

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6329

As Passed House:

March 5, 2002

Title: An act relating to exempting certain hybrid vehicles from emission control inspection requirements.

Brief Description: Exempting certain hybrid vehicles from emission control inspection requirements.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Water (originally sponsored by Senators Regala, Honeyford, Fraser, Jacobsen and Winsley).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Ecology: 2/26/02, 2/28/02 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/5/02, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Exempts hybrid motor vehicles from the Department of Ecology's emission inspection program

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Linville, Chair; Hunt, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Cooper, Delvin, Dunshee, Grant, Holmquist, Kirby, Quall, Roach and Sump.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Department of Ecology (DOE) states in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) that gasoline powered motor vehicles emit significant quantities of hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen, in addition to serving as the primary emitters of carbon monoxide. Federal emissions standards are designed to reduce motor vehicle emissions; however, the DOE reports that the effectiveness of these efforts are reduced through deterioration,

maladjustment, and tampering. In their administrative rules, DOE states that emission inspections serve to identify vehicles that are high polluting and vehicles with tampered or missing emission controls. Once the vehicles are identified, the DOE seeks to reduce their emissions if it can be accomplished at a reasonable cost.

The DOE conducts emission inspections on motor vehicles registered in the portions of the state designated by DOE as "emission contributing areas." An area of the state may only be identified as an emission contributing area if the DOE first finds that the area is within a "non-compliance" area for motor vehicle emissions. Currently in the WAC, the DOE has listed the cities of Seattle, Bellevue, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver, and Everett as non-compliance areas. Within each non-compliance area, the DOE identifies by zip code the smallest land area containing registered motor vehicles significantly contributing to air quality degradation. Vehicles registered within the identified zip codes that are older than five years or newer than 25 years are subject to emission testing biennially.

The owner of a vehicle registered in an emissions contributing area must pay a fee to have an emission inspection conducted. The amount of that fee is set in rule by the DOE, and must be applicable state-wide or throughout an emissions control area. The fee may not exceed \$15, and surplus money collected is paid to the state general fund. Fees must be calculated to compensate the contracted inspection facility owner and to offset the general fund appropriation made to the DOE to cover the administrative costs of the inspection program.

Certain vehicles are statutorily exempt from the emission inspection requirement. These include vehicles manufacturer before 1967, motorcycles, farm vehicles, collector cars, electric cars, and vehicles fueled by propane, compressed natural gas, or liquid petroleum gas.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Hybrid motor vehicles are exempt from the Department of Ecology's emission inspection program. These vehicles must obtain an Environmental Protection Agency rating of at least 50 miles per gallon during city driving in order to earn the exemption. Hybrid vehicles are vehicles that used both electricity and gas for propulsion.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: None.