

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2343

As Reported By House Committee On:

Financial Institutions & Insurance

Title: An act relating to the redemption of vehicles through credit cards and checks drawn on financial institutions.

Brief Description: Allowing the redemption of vehicles by payments from financial institutions.

Sponsors: Representatives Hatfield, Benson and Esser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Financial Institutions & Insurance: 1/18/00, 2/1/00 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Towing firms must accept major bank credit cards issued by financial institutions and accept checks drawn on in-state branches of financial institutions if the firm can verify the check is good.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS & INSURANCE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Benson, Republican Co-Chair; Hatfield, Democratic Co-Chair; Bush, Republican Vice Chair; McIntire, Democratic Vice Chair; Barlean; Cairnes; DeBolt; Keiser; Quall; Santos and Talcott.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Sullivan.

Staff: Charlie Gavigan (786-7340).

Background:

Law enforcement officers are authorized to impound a vehicle in a variety of circumstances, such as when the officer arrests the driver, the person operating the vehicle does not have a valid driver's license, or when the person operating the

vehicle is driving with a suspended or revoked license. A vehicle impounded by a law enforcement officer may be redeemed only by the owner of the vehicle or a person who has the permission of the owner and upon payment of all costs associated with the impound using commercially reasonable tender.

Commercially reasonable tender includes cash, major bank credit cards, and personal checks drawn on in-state banks if accompanied by two pieces of valid identification.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Commercially reasonable tender is modified to include major bank credit cards issued by financial institutions and checks drawn on Washington branches of financial institutions. A towing firm does not have to accept a check the towing firm cannot verify to be good.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Credit cards must be major bank credit cards and checks must be drawn on in-state branches of financial institutions. The towing firm does not have to accept a check the towing firm cannot verify to be good (rather than having to accept a check the towing firm verifies to be a bad check).

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill will enable major credit cards and checks issued by credit unions to be used to reclaim impounded vehicles. The bill should be amended to require that the checks be drawn on in-state branches of financial institutions, and towing firms should not have to release the vehicle unless the firm can verify that the check is good.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Mark Gjurasic, Washington Credit Union League; Mark Minickiello, Washington Credit Union League; and Stu Holsan, Washington Tow Truck Association.