
Transportation Committee

SSB 5719

Brief Description: Modifying title and registration requirements for kit vehicles.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Swecker and Brown).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Replaces the requirement that the kit vehicle body identification is identified as a replica with a discrete vehicle model.
- Updates the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) that is currently in statute regarding Washington State Patrol vehicle standards.
- Removes the vehicle frame welding requirements for kit vehicles.
- Requires the Department of Licensing to issue a certificate of ownership and/or register the vehicle for an applicant that complies with the State of Washington statutes and pays the required fees and taxes.

Hearing Date: 3/24/09

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306)

Background:

Kit vehicles are passenger cars or trucks that are assembled from a manufacturing kit. The vehicles are available in kit form, which means the customers buy a set of parts and assemble the motor vehicle themselves. Usually many of the major mechanical parts, such as the engine and transmission, are taken from one or more donor vehicles.

Current requirements for titling and registering a kit vehicle specify that the make be listed as "KITV," and the series and body description must describe the appearance of the vehicle using the word "replica." The titling requirements also specify that the vehicle must comply with the Washington Administration Code (WAC) 204-90 which has been replaced presently with 204-10

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for equipment standards established by the Washington State Patrol (WSP) which in specific areas reference the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

Among the equipment standards promulgated by the WSP is the requirement that a motor vehicle must be equipped with a frame. If an existing frame from a recognized manufacturer is not used and a special frame is fabricated, it must be constructed of wall box or continuous section tubing, wall channel, or unitized construction capable of supporting the vehicle, its load, and the torque produced by the power source under all conditions of operation. All welding on the frame must be completed by a certified welder and the structural strength of the frame must be certified by an engineer as meeting federal standards.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) may issue a certificate of ownership and register the vehicle with the appropriate documentation.

Summary of Bill:

The series and body designations for a kit vehicle must describe a discrete vehicle, but need not identify the vehicle as a replica of another vehicle. The reference to the WAC chapter for equipment standards is updated.

Kit vehicles must comply with the equipment standards established by the WSP. However, a kit vehicle is exempt from the welding requirements specified in the WAC if the owner provides documentation from the manufacturer that informs the owner that the welding on the frame was not completed by a certified welder and that the structural strength of the frame has not been certified by an engineer.

The DOL may not deny a certificate of ownership or registration to an applicant who completes an application, complies with the Washington statutes governing the titling of a kit vehicle, and pays the requisite titling fees and taxes.

The DOL may not deny a vehicle license or license plates to an applicant who completes an application, is a Washington State resident, complies with the Washington statutes governing the licensing of a kit vehicle, and pays the requisite vehicle licensing fees and taxes.

Appropriation:

Fiscal Note: Available.

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