

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1269

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Judiciary, March 27, 2001

**Title:** An act relating to hardship waivers for vehicle owners in cases of suspended license vehicle impounds.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing additional hardship waivers for vehicle owners in cases of suspended license vehicle impounds.

**Sponsors:** By Representatives Bush and Campbell.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Judiciary: 3/22/01, 3/27/01 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kline, Chair; Constantine, Vice Chair; Costa, Hargrove, Johnson, Kastama, Long, McCaslin and Thibaudeau.

**Staff:** Lidia Mori (786-7755)

**Background:** A vehicle driven by a person whose license is suspended or revoked can be impounded. Under current law, if there is economic or personal hardship to the spouse of the suspended or revoked driver, an agency may issue a written order to release the vehicle to the spouse after taking into consideration public safety factors, including the driver's criminal history and driving record. There is no provision in current law for a hardship exemption for anyone other than the spouse.

**Summary of Bill:** The registered owner of a vehicle that has been impounded while being driven by a person with a suspended or revoked license may obtain an order to release the vehicle if there is economic or personal hardship to the owner, the owner was not the driver of the vehicle when it was impounded, and the owner has not received a prior hardship release.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** Vehicles owned by employers have been impounded because they were being driven by employees with suspended or revoked drivers' licenses unbeknownst to their employers. Most employers do ask for a valid driver's license when they hire an employee.

The impoundment process has inadvertently created victims of people that have done nothing wrong.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Bush, prime sponsor; Stu Halsan, Washington Tow Truck Association.