

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1589

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to tow truck permit fees.

Brief Description: Allowing annual permits for oversize towing operations.

Sponsors: Representatives Murray and Woods.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 4/2/03 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Two new overweight/oversize permit categories are created for tow trucks that tow oversize or overweight vehicles. The permits in each category are valid for one year.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Simpson, Vice Chair; Ericksen, Ranking Minority Member; Jarrett, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Armstrong, Bailey, Campbell, Clibborn, Cooper, Dickerson, Edwards, Flannigan, Hankins, Hatfield, Hudgins, Kristiansen, Lovick, Mielke, Morris, Nixon, Romero, Schindler, Shabro, Sullivan, Wallace, Wood and Woods.

Staff: Reema Griffith (786-7301).

Background:

Under current law, vehicles which are overweight or oversized must obtain a special permit from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in order to travel on the state highway system. The different permits issued may be valid anywhere from one day to one year. There are currently no long-term permit categories for tow trucks.

Under the current process, if a tow truck is hired to tow an oversized or overweight vehicle, they must obtain a permit from the WSDOT which is valid for that single tow operation. The WSDOT charges according to the weight of the tow vehicle and the number of miles the vehicle will be towed. The fees for this type of permit range from \$14 to several hundred dollars.

Should there be an emergency where an oversized/overweight vehicle needs to be towed outside of regular business hours, the tow truck company can currently obtain the permit from the Washington State Patrol (WSP). However, the WSP will be discontinuing this service as of July 1, 2003 which means, under the current scenario, tow truck companies will have to obtain the necessary permits in advance of a tow, or the tow will have to wait until the WSDOT offices are open for business.

Summary of Bill:

Two new overweight/oversize permit categories are created for tow trucks that tow oversize/overweight vehicles. The categories are for class C and class B tow trucks that perform emergency and nonemergency tows of oversize or overweight vehicles. The permits are valid for one year. The permit fee for class C tow trucks is \$150 per year and the fee for class B tow trucks is \$75 per year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 31, 2003.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill will provide the tow truck industry with the ability to effectively serve the public in a way they cannot currently do. It is critical to enact this legislation since there are many situations where a tow truck cannot currently tow an overweight vehicle legally.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Stu Halsan and Ken Nikko, Washington Tow Truck Association.