

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5585

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**As Passed House:**  
April 5, 2011

**Title:** An act relating to street rod and custom vehicles.

**Brief Description:** Concerning street rod and custom vehicles.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senator Carrell).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 3/9/11, 3/22/11 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 4/5/11, 95-1.

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill**

- Redefines the definition of a street rod vehicle.
- Establishes the definition of a custom vehicle.
- Requires street rods and custom vehicles applying for the designation to be licensed as a collector vehicle with the associated registration and use requirements.
- Allows street rod vehicles and custom vehicles to use blue dot tail lights.
- Repeals various provisions of existing law regarding parts cars and street rod vehicles.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Billig, Vice Chair; Liias, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Asay, Eddy, Finn, Fitzgibbon, Jinkins, Johnson, Kristiansen, Ladenburg, McCune, Moeller, Morris, Moscoso, Overstreet, Reykdal, Rivers, Rodne, Rolfes, Ryu, Shea, Takko, Upthegrove and Zeiger.

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

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Staff:** Jerry Long (786-7306).

**Background:**

Under current Washington law, a street rod vehicle is defined as a motor vehicle, other than a motorcycle, that meets the following conditions:

- the vehicle was manufactured before 1949;
- the vehicle has been assembled or reconstructed using major component parts of a motor vehicle manufactured before 1949; or
- the vehicle was assembled or manufactured after 1949, to resemble a vehicle manufactured before 1949; and
- the vehicle has been modified in its body style or design through the use of nonoriginal or reproduction components, such as frame, engine, drive train, suspension, or brakes in a manner that does not adversely affect its safe performance as a motor vehicle or render it unlawful for highway use; or
- the body has been constructed from nonoriginal materials or has been altered dimensionally or in shape and appearance from the original manufactured body.

Street rod vehicles are required to be inspected before they can be titled and branded as a street rod.

A parts car is a motor vehicle that is owned by a collector to furnish parts for restoration or maintenance of a vehicle, thus enabling a collector to preserve, restore, and maintain such a vehicle. The owner of a parts car must possess proof of ownership of each parts car.

Currently there is not a definition for a custom vehicle in statute.

**Summary of Bill:**

A street rod vehicle is defined as a motor vehicle when:

- it is a motor vehicle that is a 1948 or older vehicle; or
- the vehicle was manufactured after 1948 to resemble a vehicle manufactured before 1949; and
- it has been altered from the manufacturer's original design or has a body constructed from nonoriginal materials.

A custom vehicle is defined as:

- a motor vehicle that is at least 30 years old and of a model year after 1948; or
- was manufactured to resemble a vehicle at least 30 years old and of a model year after 1948; and
- has been altered from the manufacturer's original design or has a body constructed from nonoriginal materials.

A street rod vehicle and a custom vehicle has to have alterations to one or more of the major component parts which includes: engine; frame; transmission and/or transfer case; cab; door; front or rear differential; front or rear clip; quarter panel; truck bed or box; seat; hood; bumper; fender; or airbag.

A street rod vehicle and a custom vehicle applying for the designation must be registered as a collector vehicle and subject to the initial registration of \$35 and is not subject to annual renewal. These vehicles cannot be used for general daily transportation and only be used for occasional transportation, exhibitions, club activities, parades, tours, and similar uses.

The model year and the year of manufacture that are listed on the certificate of title of a street rod vehicle or a custom vehicle must be the model year and the year of manufacture that the body of the vehicle resembles.

Before accepting an application for a certificate of title, the Department of Licensing, county auditor or other agent, or subagent must require an applicant to submit a certification that a street rod vehicle or a custom vehicle will not be used for general daily transportation and only be used for occasional transportation, exhibitions, club activities, parades, tours, and similar uses. The applicant must provide a certificate of vehicle inspection completed by the Washington State Patrol (WSP) or other authorized inspector when the application is for a vehicle being titled for the first time as a street rod or custom vehicle. The model year and the year of manufacture listed on the certificate of title must be the model year and year of manufacture that the vehicle resembles. The presence of modern equipment does not invalidate the year of manufacture.

Current law which excludes certain vehicles from emission test requirements is amended to include street rod and custom vehicles.

A street rod or custom vehicle may use blue dot taillights for stop lights, rear turning indicator lights, rear hazard lights, and rear reflectors. A blue dot taillight means a red light installed in the rear of a motor vehicle containing a blue or purple insert that is not more than one inch in diameter.

Hoods and bumpers are optional equipment on street rod vehicles and custom vehicles.

Street rod vehicles and custom vehicles must comply with fender and windshield requirements.

Various provisions of existing law regarding parts cars and street rod vehicles are repealed.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on October 1, 2011.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) These vehicles are used to raise money for charities through car shows. These cars do not have all stock parts on them. This hobby is a passion for many people that enjoy working on and showing their cars. When these cars are not recognized as street rod or custom vehicles, it makes it hard to sell them to collectors in other states. The years specified

in the bill correspond to the years specified in other states for these vehicles. This establishes a definition for a custom vehicle.

This will assist the WSP in how to register these vehicles as a street rod or custom vehicle or be able to tell if the vehicle qualifies for one of these designations. This bill will promote the custom car industry, especially the companies, for example, that build frames for street rods and custom vehicles. Orders come into one company close to the Port of Tacoma from all over to have car frames built. Most frames for these vehicles are better than the original frames due to no welding and no fabrication. This industry provides economic growth and helps charities through car shows.

The cars preserve history. There is not really any impact on traffic since they are show cars, not driven often, and, in most cases, driven less than 1,000 miles per year.

The bill helps to eliminate confusion on how to build a street rod or a custom vehicle. Build it legally and be able to register the vehicle correctly.

(Commented) The blue dot tail light is normally used on an antique motorcycle, and the light gives off a pink tint. The requirement for the notary on the parts being used by a private individual has been in statute for a long time since it is a requirement for the WSP inspection. The process is used to make sure the parts that are being used to build the vehicle have not been stolen.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Senator Carrell, prime sponsor; Art Morrison and Craig Morrison, Art Morrison Enterprises; David Miller, Cascade Cobra Cab Club; Frank Ham, Frank's Pickups; and Tim Dutton.

(Commented) Melissa Van Gorkon, Washington State Patrol.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.