

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5317

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As Amended by House, March 24, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to the removal of vehicles by a regional transit authority when obstructing the operation of high capacity transportation vehicles or jeopardizing public safety.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the removal of vehicles by a regional transit authority when obstructing the operation of high capacity transportation vehicles or jeopardizing public safety.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Nobles, Wilson, J., Frame, Lias, Lovick, Saldaña, Salomon, Shewmake, Wellman and Wilson, C.).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 1/24/23, 1/26/23 [DPS].

**Floor Activity:** Passed Senate: 2/15/23, 49-0.

Passed House: 3/24/23, 95-1.

**Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill**

- Allows Regional Transit Authority (RTA) representatives to direct an immediate tow of unauthorized vehicles on or within an RTA right-of-way.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5317 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

**Staff:** Jenna Forty (786-7755)

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*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.*

**Background:** Prior to 2022, unauthorized vehicles may be impounded by a registered tow truck operator at the direction of a law enforcement officer or other public official with jurisdiction if the vehicle is on public property, or at the direction of the property owner or an agent if it is on private property. A vehicle is deemed unauthorized if it is left unattended in certain public or private locations for specified periods of time. The 2022 supplemental budget—ESSB 5689—enacted changes that permit an authorized Regional Transit Authority (RTA) representative to direct impoundment of unauthorized vehicles within the 2021-23 biennium.

**Summary of First Substitute Bill:** An authorized RTA representative may direct an immediate impoundment of an unauthorized vehicle on or within ten feet on either side of a right-of-way used by an RTA for high capacity transportation where the vehicle constitutes an obstruction to the operation of high capacity transportation vehicles or jeopardizes public safety.

The language enacted in 2022, restricting the provision to the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium, is removed. The substantive provision allowing vehicle tows to be made at the direction of an authorized RTA representative is reenacted.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on First Substitute:** PRO: Our communities rely on services from transit. When vehicles are stopped in the right-of-way, this slows or stops transit. This bill will allow transit to directly call the tow company, making it so transit can be resumed sooner.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator T'wina Nobles, Prime Sponsor; Alex Alston, Sound Transit.

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

#### **EFFECT OF HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):**

- Limits the definition of an unauthorized vehicle subject to immediate impoundment to within the right-of-way rather than on or within ten feet of either side of a right-of-way used by a regional transit authority for high capacity transportation.