



AB 3153 – Save the Balboa Island Ferry

Background

AB 3153 seeks to extend the deadline for the electric motor modification of local ferries up to 15 years, or until the cost of engine replacement declines.

Problem Being Addressed

The Beek family has owned and operated the Balboa Island Ferry (Ferry) for more than 100 years and is now facing potential closure. Regulations passed by the California Air Resource Board (CARB) will require the Ferry to renovate all three of their vessels to be fitted with electronic motors by 2026.

The Balboa Island Ferry is not only an iconic fixture for Assembly District 72, but additionally vital for accessibility and safety for Balboa Island and the Balboa Peninsula.

Approximately 1.5 million people and 300,000 vehicles use the Balboa Island Ferry in Newport Beach every year. The Ferry serves as a key mode of transportation for tourists, residents, and emergency responders.

Without the Ferry, those wishing to access the Balboa Peninsula from Balboa Island will have to forgo their two and a half minute ride for the six mile drive. The ferry service operates on 26 gallons of diesel a day and can carry up to three cars for each trip. By limiting the amount of people making the six mile drive around the bay, the ferry is preventing more pollution from entering into our environment.

There are no proven motor/battery systems that can easily be adapted to the three ferries that operate between the island and the

peninsula. The Balboa Island Ferry's unique circumstances, could require them to end service without relief.

Currently, the Beek family is applying to grant programs and funding opportunities offered by CARB to modify their boats. They have hired a naval architect to help design a unique system that would fit within the shallow hull of the Ferry. They have successfully received a year extension for two of the ferries.

The Beek family is interested in modernizing their ferries, but they need more time to make sure it is done correctly and in an affordable way. The Ferry operates as any other small business does – on a budget. This legislation would ensure they do not shut down and can continue to serve people from all over the world.

Which code section is affected?

This bill would amend section 43013 of the Health and Safety Code.

Summary

AB 3153 will allow the Balboa Island Ferry to continue operation, as an exempt vehicle under a maximum 15 year extension, while awaiting new drive system developments.

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Supporters

Balboa Island Ferry - *Sponsor*