
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FERRIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The State of Hawaii is made up of a chain of
2 islands, six of which have major population centers. Unlike
3 other states, Hawaii does not have the benefit of being linked
4 to other states through the federal interstate highway system or
5 a network of intersecting state and local highways and roads.

6 With the exception of slow, time-consuming interisland
7 shipping and barge operations for the transportation of property
8 between the islands, the only link between the islands for the
9 transportation of persons is air transportation, with our
10 present reliance on two interisland carriers and a few smaller
11 commuter operations. However, this reliance on air
12 transportation may be misplaced. With the exception of the
13 island of Hawaii, each of the neighbor islands is served by only
14 one airport, and each may be subjected to severe operational
15 interruption in the event of a natural disaster, such as a
16 hurricane or earthquake. Even the Hickam Air Force Base-
17 Honolulu international airport complex, with its location along
18 the shoreline on Oahu may be operationally shut down by a



1 natural disaster. By way of example, had the airport at Lihue
2 been shut down operationally in the aftermath of Hurricane
3 Iniki, it would have taken days, if not weeks, before any major
4 aid and relief in the form of water, food, medical supplies, and
5 rescue workers could have reached the island. Hawaii is too
6 reliant on its present slow water carriers and air carriers in
7 the event of a major natural disaster.

8 While the Hawaii superferry operation had its shortcomings,
9 rocky start, and questionable financial forecast, it proved to
10 be a very successful mode of transportation of both persons and
11 property between the islands of Maui and Oahu. It was the
12 missing link in the transportation system between the islands
13 that is so essential for the health, safety, and well-being of
14 the people of Hawaii.

15 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
16 transportation to conduct a study on the feasibility of
17 establishing a statewide ferry system to provide the necessary
18 and essential additional missing link for the carriage of
19 persons and property between the islands of the State.

20 SECTION 2. (a) The department of transportation shall
21 conduct a study to determine the feasibility of establishing a
22 statewide ferry system and a Hawaii state ferry system authority



1 as the primary agency for oversight and regulation of the
2 statewide ferry system.

3 (b) The department shall study various types of ferry
4 systems, including passenger-only and passenger, automobile, and
5 cargo ferry systems, that the department determines are suitable
6 for operations within Hawaiian waters, taking into account such
7 parameters as vessel design and speed, passenger capacity, cargo
8 capacity, automobile capacity, availability of smaller vessels
9 for transportation between the islands of Maui, Molokai, and
10 Lanai, and compatibility with harbor infrastructure. The study
11 shall also include:

- 12 (1) An analysis of potential costs and revenue of a
13 statewide ferry system, as well as economic, social,
14 and physical or other effects upon residents of and
15 visitors to Hawaii;
- 16 (2) Any impact a statewide ferry system would have on the
17 state and the counties;
- 18 (3) Information on the financing of a statewide ferry
19 system, including the establishment of rates, fees,
20 rents, charges, or any other payments or costs
21 associated with a statewide ferry system;



1 (4) Information on the development of a special fund for
2 the financial self-sustainability of the statewide
3 ferry system; and

4 (5) Information on the impact a statewide ferry system
5 would have on the other water carriers in the state.

6 (c) The study shall also include the following information
7 on the development of a Hawaii state ferry system authority:

8 (1) The composition of the authority;

9 (2) The rights, duties, powers, and obligations of the
10 authority in developing, coordinating, and
11 implementing state policies and direction for the safe
12 transportation of persons and property between the
13 Hawaiian islands; and

14 (3) The ability of the authority to eliminate or reduce
15 barriers to travel between the Hawaiian islands and
16 provide a positive and competitive business
17 environment.

18 (d) The department shall submit a report of its findings
19 and recommendations, including any necessary legislation, to the
20 legislature, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
21 the 2011 regular session.

22 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2010.



Report Title:

Transportation; Ferry System Study

Description:

Requires the Department of Transportation to conduct a study on the feasibility of establishing a statewide ferry system and the Hawaii State Ferry System Authority for the operation of a ferry system between the islands. (HB2667 HD1)

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