

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5018

C 311 L 17

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Requiring the examination of rules to authorize wheelchair accessible taxicabs access to high occupancy vehicle lanes.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Hasegawa and Kuderer).

Senate Committee on Transportation House Committee on Transportation

Background: Current law allows the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and local authorities to reserve portions of any highways under their jurisdiction as limited access facilities, or HOV lanes. WSDOT and local authorities are currently authorized to give access to these limited access facilities to the following users:

- public transportation vehicles;
- motorcycles;
- private motor vehicles carrying a minimum of a specified number of passengers; and
- certain private transportation provider vehicles with the capacity to carry eight or more passengers if such use does not interfere with the efficiency, reliability, and safety of public transportation operations.

Wheelchair-accessible taxis (WATs) are for hire vehicles designed or modified for the transportation of a person who is wheelchair-bound and has a physical or medical impairment. WATs are currently allowed to use HOV lanes only if they are carrying the specified number of passengers. None of the 53 wheelchair-accessible taxis currently operating in Washington State can legally carry eight or more passengers.

Summary: WSDOT must reexamine its rules surrounding access to HOV lanes using a public process, specifically looking at impacts of allowing in wheelchair-accessible taxis. WSDOT is directed to report on progress of this process to the Legislature by January 1, 2018.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0	
House	97	0	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)

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.

House 95 1 (House receded/amended)
Senate 49 0 (Senate concurred)

Effective: July 23, 2017