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**Transportation Committee**

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**HB 2822**

**Brief Description:** Authorizing the use of high-occupancy vehicle lanes by low-emission vehicles.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Sullivan, Cooper, Hunt, Linville, Eickmeyer, Simpson, G., Ruderman, Chase and Kagi.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Permits the Department of Transportation to allow single-occupant, inherently low-emission vehicles (ILEV) to use high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes.
- Requires single-occupant ILEVs using HOV lanes, to have a sticker or decal issued by the Department of Licensing.

**Hearing Date:** 2/2/04

**Staff:** Gene Baxstrom (786-7303).

**Background:**

The Department of Transportation (DOT) and local authorities are authorized to reserve all or a portion of highway for use by vehicles having a minimum number of persons. The DOT has constructed over 200 miles of high-occupancy vehicle lanes in the central Puget Sound area.

The Federal Environmental Protection Agency defines Inherently Low-emission Vehicles and Zero-emission vehicles. The ILEVs meet certain tail pipe emission requirements and have fuel systems which do not evaporate gases. These include vehicles fueled with propane and compressed natural gas. Zero-emission vehicles emit zero tail pipe emissions and are predominantly electric vehicles.

**Summary of Bill:**

Inherently low-emission vehicles (ILEVs) are defined as those vehicles defined in, and conforming with labeling requirements of, federal regulations. Zero-emission vehicles are defined as those vehicles defined in, and conforming with labeling requirements of, federal regulations. The ILEVs include zero-emission vehicles.

The DOT is authorized to permit single-occupant ILEVs in the HOV lanes at time and locations when the addition of those vehicles would not contribute to congestion or impede the flow of traffic in those lanes.

The ILEV must have a decal or label issued by the Department of Licensing (DOL) in order to operate as a single-occupant vehicle in the HOV lanes. The DOL is to develop a decal or label to be renewed annually, to identify ILEVs. The decal or label is nontransferrable.

The DOT is to study how any existing high-occupancy toll lane program or value pricing pilot program may be extended to vehicles whose average mileage is twice the national average for passenger cars. The DOT must report its findings to the Legislature by January 1, 2005 or at the conclusion of the DOT's study of high-occupancy toll lanes, whichever occurs first.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 28, 2004.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2004.