

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1774

C 272 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Regulating occupational drivers' licenses.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Transportation (Originally sponsored by Representatives Wolfe, Romero, Tokuda, Stensen, D. Schmidt, Ogden, Gombosky, Keiser, Dickerson and Santos).

House Committee on Transportation
Senate Committee on Transportation
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Background:

A person whose license has been mandatorily suspended or revoked due to a criminal conviction other than vehicular homicide or vehicular assault may obtain an occupational driver's license if the person can show, among other things, that he or she is engaged in an occupation or trade that requires operation of a motor vehicle. A person whose license has been administratively suspended may not obtain an occupational license. People who have had their drivers' licenses administratively suspended due to failure to pay a fine are often not able to pay the fine because of financial constraints. Some assert that enrollment in an apprenticeship program could give such a person the skills to obtain a job, pay the fine, and in some cases, leave public assistance.

Summary:

A person whose driver's license has been administratively suspended for failure to pay a traffic ticket, violation of financial responsibility laws, or multiple infractions within a specified period may apply for an occupational driver's license. To qualify, the applicant must show that he or she is in one of the following programs where a driver's license is required: (1) a member or an applicant for an apprenticeship program or on-the-job training program; (2) a program that assists persons who are enrolled in a WorkFirst program to become gainfully employed; or (3) undergoing substance abuse treatment or participating in a twelve-step program such as Alcoholics Anonymous.

The occupational driver's license is valid for the period of the suspension but in no case for more than two years except that the occupational license for a person who has only applied to be in an apprenticeship program is in effect no longer than 14

days. The Department of Licensing is required to cancel the license if the person is no longer enrolled in a qualifying program. If the license is canceled, the driver may obtain a new license at no cost by submitting evidence of enrollment in another qualifying program. A person who qualifies due to participation in a substance abuse or twelve-step program: (1) may not receive a license if able to receive adequate transit services; and (2) may only receive a license valid for specific times, days, and routes.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 95 0
Senate 42 1 (Senate Amended)
House (House refused to concur)
Senate 46 3 (Senate Amended)
House 96 0 (House Concurred)

Effective: January 1, 2000