

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5341

As Passed Senate, March 13, 1999

Title: An act relating to the removal of certain exemptions for motor freight carriers from the provisions of chapter 81.80 RCW.

Brief Description: Removing the exemptions for certain vehicles from the provisions of chapter 81.80 RCW.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen, Benton, Goings and Jacobsen; by request of Utilities & Transportation Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/17/99, 3/4/99 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/13/99, 45-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Goings, Vice Chair; Benton, Costa, Eide, Finkbeiner, Heavey, Horn, Jacobsen, Johnson, Morton, Oke, Sellar, Sheahan, T. Sheldon, Shin and Swecker.

Staff: Jennifer Ziegler (786-7316)

Background: Since deregulation of the trucking industry (1980-interstate; 1995-intrastate), the Utilities and Transportation Commission's (UTC's) role in economic regulation has significantly changed. The UTC no longer regulates motor freight carriers rates and routes, the entry standard has been eased, and the terminal inspection program has been shifted to the Washington State Patrol. The commission still regulates household goods carriers (moving and storage companies) under the motor freight carrier statutes.

In the spirit of increased customer choice and consumer protection, the UTC has recently adopted Washington Administrative Code rules to ease the economic regulation of household goods carriers (HHGC), while maintaining safety standards. The service areas are no smaller than a county's boundaries. There will no longer be certificates authorizing service exclusive to one municipality. Even if a HHGC is serving a small area, it will have the authority to travel the entire county.

Currently a long-standing statute exempts transportation service movements of goods within the municipal boundaries of cities of a certain size (10,000 to 30,000 in population under certain circumstances). The statute is obsolete when applied to motor freight carriers and creates a confusing patchwork of regulated and unregulated areas for HHGC. If HHGC are to continue to be regulated by the state in the interest of consumer protection, the UTC is recommending that this exemption be removed.

Summary of Bill: A long-standing obsolete statutory requirement is removed that exempts the movement of goods within the municipal boundaries of cities of a certain size from UTC regulation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: No one.