

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 2595

C 89 L 96
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Harmonizing procedures for vehicle impoundment.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Robertson and Scott).

House Committee on Transportation
Senate Committee on Transportation

Background: Currently, when a police officer has ordered an impound for the operation of a motor vehicle without a valid driver's license, a license that has been expired for 90 days or more, or a suspended or revoked license, the officer must immediately serve upon the driver of the impounded vehicle a notice of the right to a hearing in district court to contest the validity of the impound or the amount of towing and storage fees. In other situations where impounds are authorized, RCW 46.55, the towing and impoundment chapter, prescribes that the registered tow-truck operator give written notice of the opportunity for a hearing to persons redeeming impounded vehicles.

Under RCW 46.55, when a district court finds that an improper impound has occurred, the agency that authorized the impound is liable for any towing, storage, or other impoundment fees.

Summary: When a police officer has ordered an impound for the operation of a motor vehicle without a valid driver's license, a license that has been expired for 90 days or more, or a suspended or revoked license, the registered tow-truck operator performing the impound, rather than the police officer ordering the impound, must give written notice of the opportunity for a hearing to persons redeeming impounded vehicles.

At a hearing to contest the validity of an impound or the amount of towing and storage fees, in lieu of the impounding officer's personal appearance, the court may consider a written report made under oath by the officer who authorized the impoundment.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	0
Senate	49	0

Effective: June 6, 1996