

Transportation Committee

SSB 5494

Brief Description: *Clarifying noise laws for motor vehicles.*

Sponsors: *By Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen and McAuliffe).*

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- *Modification of a vehicle's exhaust system is prohibited if the modification violates specific Society of Automotive Engineer's (SAE) standards for noise emissions.*
- *The prohibition does not apply to vehicles operated off highways in organized racing or competitive events.*

Hearing Date: *3/27/01*

Staff: *Reema Griffith (786-7301).*

Background:

In 1977 the Legislature enacted laws establishing motor vehicle equipment standards consistent with federal law which included provisions on allowable levels of noise emissions and air contaminants released from vehicle exhaust systems.

Current law has broad provisions which require that every motor vehicle be equipped with a muffler in good working order and in constant operation to prevent excessive or unusual noise. While there are no specific noise level standards established in statute, there is a general prohibition against modification of an exhaust system in a way which would make the engine noise louder than the noise emitted by the originally installed muffler.

Summary of Bill:

SSB 5494 adopts specific SAE noise emission standards and noise testing procedures to measure the decibel level of an exhaust system. Modification of a vehicle's exhaust system

is prohibited if the modification violates the SAE standards. This prohibition does not apply to vehicles that operate off highways in organized racing or competitive events which are conducted by a recognized sanctioning body.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Not Requested.*

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