
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2291

State of Washington 52nd Legislature 1992 Regular Session

By House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives R. Fisher, Betrozoff and Zellinsky)

Read first time 02/03/92.

1 AN ACT Relating to regulating the use of optical strobe light
2 devices controlling traffic control lights; amending RCW 46.37.190; and
3 creating a new section.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.37.190 and 1987 c 330 s 710 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (1) Every authorized emergency vehicle shall, in addition to any
8 other equipment and distinctive marking required by this chapter, be
9 equipped with at least one lamp capable of displaying a red light
10 visible from at least five hundred feet in normal sunlight and a siren
11 capable of giving an audible signal.

12 (2) Every school bus and private carrier bus shall, in addition to
13 any other equipment and distinctive markings required by this chapter,
14 be equipped with a "stop" signal upon a background not less than

1 fourteen by eighteen inches displaying the word "stop" in letters of
2 distinctly contrasting colors not less than eight inches high, and
3 shall further be equipped with signal lamps mounted as high and as
4 widely spaced laterally as practicable, which shall be capable of
5 displaying to the front two alternately flashing red lights located at
6 the same level and to the rear two alternately flashing red lights
7 located at the same level and these lights shall have sufficient
8 intensity to be visible at five hundred feet in normal sunlight.

9 (3) Vehicles operated by public agencies whose law enforcement
10 duties include the authority to stop and detain motor vehicles on the
11 public highways of the state may be equipped with a siren and lights of
12 a color and type designated by the state patrol for that purpose. The
13 state patrol may prohibit the use of these sirens and lights on
14 vehicles other than the vehicles described in this subsection.

15 (4) The lights described in this section shall not be mounted nor
16 used on any vehicle other than a school bus, a private carrier bus, or
17 an authorized emergency or law enforcement vehicle. Optical strobe
18 light devices shall not be installed or used on any vehicle other than
19 an emergency vehicle authorized by the state patrol ~~((or))~~, a
20 publicly~~((-))~~owned law enforcement or emergency vehicle, a department
21 of transportation maintenance vehicle, or a public transit vehicle.

22 (a) An "optical strobe light device" used by emergency vehicles
23 means a strobe light device which emits an optical signal at a specific
24 frequency to a traffic control light enabling the emergency vehicle in
25 which the strobe light device is used to obtain the right of way at
26 intersections.

27 (b) An "optical strobe light device" used by department of
28 transportation maintenance vehicles means a strobe light device which
29 emits an optical signal at a specific frequency to a traffic control

1 light enabling the department of transportation maintenance vehicle in
2 which the strobe light device is used to perform maintenance tests.

3 (c) An "optical strobe light device" used by public transit
4 vehicles means a strobe light device which emits an optical signal at
5 a specific frequency to a traffic control light enabling the public
6 transit vehicle in which the strobe light device is used to accelerate
7 the cycle of the traffic control light. For the purposes of this
8 section, "public transit vehicle" means vehicles, owned by a
9 governmental entity, with a seat capacity for twenty-five or more
10 persons and used to provide mass transportation. Public transit
11 vehicles operating an optical strobe light will have second degree
12 priority to emergency vehicles when simultaneously approaching the same
13 traffic control light.

14 (5) The use of the signal equipment described herein, except the
15 optical strobe light devices used by public transit vehicles and
16 department of transportation maintenance vehicles which are not used in
17 conjunction with emergency equipment, shall impose upon drivers of
18 other vehicles the obligation to yield right of way and stop as
19 prescribed in RCW 46.61.210, 46.61.370, and 46.61.350.

20 NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. The state patrol shall adopt rules to
21 implement RCW 46.37.190.