

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 5999**

**AS OF JANUARY 17, 1994**

**Brief Description:** Imposing an additional monetary penalty for persons who speed in construction zones.

**SPONSORS:** Senator Erwin

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

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

**Hearing Dates:** January 18, 1994

**BACKGROUND:**

In 1992 there were approximately 900 accidents reported by the Washington State Patrol that occurred within highway work zones in District 1. Recently, an employee of the Department of Transportation was struck and killed while working on a highway construction project.

A Work Zone Safety Task Force was convened during the interim to study the problem. Drivers speeding through work zones were found to create a substantial risk of injury or death to flaggers and other construction crew within highway work zones.

Under current law, no distinction is made between persons who speed near work zones and persons speeding on other areas of the highway. Speeding is a violation of RCW 46.61.400, and a traffic infraction ranging anywhere from \$25 to \$165 may be imposed, depending on the speed of the vehicle.

In addition to the monetary penalty, the State Patrol may issue a ticket for reckless driving, which is a gross misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment of not more than one year and by a fine of no more than \$5,000. Any person convicted of reckless driving has his or her license suspended for at least 30 days. However, to convict a driver of reckless driving, the state must prove that the person was driving with willful or wanton disregard for the safety of others.

**SUMMARY:**

An additional penalty of \$100 is imposed upon persons speeding in highway work zones that contain prominently displayed signs or flaggers warning motorists of construction or maintenance work. The fine may not be waived, reduced or suspended. Any funds collected shall be used for posting signs along highways warning motorists of the penalty for speeding in work zones.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** none requested