

***Transportation Committee***

***HB 1657***

***Brief Description:*** *Permitting excess weight for fire-fighting apparatus.*

***Sponsors:*** *Representatives Morell, McDermott, Rockefeller, Bush, Van Luven and Campbell; by request of Washington State Patrol.*

***Brief Summary of Bill***

- *Fire-fighting apparatus exceeding current weight restrictions is allowed on state highways subject to federal and state rules and to standards adopted by the Department of Transportation.*
- *Over-weight permits for these fire trucks are valid for five years.*

***Hearing Date:*** *2/19/01*

***Staff:*** *Penny Nerup (786-7335).*

***Background:***

*Under current size, weight, and load restrictions, the Department of Transportation can only issue permits for fire trucks that drive on the public highways if their maximum gross weight on any single axle does not exceed 24,000 pounds and if the gross weight on any tandem axle does not exceed 43,000 pounds.*

*Many newer fire trucks purchased for use in urban areas, usually for multi-story building fires, exceed these current weight limits. These trucks have the capability of operating independently and often carry water with them to pump onto fires where it is difficult or impossible to use other sources of water. Insurance ratings of fire districts where these fire trucks are used are better and, therefore, use of the heavier trucks is usually supported by local businesses in urban areas because their insurance rates are lower when these units are used.*

*Concerns have been raised about use of these heavier fire trucks on some state bridges.*

*This is Washington State Patrol request legislation.*

***Summary of Bill:***

*Fire-fighting apparatus that exceeds current weight restrictions is allowed on state highways subject to federal and state rules and to standards adopted by the Department of Transportation. The over-weight permits for these fire trucks are valid for five years.*

***Appropriation:*** None.

***Fiscal Note:*** Requested on February 13, 2001.

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