

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 655

BY REPRESENTATIVE BRAUD

BRIDGES/FERRIES: Authorizes the Department of Transportation and Development to enter into contracts for the operation and maintenance of ferry systems

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 48:25, relative to the operation and control of ferries by the  
3 Department of Transportation and Development; to authorize the department to enter  
4 into contracts for the construction, operation, and maintenance of ferries and related  
5 facilities; to exempt contracts for the construction, operation, and maintenance of  
6 ferries and associated facilities from certain applicable provisions when in the best  
7 interest of the state; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related  
8 matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 48:25 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

11 §25. Operation or control of ferries, etc.

12 A. The department may ~~take over~~, control, operate, maintain, and regulate  
13 such ferries, barges, or ~~other~~ similar means of transportation, including any related  
14 facilities, as it ~~thinks~~ determines necessary to provide adequate, safe, and efficient  
15 transportation to the public. It may prescribe and collect ~~such~~ ferry charges or  
16 transfer charges ~~as it thinks necessary to maintain these services~~ at rates reasonably  
17 anticipated to generate revenue in an amount that shall not exceed the cost of the  
18 services provided. To that end, ~~it~~ the department may ~~let franchises or~~ enter into  
19 contracts for these services in the name of the state, alone or jointly with the parishes

1 or municipalities of the state, or with other states, or with the political subdivisions  
2 of other states.

3 B. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, if the  
4 department determines it is in the best interest of the state, contracts for the operation  
5 or maintenance of department-owned ferries, barges, or similar means of  
6 transportation may be let on a cost-plus basis and shall not be subject to the  
7 provisions of R.S. 38:2221 or R.S. 48:255.4.

8 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
9 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
10 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
11 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
12 effective on the day following such approval.

---

#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

---

HB 655 Engrossed

2026 Regular Session

Braud

**Abstract:** Authorizes the Department of Transportation and Development to enter into contracts for the construction, operation, and maintenance of ferries and related facilities owned and controlled by the state.

Present law permits the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) to take over, control, operate, and regulate ferries, barges, or other means of transportation necessary to the public. Further authorizes the DOTD to prescribe and collect ferry charges or transfer charges necessary to maintain these services. Additionally, allows the DOTD to let franchises or enter into contracts for these services in the name of the state or jointly with parishes, municipalities, other states, or political subdivisions of other states.

Proposed law adds that any facility related to ferries and barges may be controlled, operated, and maintained by the DOTD. Further specifies that the DOTD may do this to provide adequate, safe, and efficient transportation to the public. Further clarifies that the DOTD may prescribe and collect ferry or transfer charges at rates reasonably anticipated to generate revenue in an amount that will not exceed the cost of the provided services.

Proposed law authorizes the DOTD to operate and maintain DOTD-owned ferries, barges, or related means of transportation to let on a cost-plus basis and not be subject to the applicable provisions in present law.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 48:25)