

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6476

As Passed House - Amended:

February 29, 1996

Title: An act relating to vehicle and vessel fees.

Brief Description: Adjusting vehicle and vessel fees.

Sponsors: Senators Sheldon and Schow.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/20/96 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 2/29/96, 90-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 22 members: Representatives K. Schmidt, Chairman; Benton, Vice Chairman; Mitchell, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; R. Fisher, Ranking Minority Member; Hatfield, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Blanton; Cairnes; Chopp; Elliot; Hankins; Horn; Johnson; Ogden; Patterson; Quall; Robertson; Romero; D. Schmidt; Scott and Tokuda.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives McMahan and Sterk.

Staff: Jeff Doyle (786-7322).

Background: The Department of Licensing (DOL) empowers county auditors to perform certain motor vehicle licensing services. The county auditors may request DOL to appoint subagents within the county. A subagent is an authorized provider of licensing services. Both subagents and county auditors charge service fees in addition to regular licensing fees paid by the vehicle owner.

County auditor and subagent fees are set in statute. In 1992 the Legislature formed a Title and Registration Advisory Committee (TRAC) to make recommendations concerning the services provided by county auditors and subagents and the fees charged. The recommendations were due January 1, 1996.

This past interim TRAC recommended changes to state law to enable county auditors and subagents to perform vessel licensing and titling and to increase service fees.

Summary of Bill: The licensing authority of county auditors and subagents is expanded to include vessel registration and titles. Every three years DOL must analyze and evaluate the service fee structure and make any recommendations for increases to the Legislative Transportation Committee. Criteria for recommending fee increases are specified.

Fee increases for county auditors are authorized as follows: an increase from \$2 to \$3 for applications for registration of vehicles and vessels; an increase from \$3 to \$4 for certificates of ownership of vehicles and vessels; and a new \$1 fee for registration of trucks, tractors, buses, for-hire vehicles, trailers, semi-trailers, and pole trailers. The fees must be used for improving traffic safety or traffic control.

Fee increases for subagents are granted as follows: an increase from \$5.50 to \$7.50 for changes in ownership, verification of record, and affidavits of lost title; and an increase from \$2.25 to \$3 for registration renewals, transit permits, or miscellaneous licensing activities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.

Testimony For: County auditors and subagents have not had a fee increase since 1991. This allows them to continue to provide services for which the public willingly pays. It constitutes a true public-private partnership that best serves the citizens of Washington.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Betti Sheldon, prime sponsor; Senator Ray Schow, secondary sponsor; Jim Wadsworth, Department of Licensing; Karen Flynn, Kitsap County Auditor; Don Burrell, WAVS; and Stan Palmer, citizen.