

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1058

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 9, 2023

Title: An act relating to streamlining the licensing process for a commercial driver's license by allowing the department to waive requirements for applicants that previously surrendered the license, allowing the license to be renewed online, and modifying the license test fees.

Brief Description: Streamlining the licensing process for a commercial driver's license by allowing the department to waive requirements for applicants that previously surrendered the license, allowing the license to be renewed online, and modifying the license test fees.

Sponsors: Representatives Paul, Orcutt, Simmons, Ryu, Reed, Ramel, Lekanoff, Sandlin, Macri, Timmons, Wylie, Shavers, Kloba and Ormsby; by request of Department of Licensing.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/9/23, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/09/23 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Reduces the fee charged by the Department of Licensing (DOL) for a skills examination for a commercial motor vehicle license and lowers the number of attempts to pass the examination for the payment of each fee from two to one.
- Removes the requirement that an applicant for the renewal of a commercial driver's license apply in person at a licensing service office.
- Provides DOL authority to waive commercial driver's license or commercial learner's permit qualification standards for applicants who previously have voluntarily surrendered a commercial driver's license.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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.

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Lias, Chair; Lovick, Vice Chair; Shewmake, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Cleveland, Fortunato, Kauffman, Lovelett, Nobles, Padden, Randall, Valdez, Wilson, C. and Wilson, J..

Staff: Bryon Moore (786-7726)

Background: A person must have a commercial driver's license (CDL) 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. Vehicles designed to carry 16 or more passengers are considered commercial vehicles, including 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:

- is a resident of the state;
- has successfully completed an approved commercial driver instruction course;
- has passed a knowledge and skills test that complies with state and federal requirements; and
- has fulfilled the requirements of the federal Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act, together with any other state laws or other federal regulations.

The fee for up to two CDL skills exams is no more than \$250. If the applicant's primary use of a CDL is to drive a school bus, the fee for up to two CDL skill exams is no more than \$100. If the applicant's primary use of a CDL is to drive for a non-profit entity that operates federally supported head start programs or early childhood education programs that qualify under state law, the fee for up to two CDL skills exams is no more than \$225.

State law specifies that an applicant must apply in person at a licensing service office to renew a CDL. Since 2018, DOL practice has been to allow CDL renewals on-line.

State law does not specify the requirements for obtaining a new CDL after a CDL has been voluntarily surrendered. DOL's current practice is to allow individuals who surrender their CDL to obtain a reinstated CDL without additional testing or training, provided they do so within a year of CDL surrender. For individuals who would like to have their CDL reinstated after a year's time, DOL requires that the process for obtaining a new CDL be repeated.

Summary of Bill: The fee charged by DOL for a skills examination for a commercial motor vehicle license is lowered to no more than \$175, but the number of

attempts to pass the examination for the payment of each fee is lowered from two to one. This lower skills examination fee applies to all applicants for a CDL, unless the applicant's primary use of the license is to drive a school bus, in which case the fee remains at no more than \$100 for up to two CDL skill exams.

An applicant, generally, is no longer required to apply in person at a licensing service office to renew a CDL.

DOL is given explicit authority to waive CDL or commercial learner's permit qualification standards for applicants who previously have voluntarily surrendered a CDL.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2024.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: No public hearing was held.

Persons Testifying: N/A

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: N/A