

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1933

As Passed House:
March 5, 2011

Title: An act relating to license plate fraud and law enforcement safety.

Brief Description: Addressing license plate fraud and law enforcement safety for collector vehicles.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representative Finn).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/22/11, 2/24/11 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/5/11, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Department of Licensing to provide a method by which law enforcement officers may readily access vehicle information for collector vehicles.
- Implements a penalty for a person using a facsimile collector license plate.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Billig, Vice Chair; Liias, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Asay, Eddy, Finn, Fitzgibbon, Jinkins, Johnson, Klippert, Kristiansen, Ladenburg, McCune, Moeller, Moscoso, Overstreet, Reykdal, Rivers, Rolfes, Ryu, Shea, Takko, Upthegrove and Zeiger.

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

A registered owner may apply for a horseless carriage license plate for a motor vehicle that is at least 40 years old. The original registration fee is \$35, and the plates are valid for the life of the motor vehicle, are not required to be renewed, cannot be transferred to any other motor vehicle, and must be displayed on the rear of the motor vehicle. There are approximately 9,000 horseless carriage vehicles registered.

A registered owner may apply for a collector vehicle plate that is at least 30 years old. The owner may receive a collector plate that is assigned by the Department of Licensing (DOL) or the owner can provide an actual Washington state-issued license plate designated for general use in the year of the vehicle's manufacture. The original registration is \$35, and the plates are valid for the life of the vehicle, are not required to be renewed, may be transferred from one vehicle to another vehicle, and must be displayed on the rear of the motor vehicle. There are approximately 111,000 collector vehicles registered.

These vehicles can only be used for participation in club activities, exhibitions, tours, parades, and occasional driving.

Law enforcement officers, when stopping a motor vehicle, in many cases will run a "wants and warrants" on the registered vehicle's license plate to receive information on the registered owner and vehicle.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Any person who knowingly provides a false or facsimile license plate for a collector vehicle is guilty of a misdemeanor.

The DOL must provide a method by which law enforcement officers may readily access vehicle information for collector vehicles by using the collector vehicle license plate number.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on August 1, 2011, except for section 2, relating to prescribing penalties, which takes effect on January 1, 2012.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Law enforcement cannot identify the registered owner of a collector vehicle due to the way the collector vehicle registration data is maintained at the DOL. A person that gets a collector or horseless carriage plate has use restrictions associated with the plate. The person does not have to renew the registration on a horseless carriage or collector vehicle. A "wants and warrants," in many cases, cannot be run on collector vehicles. The vehicle data is returned back to the law enforcement officer as "vehicle not existing."

On collector plates, if an owner uses their own plate, they have to be real Washington license plates based on the year of manufacturer. There have been plates introduced on the market that are not real plates or plates used on some collector vehicles that are facsimiles.

We have no problem with going to 40 years on the collector vehicles since the collector vehicle plates started in 1990, which, at the time, would have been vehicles 1960 and older. Today it would be 1981 and older.

(Opposed) Taking away the 10 years from 30 years to 40 years is an issue. In 1996 the Legislature acknowledged the restoration of automobiles and 30 years for a vehicle to be deemed as collector vehicles was the national standard. House Bill 1933 is not encouraging or productive for the restoration of collector vehicles. If the state needs money, then increase the fee, but maintain the 30-year requirement. The penalties have been increased, which cannot be reduced or suspended for being in violation of the restricted use law. Please remove the increased penalties and change the collector vehicle requirement back to 30 years.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Finn, prime sponsor; Paul Petrinovich; and Thomas Neff, Olympia Street Rod and Collectors Association.

(Opposed) Frank Ham.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.