

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1260

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to driver's license examinations.

Brief Description: Allowing reciprocal waiver of driver's license exams.

Sponsors: By Representatives Jarrett, Clibborn, Pettigrew and Wallace; by request of Department of Licensing.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/7/05, 3/3/05 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/10/05, 95-0.

Passed Senate: 4/5/05, 44-3.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Licensing (DOL) to enter into informal reciprocal agreements with foreign jurisdictions for the waiver of any or all parts of the driver's license exam.
- Permits the DOL to waive any or all parts of the driver's license exam for licensed driver's over the age of 18 from jurisdictions that have reciprocal agreements with the DOL.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Wallace, Vice Chair; Woods, Ranking Minority Member; Skinner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Buck, Campbell, Curtis, Dickerson, Ericksen, Hankins, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kilmer, Lovick, Morris, Nixon, Rodne, Schindler, Sells, Shabro, Simpson, B. Sullivan, Takko, Upthegrove and Wood.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

The Department of Licensing (DOL) may currently waive the skill test required of all applicants for a Washington driver's license if the applicant presents a valid driver's license

from another state, United States territory, or United States possession. While an individual with a valid driver's license from another country may drive in this state for up to one year, driver's license applicants from any foreign jurisdiction are ultimately required to take the licensing examination regardless of whether their foreign license is valid.

The requirement that foreign drivers take the Washington licensing examination has prevented the DOL from entering into agreements with foreign jurisdictions to waive their driver's licensing requirements. In the case of a Washington resident who moves to Germany, for example, this can mean the expenditure of hundreds of dollars in testing and training fees.

Summary of Bill:

The DOL is authorized to enter into informal reciprocal agreements with foreign jurisdictions to waive driver's license examination requirements. These agreements may apply only to licensed drivers from that jurisdiction who are 18 years of age or older.

For an individual who submits a valid driver's license from a jurisdiction with which there is an informal reciprocal agreement, the DOL may permit the waiver of all or any part of driver's license examination.

The DOL may only enter into an agreement with a foreign jurisdiction if the jurisdiction has procedures in place to verify the validity of the drivers' licenses that it issues.

The DOL is authorized to adopt rules necessary to implement the act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Foreign driver's license exams are exceptionally difficult, costly, and time-consuming. This has an effect on international trade in this state because it makes it more difficult for people to move overseas. A number of Washington companies are currently planning projects overseas, and not having this law will make it more difficult to move these projects forward. Thirty-three other states already enter into reciprocal agreements and we need to be able to do so as well.

The DOL will only enter into agreements with countries with high standards for their identification documents. The DOL will need multiple documents from jurisdictions with which we have agreements. The DOL will know of and check the security features on these document to prevent fraud.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Peter Teets, Department of Licensing; and Brent Heinemann, Governor's Office.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.