

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5247

As of January 22, 1997

Title: An act relating to proper lane travel for heavy vehicles.

Brief Description: Facilitating smoother flow of traffic.

Sponsors: Senators Oke, Rasmussen, Winsley, Prince, Horn, Zarelli, Benton, Schow, Hochstatter, Stevens, Rossi, Deccio, Hale, Johnson and Fraser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/29/97.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Mary McLaughlin (786-7309).

Background: On any highway with two or more lanes in one direction, all vehicles are to remain in the right lane then available for traffic except when overtaking another vehicle, traveling at a speed greater than the traffic flow, moving left to allow for merging traffic, or preparing to turn left.

In the state of California certain vehicles are restricted from using the left lane(s) on a multi-lane facility. On a highway with two lanes in the same direction, trucks must stay in the right lane except to pass. On a three-lane facility a truck must remain in the right lane and use the center lane to pass. On a highway with four or more lanes in the same direction, a truck must stay in the first two right lanes and can pass only in the third lane. The restrictions apply not only to trucks, but also to any vehicle pulling a trailer, school buses, a farm vehicle transporting passengers, a vehicle transporting explosives, etc.

Summary: Vehicles over 10,000 pounds are prohibited from driving in the left lane on a highway with three or more lanes in the same direction. The exceptions are a vehicle preparing to turn left, an authorized vehicle traveling in a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, an emergency vehicle, or a tow truck responding to a law enforcement call.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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