

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1693

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor, Commerce, Research & Development, March 15, 2007

Title: An act relating to time periods for collective bargaining by state ferry employees.

Brief Description: Modifying time periods for collective bargaining by state ferry employees.

Sponsors: House Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives Appleton, Flannigan and Rodne; by request of Department of Transportation).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/28/07, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce, Research & Development: 3/15/07 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kohl-Welles, Chair; Keiser, Vice Chair; Clements, Ranking Minority Member; Franklin and Holmquist.

Staff: Sherry McNamara (786-7402)

Background: During the 2006 Session, the Legislature made various changes in the collective bargaining statutes that apply to ferry workers. The employer, for purposes of bargaining with the collective bargaining representative of ferry workers, is the state of Washington. The employer is represented by the Governor or the Governor's designee.

Specific time frames were set for negotiations to begin in September of the odd-numbered year and conclude in April of the following year. If negotiations are not concluded by April 1, the parties are considered at an impasse and may request the Marine Employees' Commission to appoint a mediator. If an agreement has not been reached by April 15, all impasse items must be submitted to arbitration. The parties may agree to different time periods so long as a final resolution is reached by September 1.

Summary of Bill: Time periods for collective bargaining by state ferry employees are changed. The date to begin negotiations is changed from September in odd-numbered years to any time after February 1 in even-numbered years and agreements must be concluded by October 1 of even-numbered years.

Intermediate dates within these time frames are also changed. The April 1 date for request of a mediator is changed to August 1. The April 15 date by which impasse items must be submitted to arbitration is removed.

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.

A procedure is provided for selection of an interest arbitrator before bargaining. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator within ten days after the first Monday in September of odd-numbered years, either party may request a list of seven arbitrators from the federal mediation and conciliation service and the parties must select an interest arbitrator using the coin toss/alternate strike method.

The parties must then reserve dates for potential arbitration and prepare a schedule of a least five negotiation dates and execute a written agreement before November 1 of each odd-numbered year. The parties must comply with the interest arbitration agreement regardless of the status of any mediation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Since last session, the Office of Financial Management/Labor Relations has been working with the unions regarding their concerns. This bill addresses the union concerns and makes the whole collective bargaining cycle more effective.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Steve McLain, Office of Financial Management/Labor Relations; Gordon Baxter, Inlandboatman's Union, Marine Engineers Beneficial Association, International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots, Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 8, Puget Sound Metal Trades Council.