

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5591

C 336 L 13
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning confidential license plates, drivers' licenses, identicards, and vessel registrations.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Eide, King and Shin; by request of Department of Licensing).

Senate Committee on Transportation
House Committee on Transportation

Background: The Department of Licensing (DOL) is responsible for issuing various vehicle and driver-related documents, such as vehicle registrations, drivers' licenses, and identicards. In addition to standard vehicle and driver-related documents, DOL may issue confidential vessel registrations and license plates to law enforcement agencies, statewide elected officials, certain public employees when it is recommended by the Washington State Patrol (WSP), and the State Treasurer to transport state funds or negotiable securities. The use of confidential license plates by a state law enforcement agency is limited to confidential, investigative, or undercover work; confidential public health work; and public assistance, fraud, or support investigations.

DOL retains public records related to the issuance of these documents. Generally, under the Public Records Act all public records are to be made available to the public upon request unless specifically exempt.

Summary: DOL is granted authority to issue confidential driver licenses and identicards to commissioned officers of law enforcement agencies for undercover or covert law enforcement activities. Confidential drivers' licenses and identicards may be used only during an undercover or covert law enforcement operation and the holder must return the confidential document to DOL within 30 days of the end of their undercover or covert operation or upon the officer's retirement, termination, dismissal, change in job assignment, or leave from the agency.

Records related to confidential vessel registration, license plates, drivers' licenses, and identicards are exempt from public disclosure. However, the total number of confidential vessel registration, license plates, drivers' licenses, and identicards that have been issued will still be available for release. Upon request by the Legislature, DOL must provide a

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report summarizing information about the confidential drivers' licenses, identicards, license plates, and vehicle and vessel registration programs.

DOL must perform background investigations on employees who have access to confidential vessel registration, license plates, drivers' licenses, and identicards.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	1	
House	88	8	(House amended)
Senate	47	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: May 21, 2013.