

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5050

As Amended by House, April 9, 2013

Title: An act relating to the carrying of passengers in a vehicle attached to a flatbed tow truck.

Brief Description: Authorizing registered tow truck operators to carry passengers in a vehicle attached to a flatbed tow truck under certain situations.

Sponsors: Senators Sheldon, King, Ericksen and Litzow.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/30/13, 2/05/13 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/26/13, 49-0.

Passed House: 4/09/13, 92-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Eide, Co-Chair; King, Co-Chair; Benton, Vice Co-Chair; Hobbs, Vice Co-Chair; Fain, Budget Leadership Cabinet; Billig, Brown, Carrell, Ericksen, Harper, Mullet, Rolfes, Schlicher, Sheldon and Smith.

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

Background: Under current law, it is unlawful to ride in a vehicle that is being towed by a tow truck.

Summary of Bill: A tow truck operator may allow passengers to ride in a vehicle that is being carried on the deck of a flatbed tow truck under certain conditions, including that passengers are using seatbelts and child restraints, if they are otherwise required by law.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This allows tow truck operators the flexibility to allow passengers to stay in their car when it is safe. This is a rural issue because you cannot always call a cab or ambulance for someone that breaks down and will not fit in truck cab or has special transportation needs. This will create consistent law enforcement across the state so that towers will know what is allowed.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Sheldon, prime sponsor; Randy Houston, Randy's Auto Parts and Towing; Stuart Halsan, Towing and Recovery Assn. of WA.

House Amendment(s): Clarifies that the bill applies to all tow truck operators whether or not they are registered with the Department of Licensing. Allows persons with disabilities to ride in a vehicle being carried on the back of a flatbed tow truck whether or not the tow truck has sufficient seating capacity. Provides additional requirements for riding in a vehicle that is being carried by a flatbed tow truck, including that passengers under 16 years of age must be accompanied by an adult and that passengers be able to communicate with the driver of the tow truck in case of an emergency. Prohibits dangerous or distracting behavior by passengers in a vehicle that is being carried on a flatbed tow truck.