

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SSB 6460**

**AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 6, 1992**

**Brief Description:** Removing redundant for hire vehicle provisions.

**SPONSORS:** Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Sellar, Newhouse and McMullen; by request of Department of Licensing)

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6460 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chairman; Nelson, Vice Chairman; Barr, Hansen, Madsen, McMullen, Oke, Sellar, Skratek, Thorsness, and Vognild.

**Staff:** Jeff Doyle (786-7322)

**Hearing Dates:** February 6, 1992; February 10, 1992; February 11, 1992

**BACKGROUND:**

Under current law, the Department of Licensing (DOL) is responsible for enforcing regulations concerning "for-hire" vehicles. A "for-hire" vehicle is one which transports passengers for compensation. Specifically excluded from the provisions are auto stages, school buses used solely for school purposes, ride-sharing vehicles (such as van pools) and limousine charter party carriers.

Owners of for-hire vehicle companies must be issued a permit to operate. Before DOL will approve the application for a permit, the owner must first obtain a city or county permit or, where no regulatory agency exists, the approval of a designated city or county official. Once the owner has approval from the city/county authority, DOL will consider the application and may issue a permit. The permit does not need to be renewed, but can be revoked or suspended by the DOL for owners not in compliance with the law.

Each vehicle must also have a valid certificate issued by DOL listing the name of the owner and showing that the vehicle is properly insured, and that the owner has paid the yearly certificate fee. Most cities and counties also require their own certificates to be carried in each vehicle. The requirements for these certificates are usually the same as the requirements for the DOL certificates. It is a criminal violation to operate a for-hire vehicle without a valid certificate.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department of Licensing (DOL) is no longer responsible for issuing permits to for-hire vehicle operators in jurisdictions that already issue their own permits. DOL retains its responsibility for issuing certificates, even in those jurisdictions requiring their certificates be issued by their own local regulatory authority.

DOL is given the ability to adjust fees for permits and certificates via the usual administrative rulemaking procedures.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

The regulation of taxi cabs by DOL is currently being done more effectively at the local levels. Since DOL basically duplicates the efforts of local authorities, and since the cost of administering the program greatly overruns the fees generated, DOL regulation in this field is best left to local jurisdictions.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

If DOL is removed from the current regulatory scheme, those areas of the state without a local authority will be unregulated and could place the public at risk to uninsured tax cab drivers.

**TESTIFIED:** Tobias Washington, Department of Licensing (pro); Doug Bohlke, Taxi Cab Association (con)