

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2619

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, FEBRUARY 23, 1994

Brief Description: Encouraging alternative fuel in taxicabs.

SPONSORS: Representatives Schmidt, Zellinsky, Wood, Kremen and J. Kohl

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Vognild, Chairman; Loveland, Vice Chairman; Skratek, Vice Chairman; Drew, Haugen, Morton, Nelson, Oke, Prentice, M. Rasmussen, Schow, Sheldon and Winsley.

Staff: Roger Horn (786-7839)

Hearing Dates: February 23, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Cities, towns, counties and port districts license, control and regulate privately operated taxicab transportation services operating within their jurisdictions. These local governments determine the number of licenses to be issued and the criteria to determine who shall receive them.

Alternative fuels include natural gas, propane, alcohol and other fuels that serve as an alternative to gasoline. The use of these fuels is encouraged as a means of improving air quality and reducing dependence on foreign oil.

Beginning with the 1996 model year, 10 percent of state vehicles purchased for vehicle fleet concentrations of 20 or more must be equipped to operate using alternative fuel to meet the requirements of the National Energy Policy Act of 1992. King County had a mandate in effect in 1992 and 1993 to increase the number of alternatively fueled vehicles in its fleets. Some transit agencies are now operating buses powered by alternative fuels.

SUMMARY:

Political subdivisions that regulate taxicab service are encouraged to include among their licensees, when practicable, taxicab owners who operate vehicles using alternative fuels.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Increasing the number of vehicles using alternative fuels could improve air quality in the Puget Sound and other parts of the state. Taxicab companies using alternative fuel could provide refueling stations that would be available to government and private vehicles. Because jurisdictions limit the number of licenses issued, it is difficult for taxicab companies with fleets of alternatively fueled vehicles to get into the market.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Representative Karen Schmidt, prime sponsor; William Grady, attorney (pro); Doug Bohlke, Evergreen State Taxi Assn. (neutral)