
HOUSE BILL 2569

State of Washington

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2002 Regular Session

By Representatives Casada, Fisher, Campbell, Morris, Morell, Lovick, Cody, Schindler, Crouse, Delvin, Mitchell, Cairnes, Darneille, Roach and Mulliken

Read first time 01/22/2002. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to display of improper license plates or tabs;
2 amending RCW 46.16.230 and 46.63.020; reenacting and amending RCW
3 46.16.240; adding a new section to chapter 46.16 RCW; and prescribing
4 penalties.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.16.230 and 1992 c 7 s 41 are each amended to read
7 as follows:

8 The director shall furnish to all persons making satisfactory
9 application for vehicle license as provided by law, two identical
10 vehicle license number plates each containing the vehicle license
11 number to be displayed on such vehicle as by law required(~~(:—PROVIDED,~~
12 ~~That)~~). If the vehicle to be licensed is a trailer, semitrailer, or
13 motorcycle only one vehicle license number plate shall be issued for
14 each thereof. The number and plate shall be of such size and color and
15 shall contain such symbols indicative of the registration period for
16 which the same is issued and of the state of Washington, as shall be
17 determined and prescribed by the director. Any vehicle license number
18 plate or plates issued to a dealer shall contain thereon a sufficient
19 and satisfactory indication that such plates have been issued to a

1 dealer in vehicles. All vehicle license number plates may be obtained
2 by the director from the metal working plant of a state correctional
3 facility or from any source in accordance with existing state of
4 Washington purchasing procedures.

5 Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section, the
6 director may, in his or her discretion and under such rules and
7 regulations as he or she may prescribe, adopt a type of vehicle license
8 number plates whereby the same shall be used as long as legible on the
9 vehicle for which issued, with provision for tabs or emblems to be
10 attached thereto or elsewhere on the vehicle to signify renewals, in
11 which event the term "vehicle license number plate" as used in any
12 enactment shall be deemed to include in addition to such plate the tab
13 or emblem signifying renewal except when such plate contains the
14 designation of the current year without reference to any tab or emblem.
15 If two license plates have been issued for the vehicle, the director
16 shall issue two identical tabs or emblems, one each to be affixed to
17 the front and rear plates. Renewals shall be effected by the issuance
18 and display of such tabs or emblems.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 46.16 RCW
20 to read as follows:

21 It is a misdemeanor to display on a vehicle a license plate or
22 registration tab other than that issued for the vehicle or to display
23 on a vehicle a license plate or registration tab that has been
24 knowingly changed or altered.

25 **Sec. 3.** RCW 46.16.240 and 1987 c 330 s 704 and 1987 c 142 s 3 are
26 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

27 (1) The vehicle license number plates (~~shall~~) and tabs must be
28 attached conspicuously at the front and rear of each vehicle for which
29 the same are issued and in such a manner that they can be plainly seen
30 and read at all times: PROVIDED, That if only one license number plate
31 or tab is legally issued for any vehicle such plate (~~shall~~) or tab
32 must be conspicuously attached to the rear of such vehicle. Each
33 vehicle license number plate (~~shall~~) and tab must be placed or hung
34 in a horizontal position at a distance of not less than one foot nor
35 more than four feet from the ground and shall be kept clean so as to be
36 plainly seen and read at all times: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That in cases
37 where the body construction of the vehicle is such that compliance with

1 this section is impossible, permission to deviate therefrom may be
2 granted by the state patrol.

3 (2) It (~~shall be unlawful~~) is a traffic infraction to display
4 upon the front or rear of any vehicle, (~~vehicle license number plate~~
5 ~~or plates other than those furnished by the director for such vehicle~~
6 ~~or to display upon any vehicle any~~) a vehicle license number plate or
7 (~~plates which have~~) tab that has, without the knowing act of the
8 vehicle operator or registered owner, been in any manner (~~changed,~~
9 altered,) disfigured or (~~have~~) has become illegible.

