

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2345

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 26, 2002

Title: An act relating to the duty of a driver in an accident.

Brief Description: Allowing non-injury accidents to clear the roadway.

Sponsors: Representatives Lovick, Delvin, O'Brien, Morell, Berkey, Casada, Conway and Wood.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/25/02, 2/26/02 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Benton, Eide, Finkbeiner, Horn, Jacobsen, Kastama, Keiser, McAuliffe, McDonald, Oke, Shin and Swecker.

Staff: Greg Doss (786-7341)

Background: Under current law, persons involved in non-injury accidents are required to stop the vehicles at the scene of the accident and to remain at the scene until all necessary information (name, address, insurance, driver's license) is exchanged. Failing to stop or comply with the information exchange is a gross misdemeanor.

In 2000, the Washington State Patrol partnered with the Department of Transportation and the Traffic Safety Commission to alleviate congestion by moving vehicles involved in non-injury accidents off the road as soon as possible. This program is known informally as the "steer it and clear it plan."

Summary of Bill: Drivers involved in non-injury accidents must move the vehicles off the roadway or freeway as soon as possible. Drivers must remain at a suitable location until necessary information has been exchanged. Law enforcement or a representative of the Department of Transportation may have a vehicle, cargo or debris removed from the roadway without incurring liability.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Fifty percent of highway congestion is related to accidents. The bill will help to alleviate highway congestion and reduce secondary collisions.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Representative Lovick, prime sponsor; Capt. Glenn Cramer, Washington State Patrol; Toby Rickman, WSDOT.