

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2465

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to vehicle equipment standards related to original equipment installed.

Brief Description: Modifying vehicle equipment standards related to original equipment installed.

Sponsors: By Representatives Lovick, Kessler, P. Sullivan, Haler and O'Brien; by request of Washington State Patrol.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/16/06, 1/25/06 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/9/06, 98-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 3/3/06, 46-0.

House Concurred.

Passed House: 3/6/06, 98-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies vehicle equipment standards.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Wallace, Vice Chair; Woods, Ranking Minority Member; Skinner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Buck, Campbell, Clibborn, Curtis, Dickerson, Ericksen, Flannigan, Hankins, Holmquist, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kilmer, Lovick, Nixon, Rodne, Schindler, Shabro, Simpson, B. Sullivan, Takko, Upthegrove and Wood.

Staff: Teresa Berntsen (786-7301).

Background:

Current law states that all required lights and equipment on a vehicle must be in proper condition and adjustment as required by state law or rules issued by the Washington State Patrol.

Brake Lights

Current state law requires vehicles to have two or more stop lamps (brake lights). Federal law requires a third rear, high-centered brake light for passenger cars manufactured after September 1, 1985, and for trucks, vans, and sports utility vehicles manufactured after September 1, 1993.

Exhaust Systems

Vehicles must be equipped with a muffler in good working order to prevent excessive or unusual noise. Exhaust systems may not be modified in a manner which amplifies engine noise above the noise emitted with the originally-installed muffler. It is unlawful for a person to operate a vehicle with exhaust noise exceeding ninety-five decibels. Proper authorities must prove that the exhaust system modification results in noise amplification in excess of 95 decibels.

Summary of Bill:

Clarifies that all required lights and equipment on a vehicle must be in proper working condition. Brake Lights

Requires all passenger cars manufactured after September 1, 1985, and all passenger trucks, vans, and sports utility vehicles manufactured after September 1, 1993, to have a third stop lamp (brake light). The brake light must be a rear, center high-mounted light that meets certain visibility requirements, consistent with federal regulation.

Exhaust Systems

Removes prohibition against operating a motor vehicle with an exhaust system that emits a noise exceeding 95 decibels. Removes language stating that a violation does not occur unless the local authority proves a vehicle's modified exhaust system exceeds 95 decibels. Retains other vehicle exhaust system requirements in current law.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Brake lights are important for safety, and its is important that state law is updated to require that all lights are in working order, as required by federal law. The State Patrol lost a case due to a technicality that would be fixed by this bill. This bill will avoid further confusion.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Lovick, prime sponsor; and Jeff Devere, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.