

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6501

As of January 28, 2016

Title: An act relating to authorizing the use of certain cargo extensions that connect to a recreational vehicle frame.

Brief Description: Authorizing the use of certain cargo extensions that connect to a recreational vehicle frame.

Sponsors: Senator Braun.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/27/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: In Washington, it is generally not lawful to pull more than one trailer at a time behind a motor vehicle. There is an exception for motor carriers under a certain length. The current definition of a "trailer" includes every vehicle without motive power designed for being drawn by or used in conjunction with a motor vehicle constructed so that no appreciable part of its weight rests upon or is carried by such motor vehicle.

There are cargo carriers currently available on the market that attach to the left and right sides of a frame of a recreational vehicle and do not pivot on a trailer hitch as a trailer, but become a part of the recreational vehicle through the way it is connected. These carriers typically have an axle that acts as a tag axle to assist in carrying the weight of the cargo. Current statutes do not address recreational vehicle cargo extensions or carriers.

Summary of Bill: The definition of "trailer" is modified to exempt a cargo extension that connects to the left and right side of a recreational vehicle frame, becomes part of the frame, does not pivot on a hitch, and has an axle with two wheels that act like a tag axle to safely carry the weight of the cargo.

A recreational vehicle with a cargo extension is designated as a lawful combination of vehicles that may be operated in Washington.

Appropriation: None.

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.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect on July 1, 2016.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: A constituent brought this idea to me. He lives part of the year in Arizona where these devices can be used and it would be great for people in Washington to be able to also use them. I view this bill as providing a little vehicular freedom and would like to expand the opportunities people have to travel and recreate. I am happy to work with the State Patrol to alleviate any concern they may have with the bill.

OTHER: The State Patrol would like to clarify some equipment requirements for these devices, including lighting and mud flaps. Additionally, we would like to clarify that a vehicle could only use one of these devices and not attach additional trailers to the cargo extension.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Braun, prime sponsor.

OTHER: Melissa Van Gorkom, WSP.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.