

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5199

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Transportation, March 3, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to vehicle length and width measurement exclusive devices and specialized equipment.

**Brief Description:** Harmonizing vehicle size limits with federal rules.

**Sponsors:** Senators Poulsen, Swecker and Haugen; by request of Department of Transportation.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 3/2/05, 3/3/05 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Jacobsen, Vice Chair; Poulsen, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Benson, Esser, Kastama, Mulliken, Oke, Spanel and Weinstein.

**Staff:** Hayley Gamble (786-7452)

**Background:** State law regarding externally mounted mirrors is not in compliance with recently updated federal regulations. Current law allows rear view mirrors to extend five inches beyond a vehicle's width limits. Other width exclusive devices are listed in state law and may not extend more than three inches beyond the width limits of the vehicle, or be designed to carry cargo. Federal funds can be withheld from states that are found to be out of compliance with federal regulations.

Vehicles considered 'specialized equipment' must follow certain state and federal laws when being used on state highways. Specialized equipment vehicles include car and boat transporters, trucks with various trailer combinations, and trucks towing other vehicles. A change in federal law has recently amended the category of specialized equipment, allowing a certain combination vehicle to transport explosives. Under current law, this vehicle could not transport explosives in Washington state

**Summary of Bill:** Externally mounted mirror regulations are brought into compliance with federal regulations. An externally mounted rear vision mirror may extend beyond the width limits of a vehicle to provide the driver a view to the rear along both sides of the vehicle.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) may determine by rule what devices can be considered width exclusive. The current list of width exclusive devices in statute is repealed.

DOT may make changes to size and weight criteria rules for vehicles considered specialized equipment without legislative approval.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Testimony For:** The federal law change on rear vision mirrors no longer has a width limit, just a vision requirement. This bill would help the state stay on top of changes to federal law. This bill would make enforcement of relating laws easier for the State Patrol. This is a housekeeping measure that will 'clean up' statute.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: James Wright, WSDOT; Coral Estes, WSP.