

ANALYSIS OF HB 1563

HOUSE AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 6, 2001

- Eliminates requirement that motor vehicle emission inspection fees are to be uniform state-wide or throughout an emissions contributing area.
- Removes the \$15 cap on motor vehicle emission testing fees.

Background:

The Department of Ecology (DOE) states in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) that gasoline powered motor vehicles emit significant quantities of hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen, in addition to serving as the primary emitters of carbon monoxide. Federal emissions standards are designed to reduce motor vehicle emissions; however, the DOE reports that the effectiveness of these efforts are reduced through deterioration, maladjustment, and tampering. In their administrative rules, DOE states that emission inspections serve to identify vehicles that are high polluting and vehicles with tampered or missing emission controls. Once the vehicles are identified, the DOE seeks to reduce their emissions if it can be accomplished at a reasonable cost.

The DOE conducts emission inspections on motor vehicles registered in the portions of the state designated by DOE as emissions contributing areas.— An area of the state may only be identified as an emissions contributing area if the DOE first finds that the area is within a non-compliance— area for motor vehicle emissions. Currently in the WAC, the DOE has listed the cities of Seattle, Bellevue, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver, and Everett as non-compliance areas. Within each non-compliance area, the DOE identifies by zip code the smallest land area containing registered motor vehicles significantly contributing to air quality degradation. Vehicles registered within the identified zip codes that are older than five years or newer than twenty-five years are subject to emission testing biennially.

The owner of a vehicle registered in an emissions contributing area must pay a fee to have a emission inspection conducted. The amount of that fee is set in rule by the DOE, and must be applicable state-wide or throughout an emissions control area. The fee may not exceed fifteen dollars, and surplus money collected is paid to the state general fund. Fees must be calculated to compensate the contracted inspection facility owner and to offset the general fund appropriation made to the DOE to cover the administrative costs of the inspection

program.

Summary:

The motor vehicle emission inspection fee is not required to be a standard fee state-wide or throughout an emissions contributing area and the inspection fee is not required to be capped at fifteen dollars.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 31, 2001.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of regular session.