

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6676

As Passed Senate, February 14, 2006

Title: An act relating to fraudulent filing of vehicle report of sale.

Brief Description: Prohibiting fraudulent filings of vehicle reports of sale.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Senators Roach, Kline, Mulliken, Fairley and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Judiciary: 1/31/06, 2/1/06 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 2/14/06, 45-2.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6676 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Kline, Chair; Weinstein, Vice Chair; Johnson, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Esser, Hargrove, McCaslin, Rasmussen and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Lidia Mori (786-7755)

Background: Washington law requires submission of a report of sale by any person or business that transfers their interest in a Washington titled vehicle to anyone else. Transferring interest in a vehicle includes selling, gifting, trading, privately or into a dealer, or disposing of the vehicle. A properly completed report of sale releases the seller from personal liability for vehicle towing and storage charges if the vehicle is abandoned or towed after the sale.

A purchaser or transferee of a vehicle is required to make application to transfer the certificate of ownership and license registration within 15 days after the date of delivery of the vehicle. After the 15 day period, he or she will be assessed a \$25 penalty on the 16th day and a \$2 penalty for each additional day after, not to exceed \$100. This penalty may be waived when an application for transfer is delayed for reasons beyond the control of the purchaser.

It has been reported that there is an increasing number of people who hope to rid themselves of their vehicles by leaving them in front of another person's house and filing a vehicle report of sale with the goal of transferring ownership of the vehicles.

Summary of Bill: A person who files a vehicle report of sale without the knowledge of the transferee is guilty of fraudulent filing of a vehicle report of sale. If the unknowing transferee, or victim, incurred damages in an amount less than \$250, the transferor is guilty of a gross misdemeanor. If the monetary damage to the victim is more than \$250 but less than \$1500, the transferor is guilty of a class C felony. Fraudulent filing of a vehicle report of sale is a class B felony if the victim incurred damages in an amount great than \$1500.

The penalty for delay of application of transfer will be waived if the transferee had no knowledge of the filing of the vehicle report of sale and signs an affidavit to that fact. When a transferee had no knowledge of the filing of the vehicle report of sale, he or she is relieved of civil or criminal liability for the operation of the vehicle and liability is transferred to the seller shown on the report of sale.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This bill is needed. People are filing vehicle reports of sale and transferring ownership of their vehicles to unknowing recipients more often than the general public realizes.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Senator Pam Roach, prime sponsor.