

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2029

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to certificates of ownership and registration.

Brief Description: Authorizing changes to the VIN inspection program.

Sponsors: By Representatives Hurst, Mitchell, Fisher, Hankins, Haigh, Anderson, Cooper, Ericksen, Ogden, Marine, Jarrett, Wood, Romero, Armstrong, Rockefeller, Mielke, Hatfield, Sump, Lovick, Simpson, Woods, Reardon, Morell, Skinner, Ahern, Jackley, Murray, Edmonds and Kenney.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/26/01, 3/7/01 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/12/01, 98-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 3/23/01, 47-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows licenced motor vehicle dealers to perform physical inspections.
- Requests a report from the Washington State Patrol (WSP) outlining numbers of vehicles found to be stolen and an identification of any deficiencies in the self-inspection program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 30 members: Representatives Fisher, Democratic Co-Chair; Mitchell, Republican Co-Chair; Cooper, Democratic Vice Chair; Ericksen, Republican Vice Chair; Hankins, Republican Vice Chair; Lovick, Democratic Vice Chair; Ahern, Anderson, Armstrong, G. Chandler, Edmonds, Haigh, Hatfield, Hurst, Jackley, Jarrett, Marine, Mielke, Morell, Murray, Ogden, Reardon, Rockefeller, Romero, Schindler, Simpson, Skinner, Sump, Wood and Woods.

Staff: Melissa Beard (786-7347).

Background:

In order to receive a certificate of ownership, vehicles that are registered in another state or county, or rebuilt after surrender of the certificate of ownership to the Department of Licensing (DOL) due to the vehicle's destruction or declaration as a total loss, must be inspected. The Washington State Patrol (WSP) or another person authorized by the DOL performs this physical inspection and must verify the vehicle identification number.

Summary of Bill:

Licensed motor vehicle dealers are given the authority to perform physical inspections. The dealer's inspector must be at least a full-time employee whose primary responsibility is the maintenance and repair of motor vehicles. Dealers must complete a one-page vehicle identification number inspection form and submit a \$15 fee to the DOL. The WSP is still required to perform inspections on the following vehicles: totaled, assembled, constructed, replica vehicles, vehicles that appear to have been wrecked or destroyed, or vehicles imported from another country and that have not been certified as conforming to federal standards. By August 1, 2004, the WSP must provide a report that includes the number of vehicles inspected by the WSP found to be stolen, number of vehicles inspected by licensed motor vehicle dealers found to be stolen, and a comparative analysis to identify deficiencies in the self-inspection program.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S):

The requirement that the WSP conduct a physical inspection of vehicle inspection numbers on out-of-state or out-of-country cars before they are registered in this state is removed. The physical inspection requirement for rebuilt cars is retained. For vehicles previously registered in another state or country, there is a \$15 fee. The inspection fee for rebuilt automobiles is raised from \$20 to \$50. The DOL is required to institute a computer system to enable a stolen vehicle check. If, during the check, the information on the vehicle indicates it was stolen, DOL must immediately report that fact to WSP and shall not register the car.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The Washington State Patrol supported the bill because it would provide relief to inspection sites and employees. Auto dealers were in support because, currently, they spend a great deal of time running their large volume of vehicles through the VIN

inspection process. Local 17 is supportive of the bill because it brings some permanency to the current VIN inspector positions, however, they were concerned with the training standards for the licensed motor vehicle dealers.

Testimony Against: The insurance companies opposed the bill because it gives too much power to the private sector motor vehicle dealers. They are also unsure of the quality of inspections that would be performed by the motor vehicle dealers.

Testified: (Support) Eric Robertson, Washington State Patrol; Lisa Thatcher, Washington State Auto Dealers; and Kathy Cunningham, Local #17.

(Opposed) Mel Sorensen, National Association of Independent Insurers; and Mike Kapphahn, Farmers Insurance.