

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6329

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Environment, Energy & Water, January 31, 2002

Title: An act relating to vehicles exempted from emission control inspection requirements.

Brief Description: Exempting certain vehicles powered by electricity and gasoline from emission control inspections.

Sponsors: Senators Regala, Honeyford, Fraser, Jacobsen and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Energy & Water: 1/24/02, 1/31/02 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & WATER

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6329 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Eide, Hale, Jacobsen, Keiser, McDonald and Morton.

Staff: Richard Rodger (786-7461)

Background: Federal law requires vehicle emission testing in areas that violated carbon monoxide or ozone air quality standards. Testing is required in the urban portions of Clark, King, Pierce, Snohomish and Spokane counties. The Department of Ecology runs the motor vehicle emission inspection program and contracts with private entities to operate the vehicle inspection stations.

Certain motor vehicles are exempt from the emission testing requirement. Exempt vehicles include: vehicles more than 25 or less than five years old; vehicles powered by propane or compressed natural gas or electricity; motorcycles; farm vehicles; used vehicles sold by dealers; and collector cars.

A hybrid motor vehicle is one that uses propulsion units powered by both electricity and gas. It is suggested that certain hybrid vehicles should be exempt from emission testing.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Hybrid motor vehicles, that obtain a rating by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency of at least 50 miles per gallon of gas during city driving, are exempt from vehicle emission testing.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The title of the bill is narrowed to exempt "certain hybrid vehicles."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Vehicles that meet stringent EPA standards for emissions and achieve high miles per gallon ratings will help maintain clean air standards and contribute to the reductions in greenhouse gases. The bill provides a small incentive to people who make a major commitment to fuel economy and environmental protection.

Testimony Against: We are unsure of how these new vehicles will perform after they have been driven. The vehicles may have a loss of function and have higher emissions.

Testified: David Kircher, Manager, Air Resources, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (pro); Stu Clark, Air Program Manager, Department of Ecology (neutral).