
Transportation Committee

SSB 5812

Brief Description: Concerning the response to electric vehicle fires.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Wilson, J., Nguyen, Lovick and McCune).

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directs the Washington State Patrol to conduct a study of electric vehicle fires with a reporting date of January 1, 2025.

Hearing Date: 2/15/24

Staff: Beth Redfield (786-7140).

Background:

The Washington State Patrol's (WSP's) Fire Protection Bureau has broad responsibility to ensure fire and life safety for people of Washington. The WSP Fire Protection Bureau's divisions include fire services training, regional fire protection services, emergency mobilization, and fire code information services.

A 2021 National Transportation Safety Board investigation of three electric vehicle fire incidents found that vehicle manufacturers' emergency response guides were inadequate for minimizing risks to first and second responders, and that there are gaps in safety standards and research related to high-voltage lithium-ion batteries involved in high-speed, high-severity crashes.

Summary of Bill:

The WSP, in consultation with the Department of Ecology, a representative of the towing and

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

recovery industry, local fire protection districts, and other entities must conduct a study of electric vehicle fires reviewing the following:

- impacts to the environment and proximate residential areas;
- impacts to responding firefighters' health;
- best practices for fire response; and
- best practices regarding cleanup and disposal efforts.

By January 1, 2025, the WSP must report to the appropriate committees of the Legislature their study findings, and any resulting recommendations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.