

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1344

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to a window tint exemption for law enforcement vehicles.

Brief Description: Providing a window tint exemption for law enforcement vehicles.

Sponsors: By Representatives Lovick, Rodne, Hudgins, Upthegrove and Campbell; by request of Washington State Patrol.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/13/07, 2/22/07 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/6/07, 96-0.

Passed Senate: 4/9/07, 46-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides an exemption to law enforcement vehicles to allow for darker side and rear window tinting.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 20 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Jarrett, Ranking Minority Member; Schindler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Armstrong, Campbell, Dickerson, Eddy, Ericksen, Hailey, Hankins, Hudgins, Lovick, Rodne, Sells, Simpson, Springer, Takko, Wallace and Wood.

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306).

Background:

Current law restricts film sunscreening or coloring material, also referred to as "window tinting," that may be applied to the windows of a motor vehicle. Clear film sunscreening material that reduces or eliminates ultraviolet light may be applied to windshields. Tinting applied to the windows of motor vehicles, except the windshield, must allow minimum light

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transmission of 35 percent, as compared to clear glass. Tinting with a greater degree of light reduction is permitted on the top six-inch area of a vehicle's windshield, and on all windows and the top six inches of the windshield for vehicles operated by, or carrying, a person with a documented physical or medical need for protection from sunlight exposure. A vehicle with tinted rear or side windows must have left and right outside mirrors that reflect to the driver a view of at least 200 feet to the rear of the vehicle. All windows behind the driver on limousines and passenger buses may be darker under certain conditions.

Three types of tinting materials are prohibited: (1) mirror finish products; (2) red, gold, yellow or black material; and (3) liquid pre-application material. Professional tinting installers must apply a sticker to the driver's door post indicating that the tinting meets state requirements.

Operating a motor vehicle equipped with prohibited window tinting is a traffic infraction.

Summary of Bill:

The side and rear windows of law enforcement vehicles are exempt from the minimum light restriction of 35 percent.

When law enforcement vehicles are sold to private individuals, the film sunscreening or coloring material must comply with the minimum light restriction of 35 percent or documentation must be provided to the buyer communicating that the windows must comply with the minimum of 35 percent before operation of the vehicle.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The exemption is needed for law enforcement protection, for K-9 units to protect the law enforcement dogs, for protection of personnel working undercover, and persons in law enforcement custody. Limousines already have an exemption, but law enforcement vehicles are presently restricted to the standards established for personal vehicles.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Lovick, prime sponsor; and Jeff DeVere, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.