Washington State
House of Representatives

BILL ANALYSIS

Transportation

HB 1407

Brief Description: *Modifying the taxation of fuel.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Fisher and Mitchell; by request of Department of Licensing.*

Brief Summary of Bill

· *Makes technical corrections to motor vehicle fuel and special fuel tax-at-the-rack laws.*

Hearing Date: *2/5/01*

Staff: *Jeff Doyle (786-7322).*

Background:

Prior to 1999, taxes on motor fuel were collected by the Department of Licensing from fuel distributors. At that time, there were approximately 740 licensed fuel distributors in Washington. In addition, approximately 27,000 individuals held licenses that allowed them to purchase fuel without paying taxes up front. These users held the fuel in bulk storage tanks, using some of the fuel for non-highway purposes (usually agriculture). They only had to remit taxes for portions of fuel used for highway purposes.

In 1994, the Federal Highway Administration estimated that fuel tax was being evaded on 3 to 7 percent of gasoline gallons, and 15 to 25 percent on diesel gallons. In 1996, the Legislative Transportation Committee concluded that significant fuel tax evasion was occurring in Washington, and made recommendations to address the issue.

In 1998, the Legislature enacted SHB 2659, which imposes fuel taxes at the time of removal of such fuel from the terminal rack in Washington. This is referred to as tax at the rack.– Taxes are remitted to the Department of Licensing.

Summary of Bill:

Technical corrections are made to the motor vehicle fuel tax and special fuel tax statutes. The definition of motor vehicle fuel supplier– is amended to conform to federal regulations. The term position holder– is changed to licensed supplier.– The statute is changed to clarify that special fuel sold by a licensed supplier to a distributor, importer, or blender is a taxable event.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Not Requested.*

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