10 (3) License plate frames may be used on vehicle license number
11 plates only if the frames do not obscure license tabs or identifying
12 letters or numbers on the plates and the plates can be plainly seen and
13 read at all times. It is (~~unlawful~~) a traffic infraction to use any
14 holders, frames, or any materials that in any manner change, alter, or
15 make the vehicle license number plates illegible.

16 (4) Except for an offense constituting a misdemeanor under section
17 2 of this act, it (~~shall be unlawful~~) is a traffic infraction for any
18 person to operate any vehicle unless there (~~shall be~~) is displayed
19 thereon valid vehicle license number plates and tabs attached as
20 (~~herein~~) provided in this section.

21 **Sec. 4.** RCW 46.63.020 and 2001 c 325 s 4 are each amended to read
22 as follows:

23 Failure to perform any act required or the performance of any act
24 prohibited by this title or an equivalent administrative regulation or
25 local law, ordinance, regulation, or resolution relating to traffic
26 including parking, standing, stopping, and pedestrian offenses, is
27 designated as a traffic infraction and may not be classified as a
28 criminal offense, except for an offense contained in the following
29 provisions of this title or a violation of an equivalent administrative
30 regulation or local law, ordinance, regulation, or resolution:

31 (1) RCW 46.09.120(2) relating to the operation of a nonhighway
32 vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or a
33 controlled substance;

34 (2) RCW 46.09.130 relating to operation of nonhighway vehicles;

35 (3) RCW 46.10.090(2) relating to the operation of a snowmobile
36 while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or narcotics or
37 habit-forming drugs or in a manner endangering the person of another;

38 (4) RCW 46.10.130 relating to the operation of snowmobiles;

1 (5) Chapter 46.12 RCW relating to certificates of ownership and
2 registration and markings indicating that a vehicle has been destroyed
3 or declared a total loss;
4 (6) RCW 46.16.010 relating to initial registration of motor
5 vehicles;
6 (7) RCW 46.16.011 relating to permitting unauthorized persons to
7 drive;
8 (8) RCW 46.16.160 relating to vehicle trip permits;
9 (9) Section 2 of this act relating to display of improper license
10 plates or tabs;
11 (10) RCW 46.16.381(2) relating to knowingly providing false
12 information in conjunction with an application for a special placard or
13 license plate for disabled persons' parking;
14 ~~((+10+))~~ (11) RCW 46.20.005 relating to driving without a valid
15 driver's license;
16 ~~((+11+))~~ (12) RCW 46.20.091 relating to false statements regarding
17 a driver's license or instruction permit;
18 ~~((+12+))~~ (13) RCW 46.20.0921 relating to the unlawful possession
19 and use of a driver's license;
20 ~~((+13+))~~ (14) RCW 46.20.342 relating to driving with a suspended or
21 revoked license or status;
22 ~~((+14+))~~ (15) RCW 46.20.345 relating to the operation of a motor
23 vehicle with a suspended or revoked license;
24 ~~((+15+))~~ (16) RCW 46.20.410 relating to the violation of
25 restrictions of an occupational driver's license;
26 ~~((+16+))~~ (17) RCW 46.20.740 relating to operation of a motor
27 vehicle without an ignition interlock device in violation of a license
28 notation that the device is required;
29 ~~((+17+))~~ (18) RCW 46.20.750 relating to assisting another person to
30 start a vehicle equipped with an ignition interlock device;
31 ~~((+18+))~~ (19) RCW 46.25.170 relating to commercial driver's
32 licenses;
33 ~~((+19+))~~ (20) Chapter 46.29 RCW relating to financial
34 responsibility;
35 ~~((+20+))~~ (21) RCW 46.30.040 relating to providing false evidence of
36 financial responsibility;
37 ~~((+21+))~~ (22) RCW 46.37.435 relating to wrongful installation of
38 sunscreening material;

