

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5506

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 13, 2019

Title: An act relating to parking at rest areas.

Brief Description: Concerning parking at rest areas.

Sponsors: Senators Hobbs, King and Sheldon.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/05/19, 2/13/19 [DP, DNP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Shortens allowable parking times at the Washington State Department of Transportation (DOT) safety rest areas for all vehicles except commercial vehicles.
- Gives DOT and the Washington State Patrol additional authority at safety rest areas to manage and enforce parking.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hobbs, Chair; Saldaña, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Cleveland, Fortunato, Lovelett, O'Ban, Padden, Takko, Wilson, C. and Zeiger.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Das, Nguyen and Randall.

Staff: Erica Bramlet (786-7321)

Background: The Washington State Department of Transportation (DOT) owns and operates 47 safety rest areas, most open to the public 24 hours a day. Features of the safety rest areas include things like parking, restrooms, drinking water, traveler information, vending machines, public telephones, and so on. DOT estimates that 24.4 million visitors used the state's safety rest areas in 2017.

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.

Current law allows vehicles to park at safety rest areas for up to eight hours per day, with no time restrictions if the vehicle is disabled. DOT maintenance staff monitor and maintain the safety rest areas, most during the day only.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulates commercial vehicle working hours. Most rest periods are either eight or ten hours, depending on the circumstances.

Summary of Bill: Vehicles—which includes trailers, campers, motorcycles—are prohibited from parking at safety rest areas for more than four hours per day. If a vehicle is disabled, the vehicle may park at a safety rest area for up to 24 hours before Washington State Patrol (WSP) impounds it. Commercial vehicles are exempt from these parking restrictions, and may park at safety rest areas for up to an hour beyond federally mandated rest periods.

Solicitation at safety rest areas is banned unless specifically authorized by DOT. DOT is also given flexibility to designate parking zones with shorter time limits for operational efficiency, and must post signage at all safety rest areas with the new parking time limits. WSP must enforce these new limits to the maximum extent practicable.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: DOT employees brought forth this bill idea to allow them to better manage those who take advantage of loopholes in current law for disabled vehicles. Commercial truckers are also supportive of the bill, as it better allows them to meet their federally mandated rest periods. Washington is the most trade-dependent state in the nation, but is ranked 44th in the availability of truck parking. Safe and accessible truck parking is crucial to the trucking industry, and this bill would help with that problem.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Steve Hobbs, Prime Sponsor; Sheri Call, Washington Trucking Associations.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.