

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1271

As Reported By House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to lawful vehicle lengths.

Brief Description: Prescribing allowed vehicle lengths.

Sponsors: Representatives R. Fisher, Schmidt, R. Meyers, Brown, Jones, Horn and Wood; by request of Department of Transportation.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Transportation, February 4, 1993, DPA.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 23 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Jones, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Mielke, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brough; Brumsickle; Cothorn; Eide; Forner; Fuhrman; Hansen; Heavey; Horn; Johanson; J. Kohl; H. Myers; Orr; Quall; Sheldon; Shin; Wood; and Zellinsky.

Staff: Mary McLaughlin (786-7309).

Background: The state of Washington is currently in non-compliance with the following federal regulations contained in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991:

(1) Federal law allows the operation of a combination consisting of two 28-1/2 foot trailers. In order to provide an adequate turning radius, the overall length of the combination is 61 feet. Current state law restricts the legal length of a double trailer combination to 60 feet.

(2) Federal code sets the legal maximum overall length for a bus at 45 feet. With the exception of articulated auto stages and municipal transit vehicles, Washington's statutes limit bus lengths to a maximum of 40 feet.

Summary of Amended Bill: Washington's statutes are brought into compliance with ISTEA's vehicle length provisions:

(1) The legal length of a double trailer combination is increased from 60 to 61 feet to accommodate the operation of a combination consisting of two 28-1/2 foot trailers; and

(2) The length of a bus (auto stage, private carrier bus or school bus) is increased from 40 to 45 feet.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The current vehicle length exemption for transit buses is restored and types of buses are specified.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The state is brought into compliance with federal vehicle length laws, thereby promoting conformity with our neighboring states.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Barry Diseth, Department of Transportation.