
SENATE BILL 6923

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2008 Regular Session

By Senators Murray, Kohl-Welles, Weinstein, Pridemore, Jacobsen, and Kline

Read first time 02/06/08. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to a passenger vehicle greenhouse gas excise tax;
2 adding a new section to chapter 82.44 RCW; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature acknowledges the scientific
5 consensus that global warming from greenhouse gases threatens
6 Washington state's economy and environment. The legislature further
7 recognizes that it is incumbent on the people of Washington state to
8 take measures to reduce the state's contribution to global warming
9 pollution. Emissions from road transportation account for
10 approximately one-third of Washington state's global warming pollution,
11 and the transportation sector is Washington state's largest contributor
12 of greenhouse gas emissions. Encouraging the use of fuel-efficient
13 vehicles and providing transportation alternatives are important
14 strategies for reducing fuel use and associated greenhouse gas
15 emissions.

16 The legislature finds that a greenhouse gas tax is an excise tax on
17 sources that contribute to global warming. The legislature finds that
18 the global warming costs associated with automobile emissions are not
19 included in the existing costs of using a vehicle. Additionally, the

1 legislature finds more alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel
2 are needed to significantly reduce automobile vehicle miles traveled.
3 The legislature finds that a greenhouse gas tax is an effective way to
4 embed some of the global warming costs of automobile emissions into the
5 cost of using a vehicle, and at the same time provides resources to
6 fund transportation alternatives.

7 The legislature finds that an exact measure of a vehicle's
8 greenhouse gas emissions, though preferred, is not administratively
9 feasible at this time. The environmental protection agency fuel
10 economy rating is the best available measure of a vehicle's greenhouse
11 gas emissions given current technology and data collection practices.
12 The legislature finds that there is a sufficient relationship between
13 a vehicle's fuel economy and its greenhouse gas emissions to provide a
14 rational basis for determining the vehicle green house gas emissions
15 tax. The legislature assumes that passenger vehicles travel the
16 national average of twelve thousand miles per year and sets the price
17 of greenhouse gas emissions at twenty dollars per ton of carbon
18 dioxide.

19 Therefore, the legislature finds imposing a vehicle greenhouse gas
20 emissions tax is a vital part of the state's strategy to reducing
21 global warming.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 82.44 RCW
23 to read as follows:

24 (1) The department of licensing must annually collect a vehicle
25 excise tax on greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the schedules
26 contained in subsection (4) of this section. The annual vehicle
27 greenhouse gas emissions excise tax will be collected on all motor
28 vehicles licensed under the passenger use class, as specified in
29 chapter 308-96A WAC.

30 (2) The state treasurer must distribute revenues on a monthly
31 basis, less administrative fees not to exceed one percent of fees
32 collected, according to the following formula:

33 (a) Twenty-five percent to the Washington state department of
34 transportation; and

35 (b) Seventy-five percent to cities and counties based on a pro-
36 rated share of registered passenger vehicles in incorporated and
37 unincorporated areas.

1 (3) The proceeds of this tax must be used for the design,
2 construction, and operations of transportation facilities and services
3 that provide alternatives to the use of single-occupant vehicles and
4 for programs that encourage the use of these facilities and services.
5 The allowable uses of these revenues include but are not limited to
6 transit, high-capacity transportation, bicycle and pedestrian
7 facilities, and transportation demand management programs.

8 (4) The tax schedule for the vehicle greenhouse gas emissions
9 excise tax is as follows:

10 (a) For the purpose of this section, "EPA fuel economy rating"
11 means the estimated, combined (fifty-five percent city and forty-five
12 percent highway) fuel economy rating for vehicles, as reported in the
13 United States environmental protection agency and United States
14 department of energy "fuel economy guide" since the 1978 model year.

15 (b) Passenger vehicles that have an established EPA fuel economy
16 rating must be taxed according to the EPA fuel economy rating as
17 follows:

18 EPA Fuel Economy Rating	Tax	Tons CO2
19 (Miles Per Gallon)		(12,000 Vehicle Miles Traveled)
20 10 or fewer MPG	\$240	12
21 11 MPG	\$220	11
22 12 MPG	\$200	10
23 13-14 MPG	\$180	9
24 15-16 MPG	\$160	8
25 17-18 MPG	\$140	7
26 19-21 MPG	\$120	6
27 22-26 MPG	\$100	5
28 27-34 MPG	\$80	4
29 35-48 MPG	\$60	3
30 49+ MPG	\$40	2

31 (c) Passenger vehicles that do not have an established EPA fuel
32 economy rating must be taxed according to their engine displacement
33 size as follows:

1	Engine Displacement/Size	Tax
2	(Liters)	
3	4.0 L or more	\$240
4	3.0 L to less than 4.0 L	\$180
5	1.5 L to less than 3.0 L	\$120
6	Less than 1.5 L	\$80

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