

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6064

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, JANUARY 18, 1994

Brief Description: Removing the requirement of an emission inspection upon change of vehicle registration.

SPONSORS: Senators Vognild, Nelson, Sellar and Oke

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6064 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Brian McMorrow (786-7304)

Hearing Dates: January 17, 1994; January 18, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Three areas of Washington State do not meet federal health-based standards for carbon monoxide and/or ozone pollution. These areas have been classified as "nonattainment" by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Puget Sound and Vancouver areas are nonattainment for both carbon monoxide and ozone. The Spokane area is nonattainment for carbon monoxide only.

Motor vehicle exhaust is a leading source of both carbon monoxide and ozone.

EPA requires states to prepare and implement a State Implementation Plan (SIP) for bringing each nonattainment area into compliance with federal standards. The SIP for these nonattainment areas has been developed collaboratively by the Department of Ecology, Department of Transportation, regional councils, local air pollution control authorities and other affected local agencies and organizations.

The goals of the SIP are to: (1) meet the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act; (2) reduce emissions of pollutants from motor vehicles and set forth a process for transportation planning; and (3) apply new Ecology regulations on vehicle emission inspection, oxygenated gasoline and transportation conformity.

The particular requirement related to change of ownership addressed in this bill was added when Washington State changed its inspection program from annual to biennial. Because annual testing is approximately 20 percent more effective at

reducing emissions, the Department of Ecology had to expand its program so that Washington State could still meet the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act. The new program includes testing diesel vehicles, autos built in 1968 and after, and autos whose ownership has changed.

While the EPA does not specifically require states to test autos that have changed ownership, EPA does require states that violate nonattainment standards to establish a program that reduces emissions as much or more than EPA's model program.

SUMMARY:

The requirement that motor vehicles must be inspected when registered ownership changes is removed from statute.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

The amendment makes the same change to Title 46, a change necessary for the successful implementation of the bill. The amendment is a technical one.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

A spokesperson for the Clark County Auditor testified that some motorists who have recently purchased a used automobile were unaware that their auto needed to pass an emissions inspection test before it could be registered. She argued that the bill would address this issue.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

A Department of Ecology spokesperson stated that his department is confident that its maintenance inspection program is effective and follows closely the guidance given to the department by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

TESTIFIED: Liz Luce, WA State Assoc. of County Auditors (pro); Stu Clark, Air Quality, DOE (con)