

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5494

As Passed House - Amended:

April 9, 2001

Title: An act relating to noise prevention for motor vehicles.

Brief Description: Clarifying noise laws for motor vehicles.

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

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 3/27/01, 3/29/01 [DPA].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 4/9/01, 94-1.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House)

- 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, or to vehicles over 25 years old.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Fisher, Democratic Co-Chair; Mitchell, Republican Co-Chair; Cooper, Democratic Vice Chair; Ericksen, Republican Vice Chair; Hankins, Republican Vice Chair; Lovick, Democratic Vice Chair; Ahern, Anderson, Armstrong, G. Chandler, Edmonds, Haigh, Hatfield, Hurst, Jackley, Jarrett, Marine, Mielke, Morell, Murray, Ogden, Rockefeller, Romero, Schindler, Simpson, Skinner, Sump, Wood and Woods.

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 Amended Bill:

Modification of a vehicle's exhaust system is prohibited if the modification violates the SAE standard of 95 decibels. 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, or to vehicles over 25 years old.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: People who participate in racing events should be able to drive their vehicle home, as is, and not be in violation of the law.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Matthew Ahl, citizen.