

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1376

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to special parking privileges for leg amputees.

Brief Description: Simplifying disabled parking certification for leg amputees.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Transportation (Originally sponsored by Representatives G. Chandler, Fisher, Mitchell, K. Schmidt, Romero, Mielke, Skinner, Scott, O'Brien, Wood and Mulliken).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/16/99, 2/23/99 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/10/99, 97-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 4/14/99, 47-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Individuals who have lost a lower extremity do not have to obtain a physician's certification in order to qualify for a disabled parking permit. Instead, authorized Department of Licensing staff can confirm the loss to satisfy this requirement.
- The Department of Licensing is prohibited from requiring existing permit holders to obtain a re-certification of their disability from their physician in order to renew their parking permit.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Fisher, Democratic Co-Chair; K. Schmidt, Republican Co-Chair; Cooper, Democratic 1st Vice Chair; Edwards, Democratic 2nd Vice Chair; Ericksen, Republican Vice Chair; Hankins, Republican Vice Chair; Buck; G. Chandler; DeBolt; Fortunato; Haigh; Hatfield; Hurst; Lovick;

McDonald; Mielke; Mitchell; Morris; Murray; Ogden; Pflug; Radcliff; Romero; Schindler; Schual-Berke; Scott; Skinner and Wood.

Staff: Reema Shawa (786-7301).

Background:

Under current law, if an individual wishes to apply for special parking privileges for person's with disabilities, they must submit a physician's certification form to the Department of Licensing confirming their disability. This certification is required of all applicants regardless of the type of disability. Therefore, even those individuals with permanent, apparent disabilities such as leg amputees, must go through the process of having a doctor confirm the amputation and subsequent inability to walk long distances.

After the enactment of additional provisions in 1998, the Department of Licensing initiated a one-time re-certification process by which all existing special parking permit holders must submit a form signed by their physician re-certifying their disability and thus re-certifying their right to continued use of the privileges associated with the permit. This re-certification requirement has been applied across the board to all permit holders regardless of the type of disability they may have. Therefore, even individuals with permanent disabilities such as leg amputees, are required to have their physician reconfirm their disability in order for them to keep their permit valid.

Summary of Bill:

Individuals who have lost a lower extremity are exempt from the physician certification requirement necessary to receive special parking privileges. To satisfy the certification requirement and in lieu of a physician's certification, authorized Department of Licensing staff will visually confirm the loss of the lower extremity.

The Department of Licensing cannot require existing permit holders to obtain a physician's re-certification of their disability in order to renew their disabled parking permit.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S): To ensure that the applicants are truly qualified, the amendment requires the applicant to sign a form certifying that they cannot walk 200 feet without stopping. For individuals who receive a permit in this manner, for enforcement purposes, their identification card will bear a notation on it that they certified their inability to walk. The penalty for providing false information is immediate cancellation of the permit.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (original bill) .This bill will help provide some relief to those in the disabled community who have suffered the loss of a lower extremity, as this type of visually apparent disability should not require a physician confirmation.

Testimony Against: (original bill) Leg amputees should not be given preferential treatment over other disabilities.

Testified: (original bill) (support) Gerald T. Cole, citizen.

(support with concerns) Evelyn Barker, Department of Licensing.

(opposed) Skip Dreps, NW Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America.