

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5154

As Passed Senate, March 6, 1997

Title: An act relating to maximum gross weight of vehicles.

Brief Description: Extending the vehicle gross weight schedule.

Sponsors: Senators Horn, Heavey and Prince.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/29/97, 2/6/97 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/6/97, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Mary McLaughlin (786-7309)

Background: Washington's vehicle gross weight schedule is based upon a federal formula that sets forth truck weight limits based upon the number of axles and axle configuration/spacing. The gross weight schedule is capped at 105,500 pounds. The maximum length between the first and last axle is currently set at 70 feet. Based on this schedule, the maximum weight that can be carried by vehicles with six or seven axles is 96,000 and 101,000 pounds, respectively.

These vehicles could haul up to the legal maximum limit of 105,500 pounds if the weight table were extended from 70 feet to 86 feet, thereby creating more distance between the first and last axle. The extension does not change the 105,000 pound limit or the axle weight limits. Extending the table does make Washington's gross weight schedule for six- and seven-axle trucks the same as Idaho and Oregon.

The Federal Highway Administration has informed the Washington State Department of Transportation that there is a rounding error in the state's weight table. The correct weight limit for five-axle trucks with 70 feet between the first and last axle should be 91,500 pounds rather than 92,000 pounds.

Summary of Bill: Washington's vehicle gross weight schedule is extended from 70 feet to 86 feet between the first and last axle so that six- and seven-axle trucks can reach the legal maximum weight limit of 105,500 pounds. The weight limit for five-axle trucks with 70 feet between the first and last axle is changed from 92,000 pounds to 91,500 pounds to correct a rounding error in Washington's weight table, thereby bringing the table into compliance with the federal bridge formula.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Extending the weight table for six- and seven-axle trucks will make Washington's weight table the same as Idaho and Oregon, thereby creating more efficiency in the movement of goods between the states.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Horn, prime sponsor (pro); Larry Pursley, Washington Trucking Association (pro); John Balcom, WSDOT (pro); Rick Jensen, Washington Refuse and Recycling Association (pro).