

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6370

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Law & Justice, February 6, 1998

**Title:** An act relating to occupational drivers' licenses.

**Brief Description:** Regulating occupational drivers' licenses.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kline, Winsley, Brown, McAuliffe, Prentice and Franklin.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Law & Justice: 2/6/98 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6370 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Johnson, Vice Chair; Fairley, Goings, Kline, Long and McCaslin.

**Staff:** Lidia Mori (786-7755)

**Background:** People who have had their drivers' licenses suspended due to failure to pay a fine are often not able to pay the fine because of financial constraints. Proponents of this bill believe that were these people allowed to have an occupational license, they would be eligible to enter apprenticeship programs and earn enough money to not only pay their fines but also get off welfare.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** A person whose driver's license has been suspended or revoked may apply for an occupational driver's license if the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Department of Licensing (DOL) that: (1) the applicant is in an apprenticeship program or an on-the-job training program for which a driver's license is required; or (2) the applicant is in the process of applying for a position in an apprenticeship or on-the-job training program and the program has certified that a driver's license is required to begin the program; or (3) the applicant is in a program that assists persons who are on welfare to become gainfully employed and requires a driver's license. The person may not apply for an occupational driver's license if his or her license was suspended or revoked due to vehicular homicide, vehicular assault, refusing a blood or breath test, noncompliance with a child support order, or for a physical or mental disability that prevents the person from operating a motor vehicle with safety. If the driver's license suspension is for failure to respond, pay, or comply with a notice of traffic infraction or conviction, the applicant must enter into a payment plan with the court.

An occupational driver's license is valid for the period of the suspension or revocation but in no case for more than two years. DOL may require subsequent proof that the apprenticeship or on-the-job training program applications are actively pursued by the licensees.

The bill goes into effect January 1, 1999.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The effective date is January 1, 1999, instead of 90 days after adjournment of session.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 6, 1998.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect January 1, 1999.

**Testimony For:** This bill will help economically challenged people in many areas, including central and south Seattle.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Gregory Davis, CAMP; Debbie Schmidt, Department of Licensing; Steve Lind, WA Traffic Safety Commission.