

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 1269

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Addressing motor vehicle transporter license plates.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Kirby, Barkis, Robertson and Chambers).

**House Committee on Transportation**  
**Senate Committee on Transportation**

### **Background:**

A motor vehicle transporter (transporter) is a business that delivers or moves vehicles as a service to persons or other businesses or entities for a fee. The transporter may move the vehicle either by driving it from one location to another or else by towing it. Types of businesses or entities that are transporters include: auto detail shops; towers that move vehicles for persons that are members of an automobile association; car haulers; auction houses; and some tow truck operators. Auto repair shops are also eligible for transporter licenses for the purposes of evaluating vehicles in need of repair or that have been repaired. The function of transporters is considered distinct from that of registered tow truck operators that tow abandoned vehicles or improperly parked vehicles, and from that of motor freight carriers that haul vehicles on trailers or semitrailers.

A transporter business must procure a special business license known as a transporter license, which allows the holder the authority to drive or tow any motor vehicle upon the public roads of Washington. To apply for the license, the person representing the business must submit an application to the Department of Licensing (DOL) along with a fee of \$25. To receive special transporter license plates or, in the case of a registered tow truck operator, special indicator tabs, the applicant must submit a fee of \$2 for each set of plates or indicator tabs; there is no limit to the number of plate sets or indicator tabs that may be requested. If the application is in order, the DOL must issue a certificate of license along with any plate sets or indicator tabs requested. The plates or indicator tabs must be attached to and conspicuously displayed on all vehicles being delivered or moved in the conduct of

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business.

A transporter license may be renewed annually for a fee of \$15.

The Director of the DOL may deny, suspend, or revoke the license of a transporter if the licensee: uses the transporter plates or indicator tabs on a vehicle owned by the transporter business; loans the transporter plates or indicator tabs to another entity or person; uses the plates or indicator tabs for a purpose other than delivering or moving vehicles as a service to others; is knowingly in possession of a stolen vehicle or a vehicle with an altered or missing vehicle identification number; or otherwise violates the provisions of the chapter of law regulating transporters.

Violation of any provision of the laws governing transporters is a traffic infraction.

**Summary:**

The number of license plate sets that the DOL may issue for the purpose of a vehicle transporter business is limited to three, unless the business demonstrates a sufficient business need, in which case the DOL may issue up to 10. The limit does not apply to indicator tabs requested by a registered tow truck operator. The authority to use such plates or an indicator tab is restricted to Washington public highways only. The fee for an original transporter's license is increased from \$25 to \$150 and the annual renewal fee is increased to \$100. The fee for a set of vehicle transporter plates is increased from \$2 to \$50. The holder of a transporter license is required to report the loss, theft, or damage of a transporter license plate or indicator tab to the DOL within 10 days of the event of loss, theft, or damage. The DOL Director is authorized to deny, suspend, or revoke a transporter license, if the holder uses transporter license plates on public highways outside Washington.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	93	4
Senate	44	4

**Effective:** January 1, 2022