

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1305

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to authorized emergency vehicles.

Brief Description: Authorizing background checks before an authorized emergency vehicle permit is issued.

Sponsors: By Representatives Haigh, McDonald, Eickmeyer, Holmquist, Wallace, P. Sullivan, Roach, Morrell and Sells.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/26/06, 2/1/06 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/06, 96-0.

Passed Senate: 3/2/06, 46-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Places in statute the requirement for background checks of applicants for authorized emergency vehicle permits through the systems of both the Washington State Patrol and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Wallace, Vice Chair; Woods, Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Buck, Campbell, Clibborn, Curtis, Dickerson, Ericksen, Flannigan, Hankins, Holmquist, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kilmer, Lovick, Morris, Nixon, Rodne, Schindler, Sells, Shabro, Simpson, B. Sullivan, Takko, Upthegrove and Wood.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) is responsible for screening applicants for authorized emergency vehicle permits. This permit is required for drivers of Department of Transportation incident response vehicles, private contractors providing funeral procession traffic control, school security personnel, and fire department chiefs driving private vehicles.

As part of the screening process, applicants are currently screened through both the WSP's criminal identification section and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). However, the FBI's policy regarding fingerprint checks requires a legislative enactment authorizing the use of FBI records for the screening of applicants. The WSP is currently using the FBI's records by virtue of a temporary waiver.

Summary of Bill:

The equipment and standards review unit shall require a records check of all applicants for an authorized emergency vehicle permit through the WSP and the FBI. The record check shall include a fingerprint check, and the applicant may be employed on a conditional basis pending completion of the investigation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This screening is necessary to prevent felons from obtaining access to emergency lights and other similar types of equipment. The bill codifies the current practice and thus allows the continuation of the current process.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Jeff Devere, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.