1 ~~((22))~~ (23) RCW 46.44.180 relating to operation of mobile home
2 pilot vehicles;
3 ~~((23))~~ (24) RCW 46.48.175 relating to the transportation of
4 dangerous articles;
5 ~~((24))~~ (25) RCW 46.52.010 relating to duty on striking an
6 unattended car or other property;
7 ~~((25))~~ (26) RCW 46.52.020 relating to duty in case of injury to
8 or death of a person or damage to an attended vehicle;
9 ~~((26))~~ (27) RCW 46.52.090 relating to reports by repairmen,
10 storagemen, and appraisers;
11 ~~((27))~~ (28) RCW 46.52.130 relating to confidentiality of the
12 driving record to be furnished to an insurance company, an employer,
13 and an alcohol/drug assessment or treatment agency;
14 ~~((28))~~ (29) RCW 46.55.020 relating to engaging in the activities
15 of a registered tow truck operator without a registration certificate;
16 ~~((29))~~ (30) RCW 46.55.035 relating to prohibited practices by tow
17 truck operators;
18 ~~((30))~~ (31) RCW 46.61.015 relating to obedience to police
19 officers, flaggers, or fire fighters;
20 ~~((31))~~ (32) RCW 46.61.020 relating to refusal to give information
21 to or cooperate with an officer;
22 ~~((32))~~ (33) RCW 46.61.022 relating to failure to stop and give
23 identification to an officer;
24 ~~((33))~~ (34) RCW 46.61.024 relating to attempting to elude
25 pursuing police vehicles;
26 ~~((34))~~ (35) RCW 46.61.500 relating to reckless driving;
27 ~~((35))~~ (36) RCW 46.61.502 and 46.61.504 relating to persons under
28 the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs;
29 ~~((36))~~ (37) RCW 46.61.503 relating to a person under age twenty-
30 one driving a motor vehicle after consuming alcohol;
31 ~~((37))~~ (38) RCW 46.61.520 relating to vehicular homicide by motor
32 vehicle;
33 ~~((38))~~ (39) RCW 46.61.522 relating to vehicular assault;
34 ~~((39))~~ (40) RCW 46.61.5249 relating to first degree negligent
35 driving;
36 ~~((40))~~ (41) RCW 46.61.527(4) relating to reckless endangerment of
37 roadway workers;
38 ~~((41))~~ (42) RCW 46.61.530 relating to racing of vehicles on
39 highways;

1 (~~(42)~~) (43) RCW 46.61.685 relating to leaving children in an
2 unattended vehicle with the motor running;
3 (~~(43)~~) (44) RCW 46.61.740 relating to theft of motor vehicle
4 fuel;
5 (~~(44)~~) (45) RCW 46.64.010 relating to unlawful cancellation of or
6 attempt to cancel a traffic citation;
7 (~~(45)~~) (46) RCW 46.64.048 relating to attempting, aiding,
8 abetting, coercing, and committing crimes;
9 (~~(46)~~) (47) Chapter 46.65 RCW relating to habitual traffic
10 offenders;
11 (~~(47)~~) (48) RCW 46.68.010 relating to false statements made to
12 obtain a refund;
13 (~~(48)~~) (49) Chapter 46.70 RCW relating to unfair motor vehicle
14 business practices, except where that chapter provides for the
15 assessment of monetary penalties of a civil nature;
16 (~~(49)~~) (50) Chapter 46.72 RCW relating to the transportation of
17 passengers in for hire vehicles;
18 (~~(50)~~) (51) RCW 46.72A.060 relating to limousine carrier
19 insurance;
20 (~~(51)~~) (52) RCW 46.72A.070 relating to operation of a limousine
21 without a vehicle certificate;
22 (~~(52)~~) (53) RCW 46.72A.080 relating to false advertising by a
23 limousine carrier;
24 (~~(53)~~) (54) Chapter 46.80 RCW relating to motor vehicle wreckers;
25 (~~(54)~~) (55) Chapter 46.82 RCW relating to driver's training
26 schools;
27 (~~(55)~~) (56) RCW 46.87.260 relating to alteration or forgery of a
28 cab card, letter of authority, or other temporary authority issued
29 under chapter 46.87 RCW;
30 (~~(56)~~) (57) RCW 46.87.290 relating to operation of an
31 unregistered or unlicensed vehicle under chapter 46.87 RCW.

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