
Transportation Committee

SB 5100

Brief Description: Concerning the processing of certain motor vehicle-related violations applicable to rental cars.

Sponsors: Senators Hobbs and King.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes an exception prohibiting certain infraction information from being reported to the Department of Licensing for rental cars.
- Clarifies that the person who rented a vehicle when an infraction is issued may be responsible for the infraction.

Hearing Date: 3/23/15

Staff: Andrew Russell (786-7143).

Background:

Under current law, local jurisdictions and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) may report certain violations to the Department of Licensing (DOL) for purposes of withholding vehicle registration renewals applicable to the vehicle at issue. These infractions include unpaid civil penalties related to toll violations and two or more unpaid parking violations, automated traffic safety camera violations, or automated school bus safety camera violations.

However, these reporting provisions do not apply if the vehicle at issue is a rented or leased vehicle. Additionally, rental car businesses are relieved of liability for the violations by forwarding the renter's name and address to the jurisdiction or the WSDOT in a timely manner.

Local courts may refer unpaid monetary obligations attached to parking or camera violations to a collections agency, which include violations involving a rented or leased vehicle. This provision applies to whomever is ultimately liable for the violation—the rental car business or the renter.

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.

Summary of Bill:

The exception for rented or leased vehicles from the DOL reporting is removed, allowing local jurisdictions and the WSDOT to report unpaid parking, camera, or toll violations, for which rental car businesses are liable, to the DOL for purposes of withholding vehicle registration renewals applicable to the vehicle at issue. Additionally, language is added clarifying that if a rental car business forwards the renter's name and address to the jurisdiction, liability for an unpaid parking infraction transfers to the renter.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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