

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6089

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As Reported By House Committee On:  
Transportation

**Title:** An act relating to institutions of higher education collegiate license plates.

**Brief Description:** Creating the collegiate license plate fund program.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators West, Bauer, A. Smith, Vognild, Talmadge, Nelson, Prince, Oke, Sutherland, Winsley, Sheldon, M. Rasmussen, Deccio, Erwin, Roach, Ludwig, Drew, Loveland, Sellar, Cantu, Morton and Skratek; by request of Washington State University).

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Transportation, February 23, 1994, DPA.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 26 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Jones, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Mielke, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Brough; Brumsickle; Cothorn; Eide; Finkbeiner; Forner; Fuhrman; Hansen; Heavey; Horn; Johanson; J. Kohl; Orr; Patterson; Quall; Romero; Sheldon; Shin; Wood and Zellinsky.

**Staff:** Jennifer Joly (786-7305).

**Background:** Currently, the Department of Licensing (DOL) has the authority to create, design and issue special license plates in lieu of regular or personalized license plates. In addition to ordinary fees required to register and license vehicles, DOL may charge a fee of not more than \$35 to offset the costs of production of the special plates and for the administration of the special plate program; these fees are deposited in the motor vehicle fund.

Institutions of higher education, including state universities, regional universities, The Evergreen State College, community colleges and technical colleges may petition the department to create, design and issue a vehicle license plate emblem series that identifies that

institution. The emblem may display a mascot, slogan, message or symbol. DOL has the sole discretion for approving or disapproving institutions for participation in the vehicle license plate emblem program. Fees collected by DOL for the emblems are to be deposited in the special vehicle license plate emblem account. Institutions approved for participation in the emblem program may collect additional fees from persons receiving an emblem to be used for purposes of the approved institution.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** RCW 46.16.323, the vehicle license plate emblem program for institutions of higher education, is repealed.

Beginning January 1, 1995, a state university, regional university or state college may apply to DOL to issue a collegiate license plate series. A collegiate license plate displays a depiction of the mascot or symbol of the college or university, plus the name of the college or university.

In addition to all fees and taxes required to be paid upon registration and renewal of a motor vehicle, the owner of a motor vehicle issued a collegiate license plate shall pay an annual fee of \$30. DOL shall deduct an amount not to exceed \$2 for administration and collection expenses. The remaining proceeds minus the cost of plate production shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for deposit in the collegiate license plate accounts.

A collegiate license plate account is established in the state treasury for each college or university that develops and administers a collegiate license plate program. The money credited to each college and university shall be used for student scholarships.

By January 1, 1996, DOL shall report to the Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC) regarding the number of colleges or universities issued a collegiate license plate series, and the total number of collegiate plates issued for each participating college or university.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** DOL's existing statutory authority to create, design and issue special license plates is amended so that the proceeds from special collegiate license plates may be deposited in the newly created license plate accounts earmarked for student scholarships, rather than exclusively in the motor vehicle fund.

By January 1, 1996, DOL shall report to the LTC regarding the number of colleges or universities issued a collegiate

license plate series, and the total number of collegiate plates issued for each participating college or university.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** In these times of fiscal constraint, this program, which is wholly supported by fees from the sale of collegiate license plates, makes sense. Scholarship funds generated by collegiate license plate sales could be used to target students who ordinarily would not have adequate access to financial aid. Each year more than half of the eligible students applying for scholarships at Washington State University cannot be funded.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Larry Ganders, Washington State University; Todd McGee, Associated Students, Western Washington University; George Durrie, Eastern Washington University; and Mark Dahlen, Eastern Washington University Alumni Association.