

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6476

As Passed Senate, February 7, 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: 1/31/96, 2/1/96 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/7/96, 48-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Owen, Chair; Heavey, Vice Chair; Haugen, Morton, Oke, Prince, Rasmussen, Schow, Sellar and Wood.

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, enabling county auditors and subagents to perform vessel licensing and titling and increasing 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.

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 that the public willingly pays for. It constitutes a true public-private partnership that best serves the citizens of Washington.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Sheldon, prime sponsor; Senator Schow, Co-Sponsor; Jim Wadsworth, DOL (pro); Don Burrell, WAVS (pro); Shirley Berkley, Thurston County Auditors (pro).

House Amendment(s): Fees charged by county auditors for vehicle and vessel licensing services must be used for traffic safety or to improve traffic flow.