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AN ACT relative to a pilot project by the department of transportation to operate a ferry on the Tennessee River between the counties of Benton and Houston.

WHEREAS, Benton and Houston are the only counties bordering the Tennessee River which do not have easily accessible means of transportation across such river; and

WHEREAS, this lack of means of transportation has created undue hardship upon both counties and has impeded their economic development in respect to other counties which have transportation across such river; and

WHEREAS, a ferry would encourage economic development in the western portion of Houston County and the eastern portion of Benton County; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. The department of transportation is hereby directed to implement a pilot project to establish ferry service on the Tennessee River between Benton County and Houston County. This pilot project shall operate for two (2) years from the effective date of this act. The pilot project shall include a study of the efficacy of providing such ferry service, and the costs of arranging and maintaining such service.

SECTION 2. At the conclusion of such pilot project the department of transportation shall prepare a report to be delivered to the speaker of the senate, the speaker of the house, and to each member of the senate and house transportation committees. Such report shall contain information relative to the costs of such ferry service, the amount of fees received from the users of such ferry service, and a statement from county officials from Benton and Houston Counties regarding the impact such ferry service has had upon their economic development.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 1995, the public welfare requiring it.