

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2612

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 26, 2018

Title: An act relating to tow truck operators.

Brief Description: Concerning tow truck operators.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Condotta and Steele).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/09/18, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/21/18, 2/26/18 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Amended Bill

- Creates license plate indicator tabs for licensed tow truck operators applying for a license to use a tow truck to conduct transporter, hulk hauler or scrap processor, or wrecker business.
- Establishes fees for the transporter, hulk hauler or scrap processor, and wrecker license plate indicator tabs.
- Requires that tow truck operators with transporter, hulk hauler or scrap processor, and/or wrecker license plate indicator tabs be subject to the same requirements, enforcement, and penalties as non-towing companies conducting transporter, hulk hauler or scrap processor, or wrecker business with vehicles bearing special license plates indicating the business purpose.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Hobbs, Chair; Saldaña, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Chase, Cleveland, Dhingra, Fortunato, Liias, McCoy, Sheldon, Takko, Walsh, Wellman and Zeiger.

Staff: Bryon Moore (786-7726)

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.

Background: Registered tow truck operators may apply for a transporter license with the Department of Licensing (DOL). A transporter license allows a person or business to deliver vehicles that are not registered as their own using the driveaway or towaway methods. When a license application is approved by DOL, the operator is issued a set of unique license plates indicating the transporter business purpose that are to be displayed on the tow truck in operation. The fee for an original transporter license is \$25. Special license plates indicating the transporter business must be displayed on any vehicle being transported using a licensed tow truck. The fee for these plates is \$2 per set.

Registered tow truck operators may apply for a hulk hauler or scrap processor license with DOL. A hulk hauler is a person or a business that transports and/or sells vehicles to a licensed vehicle wrecker or scrap processor in the same form that the vehicle was obtained in. A hulk hauler may not sell secondhand vehicle parts to anyone other than a licensed vehicle wrecker or scrap processor, with exception to some parts that are authorized to be removed from the vehicle and sold. A scrap processor is a licensed establishment that maintains a hydraulic baler and shears or a shredder for recycling salvage. When a license application is approved by DOL, the operator is issued a certificate that must be displayed at the place of business. The fee for a hulk hauler license is \$10, and the fee for a scrap processor license is \$25. Special license plates indicating the hulk hauler or scrap processor business must be displayed on the tow truck vehicles used for this work and must be displayed on any vehicle being transported in lieu of a trip permit or current license. The fee for these special plates is \$5 for the first set and \$2 for each additional set bearing the same license number.

Registered tow truck operators may apply for a wrecker license with DOL. A wrecker is a person or business engaged in buying, selling, or dealing in vehicles for the purpose of wrecking, dismantling, or disassembling vehicles, or who buys and sells integral secondhand parts of component material, or who deals in secondhand vehicle parts. When a license application is approved by DOL, the operator is issued a certificate that must be displayed at the place of business. The fee for a wrecker license is \$25. Special license plates indicating the wrecker business must be displayed on the vehicles owned or operated by the operator and used to conduct business. Wrecker companies with more than one licensed location in the state may use special license plates bearing the same number for vehicles operated out of any of the locations. The fee for these special plates is \$5 for the first set and \$2 for each additional set bearing the same license number.

Summary of Amended Bill: A registered tow truck operator using a tow truck to conduct transporter business is required to display a license plate indicator tab detailing the business purpose on the vehicle's regular license plates. This is in lieu of obtaining and displaying a special set of license plates indicating the business purpose in addition to the regular license plates. A fee of \$25 is established for the transporter license plate indicator tab.

A registered tow truck operator using a tow truck to conduct hulk hauler or scrap processor business is required to display a license plate indicator tab detailing the business purpose on the vehicle's regular license plates. This is in lieu of obtaining and displaying a special set of license plates indicating the business purpose in addition to the regular license plates. A fee of \$5 is established for the first hulk hauler or scrap processor license plate indicator tab, and a fee of \$2 is established for each additional indicator tab.

A registered tow truck operator using a tow truck to conduct wrecker business is required to display a license plate indicator tab detailing the business purpose on the vehicle's regular license plates. This is in lieu of obtaining and displaying a special set of license plates indicating the business purpose in addition to the regular license plates. A fee of \$5 is established for the first wrecker business license plate indicator tab, and a fee of \$2 is established for each additional indicator tab.

The license plate indicator tabs must affix to the tow truck's regular license plate, clearly identify the business purpose of the licensed vehicle, use a combination of letters and numbers to indicate a vehicle is licensed, and be approved by DOL. Tow truck operators with transporter, hulk hauler or scrap processor, and/or wrecker license plate indicator tabs are subject to the same requirements, enforcement, and penalties as non-towing companies conducting transporter, hulk hauler or scrap processor, or wrecker business with vehicles bearing special license plates indicating the business purpose. The license plate indicator tabs may not be used on any special or personalized license plate.

EFFECT OF TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE AMENDMENT(S): Removes language requiring the hulk hauler, scrap processor, or wrecker tabs to have the same license number.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on June 1, 2019.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute House Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This allows us to fix the issues and streamline the current process tow truck operators licenses to conduct other business in the state. Tow trucks may have up to four sets of license plates on the vehicle—one for registering the vehicle and up to three different sets based on type of business conducted. The new tab system will make it easier for them to operate. The bill is revenue neutral. We were able to fix some of the technical issues as the bill passed the House floor.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Cary Condotta, Prime Sponsor; Peter Lukevich, Towing and Recovery Association of Washington.

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