

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2353

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to fire trailer vehicle registration and license plates.

Brief Description: Providing for fire trailer vehicle registration and license plates.

Sponsors: Representatives Blake and Dent.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/23/20, 2/5/20 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Defines a fire trailer to mean a commercial trailer that is used only for wildfire response as required by state and federal regulations, is only transported between storage and job sites, and is equipped with a water tank designed for fire-fighting purposes.
- Provides permanent registration and license plates for fire trailers. The registered owner must pay the initial commercial trailer registration fee of \$30 in addition to any other fees and taxes due by law.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 31 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Wylie, 1st Vice Chair; Slatter, 2nd Vice Chair; Valdez, 2nd Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Young, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Chambers, Chapman, Dent, Doglio, Duerr, Dufault, Entenman, Eslick, Goehner, Gregerson, Irwin, Kloba, Lovick, McCaslin, Mead, Orcutt, Ortiz-Self, Paul, Ramos, Riccelli, Shewmake, Van Werven and Volz.

Staff: Beth Redfield (786-7140).

Background:

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.

Several vehicle types may be permanently registered, without a requirement for registration renewal:

- collector vehicles (30 years and older) and horseless carriages (40 years and older);
- commercial trailers used to transport loads in excess of 40,000 pounds;
- intermittent-use private trailers;
- vehicles with Medal of Honor license plates;
- vehicles with Disabled American Veteran or Prisoner of War license plates;
- vehicles with Gold Star license plates; and
- vehicles with Purple Heart license plates.

Each is treated differently in terms of how much the initial registration costs and how many vehicles may be registered by an individual owner.

Prior to 2015, license plates were generally replaced every seven years. Since 2015 all plates are now permanent, only being replaced as needed due to wear, damage, or loss.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The substitute bill specifies a "fire trailer" is defined to mean a commercial trailer that is used only for wildfire response as required by state and federal regulations, is only transported between storage and job sites, and is equipped with a water tank designed for fire-fighting purposes.

A fire trailer may be issued a permanent license plate and registration. The registered owner must pay the initial commercial trailer registration fee of \$30 in addition to any other fees and taxes due by law.

A fire trailer with permanent registration is exempt from registration renewal; expires upon change of ownership, removal from the state, or disposal; and may not be issued to trailers that haul logs.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The use of a fire trailer is only for wildfire response as required by state or federal regulations, rather than being limited to wildfire response at logging sites. The effective date is changed to October 1, 2020.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect on October 1, 2020.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) A fire trailer is a Washington Department of Natural Resources requirement during fire season, which typically runs from April 15 to October 15. These trailers are transported from a storage facility or yard out to job sites and might be moved around in the summer, depending where they are relocating the logging operations. The trailers are only used for a maximum of six months of the year. This would be a convenience issue for the loggers that also would save us a few bucks. There is already an allowance in the law for intermittent trailers. Fire trailers are also required for work by volunteer organizations on recreational trails for off-road vehicles. Anything reducing costs for a nonprofit would definitely help. Weyerhaeuser frequently turns to small independent businesses for harvest. This will provide a minor cost savings, as well as a significant convenience, and helps small business in rural communities.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jakob Perry, Washington Off-Highway Vehicle Alliance; Jerrold Bonagofsky, Washington Contract Loggers Association; and Scott Hazlegrove, Weyerhaeuser.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.