

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1273

As Reported By House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to overweight permits for trucks.

Brief Description: Consolidating gross weight permit authority.

Sponsors: Representatives R. Fisher, Schmidt, R. Meyers, Brown, Jones, Horn and Wood; by request of Department of Transportation.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Transportation, February 4, 1993, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 24 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Jones, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Mielke, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brough; Brumsickle; Cothorn; Eide; Finkbeiner; Forner; Fuhrman; Hansen; Heavey; Horn; Johanson; J. Kohl; H. Myers; Orr; Quall; Sheldon; Shin; Wood; and Zellinsky.

Staff: Mary McLaughlin (786-7309).

Background: Vehicles over 4,000 pounds must be licensed to their maximum declared gross weight, i.e., 40,000 pounds for a single unit vehicle and 80,000 pounds for a combination vehicle. The combined license fee (basic vehicle registration plus declared gross weight) is collected by the Department of Licensing at the time of annual vehicle registration. If the vehicle's gross weight, including the load, exceeds these limits, additional tonnage is purchased from the Department of Transportation (DOT) for up to 105,500 pounds if the vehicle meets the legal axle loading (20,000 single axle, 34,000 tandem) and spacing requirements of the statutory weight table. The annual additional tonnage fee is \$52.50 for each 1,000 pounds of additional weight. Consolidating the additional tonnage and the combined license fees eliminates the need for many carriers to obtain a second annual license, and brings the trucking industry closer to the "one-stop shopping" concept.

The federal Bridge Formula, established by Congress, requires all states to comply with specific vehicle axle loading and spacing requirements. The purpose of the Bridge Formula is to allow a vehicle to operate at a maximum weight that minimizes pavement damage. The state of Washington is currently not in full compliance with the Bridge Formula.

Special oversize/overweight permits are issued by the DOT for loads that cannot be reasonably reduced and exceed the statutory width, height, length and weight table. Oversize special permits may be purchased on a monthly basis. However, there is no provision for the advanced purchase of permits for the ensuing months. If an individual wishes to purchase an oversize permit for three consecutive months, three separate monthly permits must be purchased on separate occasions.

Certain vehicle configurations, such as cement pumping trucks and well digging rigs, do not currently qualify for the 30-day special overweight permits issued by the DOT. These four-axle, fixed load vehicles must purchase a single \$10 trip permit for each movement.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Transportation's (DOT) annual additional tonnage permit and fee structure are incorporated into the combined license fee collected by the Department of Licensing. Distribution of the revenue from the combined license fee is adjusted to reflect incorporation. Temporary additional tonnage may still be purchased from the DOT or its agents at the current rate of \$2.80 for each 2,000 pounds for a five day minimum.

The state of Washington is brought into conformance with the federal Bridge Formula. The DOT may issue its 30-day overdimensional permits for expanded periods of up to one year. A new \$90, 30-day overweight special permit is created for the movement of four-axle fixed load cement trucks and well drilling rigs weighing less than 86,000 pounds.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The truck licensing and permitting process is streamlined, bringing the state closer to the "one-stop shopping" concept.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Barry Diseth, Department of Transportation;
Merle Steffenson, Department of Licensing; and Larry
Pursley, Washington Trucking Association.