

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6112

As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

Title: An act relating to the use of alternative traction devices on tires under certain conditions.

Brief Description: Concerning the use of alternative traction devices on tires under certain conditions.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Eide, King, Haugen, Fain and Shin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/24/12 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Adds "alternative traction devices" to allowable traction devices in addition to chains and studded tires to be used on a vehicle because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid to be approved by the Washington State Patrol.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Liias, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Eddy, Finn, Fitzgibbon, Hansen, Jinkins, Johnson, Klippert, Kristiansen, Ladenburg, McCune, Moeller, Moscoso, Overstreet, Reykdal, Rivers, Rodne, Shea, Takko, Upthegrove and Zeiger.

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306).

Background:

A tire on a vehicle on a highway may not have on its outside surface any block, flange, cleat, or spike or any other protuberance of any material other than rubber which projects beyond the tread of the tire. An exemption is the use of tire chains or studded tires between

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November 1 and April 1, because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid. The Washington State Department of Transportation may, from time to time, allow the use of studded tires outside this time period due to weather conditions.

Current statutes authorize the Washington State Patrol (WSP) to adopt rules pertaining to chains and tire studs. Testing of chains or studded tires by the WSP is certified under one of the following:

- conformance to the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; if none, then
- conformance to current standards and specifications of the Society of Automotive Engineers.

In order for the alternative traction device to be approved, the device must be tested in accordance with a recognized standard. The alternative device must meet or exceed the standard.

The following information must be provided to the WSP:

- certification of the test results by the tester;
- a copy of the testing standards used; and
- documentation of the testing results.

Summary of Bill:

The substitute bill adds "alternative traction devices" to the list of permissible traction devices that conform to rules adopted by the WSP to be used upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid in addition to chains and studded tires.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available on original bill. New fiscal note requested on February 23, 2012.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This provides the authority in statute for the WSP, by rule, to approve alternative traction devices that meet and exceeds the required standards. The manufacturer, Autosock, is presently performing the required tests and certifications and hopefully their product will be available by next winter.

Retail tire dealers would like to have a different product other than chains to offer tire customers.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Michael Groesch, Auto Sock Company; and Mark Johnson, Washington Retail Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.