
SENATE BILL 6504

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By Senator Fortunato

1 AN ACT Relating to removing the requirement that a vehicle pass
2 on the left-hand side; and amending RCW 46.61.110 and 46.61.100.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.61.110 and 2005 c 396 s 1 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 The following rules shall govern the overtaking and passing of
7 vehicles proceeding in the same direction, subject to those
8 limitations, exceptions and special rules hereinafter stated:

9 (1) The driver of a vehicle overtaking (~~((other traffic))~~) another
10 vehicle proceeding in the same direction shall pass (~~((to the left~~
11 ~~thereof))~~) at a safe distance and shall not (~~((again drive to the right~~
12 ~~side of the roadway))~~) merge into the same lane as the vehicle being
13 overtaken until safely clear of the overtaken (~~((traffic))~~) vehicle.

14 (2) The driver of a vehicle approaching a pedestrian or bicycle
15 that is on the roadway or on the right-hand shoulder or bicycle lane
16 of the roadway shall pass to the left at a safe distance to clearly
17 avoid coming into contact with the pedestrian or bicyclist, and shall
18 not again drive to the right side of the roadway until safely clear
19 of the overtaken pedestrian or bicyclist.

20 (3) (~~((Except when overtaking and passing on the right is~~
21 ~~permitted,))~~) An overtaken (~~((traffic))~~) vehicle shall give way (~~((to the~~

1 ~~right~~)) in favor of an overtaking vehicle on audible signal and shall
2 not increase speed until completely passed by the overtaking vehicle.

3 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.61.100 and 2007 c 83 s 2 are each amended to read
4 as follows:

5 (1) Upon all roadways of sufficient width a vehicle shall be
6 driven upon the right half of the roadway, except as follows:

7 (a) When overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the
8 same direction under the rules governing such movement;

9 (b) When an obstruction exists making it necessary to drive to
10 the left of the center of the highway; provided, any person so doing
11 shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles traveling in the proper
12 direction upon the unobstructed portion of the highway within such
13 distance as to constitute an immediate hazard;

14 (c) Upon a roadway divided into three marked lanes and providing
15 for two-way movement traffic under the rules applicable thereon;

16 (d) Upon a street or highway restricted to one-way traffic; or

17 (e) Upon a highway having three lanes or less, when approaching a
18 stationary authorized emergency vehicle, tow truck or other vehicle
19 providing roadside assistance while operating warning lights with
20 three hundred sixty degree visibility, or police vehicle as described
21 under RCW 46.61.212(~~(+2)~~) (1)(d)(ii).

22 (2) Upon all roadways having two or more lanes for traffic moving
23 in the same direction, all vehicles shall be driven in the right-hand
24 lane then available for traffic, except (a) when overtaking and
25 passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction, (b) when
26 traveling at a speed greater than the traffic flow, (c) when moving
27 left to allow traffic to merge, or (d) when preparing for a left turn
28 at an intersection, exit, or into a private road or driveway when
29 such left turn is legally permitted. On any such roadway, a vehicle
30 or combination over ten thousand pounds shall be driven only in the
31 right-hand lane except under the conditions enumerated in (a) through
32 (d) of this subsection.

33 (3) No vehicle towing a trailer or no vehicle or combination over
34 ten thousand pounds may be driven in the left-hand lane of a limited
35 access roadway having three or more lanes for traffic moving in one
36 direction except when preparing for a left turn at an intersection,
37 exit, or into a private road or driveway when a left turn is legally
38 permitted. This subsection does not apply to a vehicle using a high
39 occupancy vehicle lane. A high occupancy vehicle lane is not

1 considered the left-hand lane of a roadway. The department of
2 transportation, in consultation with the Washington state patrol,
3 shall adopt rules specifying (a) those circumstances where it is
4 permissible for other vehicles to use the left lane in case of
5 emergency or to facilitate the orderly flow of traffic, and (b) those
6 segments of limited access roadway to be exempt from this subsection
7 due to the operational characteristics of the roadway.

8 (4) It is a traffic infraction to drive continuously in the left
9 lane of a multilane roadway when it impedes the flow of other
10 traffic.

11 (5) Upon any roadway having four or more lanes for moving traffic
12 and providing for two-way movement of traffic, a vehicle shall not be
13 driven to the left of the center line of the roadway except when
14 authorized by official traffic control devices designating certain
15 lanes to the left side of the center of the roadway for use by
16 traffic not otherwise permitted to use such lanes, or except as
17 permitted under subsection (1)(b) of this section. However, this
18 subsection shall not be construed as prohibiting the crossing of the
19 center line in making a left turn into or from an alley, private road
20 or driveway.

21 (6) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a
22 vehicle from overtaking and passing a vehicle on the right-hand side
23 of the roadway.

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