CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5539

Chapter 248, Laws of 1997

55th Legislature
1997 Regular Session

ACCIDENT REPORTS--REQUIREMENTS

EFFECTIVE DATE: 5/2/97

Passed by the Senate April 21, 1997
YEAS 47 NAYS 0

BRAD OWEN
President of the Senate

Passed by the House April 8, 1997
YEAS 98 NAYS 0

CLYDE BALLARD
Speaker of the
House of Representatives

Approved May 2, 1997

I, Mike O'Connell, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5539 as passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.

MIKE O’CONNELL
Secretary

FILED
May 2, 1997 - 3:07 p.m.

GARY LOCKE
Governor of the State of Washington

Secretary of State
State of Washington
AN ACT Relating to accident reports; amending RCW 46.52.030; and declaring an emergency.

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

Sec. 1. RCW 46.52.030 and 1996 c 183 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Unless a report is to be made by a law enforcement officer under subsection (3) of this section, the driver of any vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury to or death of any person or damage to the property of any one person to an apparent extent equal to or greater than the minimum amount established by rule adopted by the chief of the Washington state patrol in accordance with subsection (5) of this section, shall, within ((twenty-four hours)) four days after such accident, make a written report of such accident to the chief of police of the city or town if such accident occurred within an incorporated city or town or the county sheriff or state patrol if such accident occurred outside incorporated cities and towns. Nothing in this subsection prohibits accident reports from being filed by drivers where damage to property is less than the minimum amount or where a law enforcement officer has submitted a report.
(2) The original of the report shall be immediately forwarded by the authority receiving the report to the chief of the Washington state patrol at Olympia, Washington. The Washington state patrol shall give the department of licensing full access to the report.

(3) Any law enforcement officer who investigates an accident for which a ((driver’s)) report is required under subsection (1) of this section shall submit an investigator’s report as required by RCW 46.52.070.

(4) The chief of the Washington state patrol may require any driver of any vehicle involved in an accident, of which report must be made as provided in this section, to file supplemental reports whenever the original report in ((his)) the chief’s opinion is insufficient, and may likewise require witnesses of any such accident to render reports. For this purpose, the chief of the Washington state patrol shall prepare and, upon request, supply to any police department, coroner, sheriff, and any other suitable agency or individual, sample forms of accident reports required hereunder, which reports shall be upon a form devised by the chief of the Washington state patrol and shall call for sufficiently detailed information to disclose all material facts with reference to the accident to be reported thereon, including the location, the ((cause)) circumstances, the conditions then existing, the persons and vehicles involved, the insurance information required under RCW 46.30.030, personal injury or death, if any, the amounts of property damage claimed, the total number of vehicles involved, whether the vehicles were legally parked, legally standing, or moving, and whether such vehicles were occupied at the time of the accident. Every required accident report shall be made on a form prescribed by the chief of the Washington state patrol and each authority charged with the duty of receiving such reports shall provide sufficient report forms in compliance with the form devised. The report forms shall be designated so as to provide that a copy may be retained by the reporting person.

(5) The chief of the Washington state patrol shall adopt rules establishing the accident-reporting threshold for property damage accidents. Beginning October 1, 1987, the accident-reporting threshold for property damage accidents shall be five hundred dollars. The accident-reporting threshold for property damage accidents shall be revised when necessary, but not more frequently than every two years. The revisions shall only be for the purpose of recognizing economic

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changes as reflected by an inflationary index recommended by the office of financial management. The revisions shall be guided by the change in the index for the time period since the last revision.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

Passed the Senate April 21, 1997.
Passed the House April 8, 1997.
Approved by the Governor May 2, 1997.
Filed in Office of Secretary of State May 2, 1997.