

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2234

As of February 23, 2012

Title: An act relating to commercial driver's license suspension.

Brief Description: Addressing employer notification upon commercial driver's license suspension.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Hurst and Dahlquist).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/09/12, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/23/12.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: The operation of commercial motor vehicles is regulated under both state and federal law. In order to operate a commercial motor vehicle in Washington, a person generally must hold a commercial driver's license, issued by the Department of Licensing (DOL), with the applicable endorsements for the vehicle that is being driven. If a person is convicted of certain offenses, the person may be disqualified from driving a commercial motor vehicle for a specified period of time. An employer of a commercial driver licensee is not notified if the employee's license is suspended.

Summary of Bill: If a driver's commercial driver's license is suspended, revoked, or canceled, or if the driver is disqualified from operating a commercial motor vehicle, DOL must notify the driver's employer or employers, who are on file with DOL.

DOL must establish a voluntary database in which an employer may register any employee for which the employer wishes to receive this notification.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2013.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a pretty simple bill, but it is very important to companies that employ commercial motor vehicle drivers. This bill closes a loophole for us. We have huge liability issues and concerns with not being notified when an employee's CDL has been suspended. We do random checks of the driving record and catch driver's who are still operating without a valid CDL. If that driver is in an accident it would be devastating for many businesses. A driver who has had their CDL suspended is not insurable. This is a public safety concern as well, because for some of these drivers, we all don't want them on the road if they have had their license suspended. While we support this bill, we had hoped it would be expanded to cover all employees, not just those that have a CDL. We run an airport shuttle business and many of our drivers don't have to have a CDL because they are operating a van, and therefore, under the bill we still won't be able to be notified of that employee's driver's license suspension.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Bruce Chapman, WACA; Jim Fricke, Capital Aeroporter; Jerry Trudeau, Miles Sand & Gravel.