

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5260

---

**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Transportation

**Title:** An act relating to combination of vehicles.

**Brief Description:** Modifying combination of vehicle provisions.

**Sponsors:** Senators King, Haugen, Eide, Swecker, Delvin, Hobbs and Ericksen; by request of Department of Transportation.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 3/8/11, 3/22/11 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Removes the state statute that is not in compliance with the federal code for saddlemount combination vehicles.

---

### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 29 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, Morris, Moscoso, Overstreet, Reykdal, Rivers, Rodne, Rolfes, Ryu, Shea, Takko, Upthegrove and Zeiger.

**Staff:** Jerry Long (786-7306).

**Background:**

A saddlemount combination is a combination of vehicles in which a truck or truck tractor tows one or more trucks or truck tractors. Each one is connected by a saddle or fifth wheel to the vehicle in front of it. The saddle is a mechanism that connects the front axle of the towed vehicle to the frame or fifth wheel of the vehicle in front and functions like a fifth wheel kingpin connection. When two vehicles are towed in this manner, the combination is called a double saddlemount combination. When three vehicles are towed in this manner, the

---

*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.*

combination is called a triple saddlemount combination. These combinations are used when there is a need to move multiple vehicles, for example, from a truck manufacturer to a truck dealer. Current Washington law prohibits a combination of these vehicles to exceed 75 feet in overall length. In 2005 the federal law was changed to prohibit any state to impose a length for these saddlemount combinations of less or more than 97 feet. Federal law states that noncompliance with the federally mandated saddlemount length could lead to a 10 percent reduction of federal aid for the National Highway System apportioned to the state for the next fiscal year.

When seeking to enforce a federal law or regulation, an agency, through the Washington Administrative Code, may adopt the federal rules and regulations as a state rule.

---

**Summary of Bill:**

The bill removes the 75-foot restriction from existing Washington statutes regarding the saddlemount combination.

---

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The Washington State Department of Transportation supports Senate Bill 5260. The bill removes the maximum length restriction of the saddlemount vehicles to 75 feet. This brings the State of Washington into compliance with the federal standards. This is the last of the specialized equipment statutes that need to be brought into compliance. A state that is not in compliance with these sections of the federal regulations runs the risk of losing 10 percent of the federal transportation funds they receive from the Federal Transportation Administration.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Jim Wright, Washington State Department of Transportation.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.