

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3058

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to public transit vehicle stops at unmarked stop zones.

Brief Description: Permitting public transit vehicle stops at unmarked stop zones under certain circumstances.

Sponsors: Representatives Takko, Armstrong, Clibborn, Williams and Roberts.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/29/08, 2/6/08 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows public transportation providers, including nonprofit providers, operating outside of cities and towns to stop their vehicles at any location in order to receive or discharge passengers, so long as the posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour or less.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Flannigan, Vice Chair; Ericksen, Ranking Minority Member; Schindler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Armstrong, Campbell, Dickerson, Eddy, Herrera, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kristiansen, Loomis, Rodne, Rolfes, Sells, Simpson, Smith, Springer, Takko, Upthegrove, Wallace, Warnick, Williams and Wood.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

With limited exceptions, drivers are not allowed to stop or park a vehicle on the roadway outside of incorporated cities or towns. In addition to drivers of disabled vehicles and solid waste and recycling collection vehicles, drivers of public transit vehicles are exempt from this

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restriction if temporarily stopping the vehicle to receive or discharge passengers at a marked transit vehicle stop zone.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Outside of incorporated cities and towns, drivers of public transit vehicles, including those operated by nonprofit providers, may stop their vehicles at any location in order to receive or discharge passengers, as long as the location where the vehicle stops has a posted speed limit of 40 miles per hour or less.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Public transit vehicles operated by nonprofit organizations are added to the types of vehicles that may stop at unmarked stop zones, and the requirement that drivers only stop under circumstances consistent with the driver's duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons on the roadway is removed. Finally, drivers of vehicles used for public transportation purposes are restricted to stopping in unmarked stop zones only where the posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour or less.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill would allow buses to stop outside of cities, which is something that garbage trucks are already allowed to do. Garbage trucks are involved in fairly few collisions and they stop a lot more often than a bus would.

Buses are currently only allowed to stop at marked stops. However, a bus stop must be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, despite the fact that the stops are often in areas with no sidewalks. Thus, there is a significant cost with little associated benefit.

Many citizens are served by mass transit in unincorporated areas, where they board at so-called flag stops, which is essentially wherever the mass transit driver is asked to receive or discharge a passenger. The buses pull over as far to the right side of the roadway as they can, and only when it is safe to do so. Sometimes they are forced to pass a person waiting for a stop in an unsafe area, so the driver will try to inform the potential passenger of safe locations for boarding.

(Concerns) Buses stopping on roadways with higher speed limits could be dangerous, especially if the other drivers do not expect the bus to stop.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Takko, prime sponsor; Peter Thein, Washington State Transit Association; Tim Russ, Pacific Transit; Dave O'Connell, Mason Transit; and Brian Bradford.

(Concerns) Jeff DeVere, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.