

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5694

As Passed Senate, February 25, 2019

Title: An act relating to commercial beekeeper drivers.

Brief Description: Concerning commercial beekeeper drivers.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators King and Saldaña).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/06/19, 2/13/19 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed Senate: 2/25/19, 48-1.

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Exempts commercial beekeeper drivers from the medical examination and certification requirements for commercial driver's license purposes.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5694 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hobbs, Chair; Saldaña, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Cleveland, Das, Fortunato, Lovelett, Nguyen, O'Ban, Padden, Randall, Takko, Wilson, C. and Zeiger.

Staff: Bryon Moore (786-7726)

Background: A person must have a commercial driver's license (CDL) in order to legally drive a commercial vehicle in Washington. Several types of vehicles are characterized as commercial vehicles under Washington law. Any single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 26,001 pounds or more is a commercial vehicle. This designation also covers any combination of vehicles if the vehicle being driven has a GVWR of 26,001 pounds or more, or the towed vehicle has a GVWR of 10,001 pounds when the combined GVWR equals 26,001 pounds or more.

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.

Vehicles designed to carry 16 or more passengers are considered commercial vehicles, as are school buses. Certain vehicles that carry hazardous materials are also considered commercial vehicles.

To obtain a CDL, a person must apply to the Department of Licensing (DOL) and pay the application fee. DOL will not issue a CDL unless the applicant (1) is a resident of the state; (2) has successfully completed an approved commercial-driver instruction course; (3) has passed a knowledge and skills test that complies with state and federal requirements; and (4) has fulfilled the requirements of the federal Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act, together with any other state laws or other federal regulations. A medical examiner must certify a person is physically qualified to drive a commercial vehicle.

The federal government also regulates commercial drivers under the Federal Motor Carriers Safety Administration. These regulations include driver's license standards and driver qualifications. States must comply with certain federal requirements, and the Secretary of Transportation can withhold a portion of federal funding from noncomplying states.

Summary of First Substitute Bill: A commercial beekeeper driver is exempt from the medical examination and certification requirements for CDL purposes. A commercial beekeeper driver is defined as a driver who is operating a commercial motor vehicle controlled and operated by a beekeeper engaged in the seasonal transportation of bees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This bill eases the burden on beekeepers getting their CDL. Since there is a small number of these types of drivers and because they are driving for such short time periods, this does not impose any additional safety risk. Beekeepers play a critical role in many aspects of the agricultural sector.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Curtis King, Prime Sponsor.

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