
Transportation Committee

HB 2740

Brief Description: Modifying special permit fees for certain vehicle loads and movements.

Sponsors: Representative Moeller.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases commercial vehicle special permit fees.
- Allocates \$500,000 each biennium to be utilized by the Washington State Department of Transportation to implement and maintain an automated system that maintains a database of the state's bridge inventory for use when issuing special permits.
- Directs any remaining special permit fees collected above \$500,000 per biennium must be used for highway preservation.

Hearing Date: 2/6/14

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306).

Background:

There are approximately 7,600 bridges that are owned by cities, counties and the State of Washington. Nearly 3,100 are state-owned vehicular bridges. Legal dimensions for a commercial vehicle are 8 feet 6 inches wide, 14 feet tall, 56 feet length single trailer, 68 feet length double trailer, and 40 feet single unit. Also allowed is 3 feet of front overhang and 15 feet of rear overhang. If the vehicle is over these dimensions, then an oversize permit is required. A vehicle or combination of vehicles must not operate on the public highways of the State of Washington with a gross load on any single axle in excess of 20,000 pounds, or upon any group of axles in excess specified in state statute (RCW 46.44.041), except that two consecutive sets of tandem axles may carry a gross load of 34,000 pounds each depending on distance between axles. If over the legal weight, an overweight permit will be required.

Special permits may be obtained from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), ports of entry, or other agents appointed by the WSDOT. Agents so appointed may

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retain \$3.50 for each permit sold to defray expenses incurred in handling and selling the permits. If the permit fee is collected by the WSDOT, the fee is deposited to the Motor Vehicle Fund.

It is the responsibility of the commercial vehicle operator to check the route of the load to ensure there are no obstacles in which the load cannot clear. The WSDOT has the highways listed on their website for operators to use when reviewing their selected routes. In 2013 there were 137,535 oversize and overweight permits issued, 86,970 were Washington trucks and 50,565 were out-of-state trucks. Included in the above number of permits, 62,501 were oversize overweight permits with a height over 14 feet.

The special permit fees except for the agent fees are deposited to the Motor Vehicle Fund.

Summary of Bill:

The bill:

- increases the special permit fees using the Implicit Price Deflator from the last fee adjustment for each fee;
- increases the minimum weight permit and duplicate permit from \$14 to \$25;
- allocates \$500,000 each biennium to be utilized by the WSDOT to implement and maintain an automated system that maintains a database of the state's bridge inventory along with the associated structural designs, specifications, and weight limits. When issuing a special permit for an overwidth, overweight, overheight, or overlegal load, the route must be checked by the automated system to make sure that the load will not cause damage to the state's bridges; and
- directs any remaining permit fees collected above \$500,000 per biennium must be used for highway preservation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2014.