

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1008

C 291 L 97

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Standardizing issuance of license plates.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Transportation Policy & Budget (originally sponsored by Representatives Robertson, Fisher, Chandler, Hatfield, Johnson, Zellinsky and L. Thomas).

House Committee on Transportation Policy & Budget
Senate Committee on Transportation

Background: The 1996 supplemental transportation budget directed the Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC) to develop recommendations regarding motor vehicle license plates. The primary impetus for this review was an inordinate number of bills requesting special license plates for fund-raising purposes.

The LTC established a license plate working group, composed of six legislators to spearhead the review. The working group met four times during the interim and developed legislative recommendations aimed at curtailing the number of special license plates.

Summary: Special license plates may be issued from the existing series, but the creation of additional special license plate series is prohibited. Furthermore, following an initial issuance period of three years, the Department of Licensing (DOL) is granted the authority to discontinue a special license plate series if sales are nominal.

Except for collector vehicle license plates issued prior to January 1, 1987, Congressional Medal of Honor license plates, and license plates issued for commercial vehicles with a gross weight in excess of 26,000 pounds, all license plates must be issued on a standard background designated by the DOL, effective January 1, 2001.

With a few exceptions (primarily for military service recognition plates), effective January 1, 1998, the original fees for special license plates are set at \$40, with \$12 earmarked for the DOL's administrative costs. Effective January 1, 1999, special license plate renewals are set at \$30, with \$2 earmarked for the DOL.

To ensure maximum legibility and reflectivity, the DOL shall periodically provide for the replacement of license plates.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 83 13

Senate 21 24 (Senate amended; failed)

Senate 39 9 (Senate reconsidered)

House 86 3 (House concurred)

Effective: July 27, 1997