

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1023

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 31, 1997

Title: An act relating to commuter ride-sharing qualifications.

Brief Description: Clarifying qualifications for commuter ride sharing.

Sponsors: Representatives Buck, Cooke, Mielke and Cairnes.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/26/97, 3/31/97 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prince, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Goings, Haugen, Heavey, Horn, Jacobsen, Morton, Oke, Patterson, Rasmussen and Sellar.

Staff: Mary McLaughlin (786-7309)

Background: There are two types of ride sharing: commuter ride sharing and ride sharing for persons with special transportation needs. Vehicles used as ride sharing vehicles are exempt from the retail sales and use tax and the motor vehicle excise tax (MVET). (Nonprofit transportation providers rendering ride sharing services for persons with special transportation needs are also entitled to gas and diesel fuel tax rebates.)

Commuter ride sharing is conducted in a passenger vehicle with (1) a gross weight not to exceed 10,000 pounds, excluding special rider equipment; and (2) a seating capacity not to exceed 15 persons that is used by (a) no fewer than five people, including the driver, or (b) four persons, including the driver, when at least two persons are confined to wheelchairs. The provisions apply to a fixed group of people traveling between their homes or nearby termini and place of employment, or educational or other institution in a single daily round trip.

Because of the term single daily round-trip,– a commuter ride sharing vehicle used for multiple daily round-trips for different employment shifts does not qualify for the tax exemptions. Example: the commuter van that makes three round-trips between Port Angeles and Clallam Bay Prison each day for three different shifts of employees is not exempt.

Summary of Bill: A vehicle that transports more than one group to and from work or an educational or other institution on a daily round trip basis, qualifies as a commuter ride sharing vehicle and is therefore eligible for the sales tax and MVET exemptions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Traffic congestion can be reduced by encouraging ride sharing in vehicles that are used for more than one shift per day.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rep. Buck, prime sponsor.