days from the date of purchase. The remaining value on such fare media is also not eligible for refund.

Summary of Bill:

The WSF may not enforce an expiration date on the monetary value of any of its fare media. The WSF must also refund or exchange the remaining monetary value of any of its fare media.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.