

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6540

As Passed Senate, February 17, 1998

Title: An act relating to vehicle licensing agents.

Brief Description: Providing criteria for establishing and siting vehicle licensing agencies.

Sponsors: Senators Schow and T. Sheldon.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/5/98, 2/10/98 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/17/98, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Paul Neal (786-7315)

Background: The Department of Licensing (DOL) provides vehicle licensing services to the public through department offices, county auditor offices (agents), and private businesses (subagents). In determining where to site vehicle licensing offices and in determining whether to authorize a subagent to operate at a given location, the department analyzes several factors to determine whether the location is viable. One of the main factors considered is the number of projected licensing transactions at a given site. There is no statutory requirement that the department apply the same standards to decisions regarding the siting of subagent locations as it does to siting of department locations.

Summary of Bill: In determining whether to site vehicle licensing services in a state facility, the department must: (1) apply the same criteria used to determine siting of vehicle license facilities outside of a state facility; and (2) determine whether the services could be better performed at a location other than the state facility. The department must authorize the providing of vehicle licensing services outside the state facility if it determines, using the developed criteria, that the services could be better performed at that location.

The department is directed to adopt rules ensuring that the same criteria are used to determine siting of vehicle licensing services regardless of whether the location is a state facility and regardless of whether the services are provided by the department, an agent, or a subagent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 28, 1998.

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

Testimony For: Passage of the bill would provide a level playing field where vehicle licensing agents and subagents would be assured of input in decisions regarding siting of vehicle license facilities. All parties that provide vehicle licensing services to the public should go through the same process in making siting decisions.

Testimony Against: The Department of Licensing has a committee process in place that provides access for agents and subagents in siting decisions. That process should be allowed to work.

Testified: PRO: Senator Schow, prime sponsor; Patrick Mahan, Don Burrell, Meade McDonald, WA Association of Vehicle Subagents; CON: Jim Wadsworth, DOL.