

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5531

As Passed Senate, March 1, 2023

Title: An act relating to special use permits for milk product haulers.

Brief Description: Concerning special use permits for milk product haulers.

Sponsors: Senators King, Shewmake and Nobles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/31/23, 2/09/23 [DP].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 3/1/23, 48-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Washington State Department of Transportation to issue a special permit for double trailers hauling liquid milk that together are up to 85 feet in length.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Daniel Masterson (786-7454)

Background: It is illegal under state law to operate on public highways a combination of a tractor and two trailers with a combined length of the trailers of more than 61 feet without a special permit.

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.

Operators of overlength vehicles must obtain a special permit from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to travel on the state highway system. Permits issued may be valid anywhere from one day to one year. WSDOT is authorized to issue a one-year permit for operation of two trailing units which together are no more than 68 feet in length. WSDOT must charge a \$100 fee for the permit.

Summary of Bill: WSDOT is authorized to issue a one-year special permit for operation of two trailing units hauling fluid or liquid nondivisible milk, which together are not more than 85 feet in length. WSDOT must charge a \$300 fee for the permit.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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: PRO: Allowing these longer trailers will have a very positive impact on the environment. This bill is narrowly aimed at implementing a provision of the 2015 Fast Act, which permits milk trucks to exceed the weight limit in federal law. Permitting of oversize vehicles is not unusual in Washington or in any other state. This bill has the added benefit of reducing vehicle miles traveled by milk haulers by allowing them to use higher capacity tanks. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions. We see this bill as our best shot at reducing emissions in our transportation supply chain. Dairygold has adopted a corporate goal of net zero emissions by 2050. This would be one of the best tools to help us reach that goal. These permits will also help us as we moved toward electric vehicles, which are heavier because of the batteries. This bill would reduce Dairygold truck loads by 75 per day. Dairy products are one of the top two commodities in the state today. Even though these trucks weigh more, the weight per axle is less than other trucks. We will be modernizing our transportation infrastructure. This bill will allow us to dramatically reduce the truck trips needed to transport our milk. These trucks have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 20% in other states.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Curtis King, Prime Sponsor; Case VanderMeulen, Darigold; Russ Brandt, Darigold; Kristi Kangas, Darigold; Sheri Call, Washington Trucking Associations; Ben Buchholz, NW Ag Cooperative Council and Darigold.

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