

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5583

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As of February 14, 2013

**Title:** An act relating to an annual permit fee on studded tire use.

**Brief Description:** Requiring an annual permit fee on studded tire use.

**Sponsors:** Senators Benton, Billig and Kohl-Welles.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 2/13/13.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Staff:** Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

**Background:** Current law authorizes the use of studded tires from November 1 until March 31 each year and authorizes the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to extend that period. It is a traffic infraction, punishable by a fine of \$124, to use studded tires during the period that they are not authorized in law or by WSDOT.

According to a technical brief prepared by WSDOT and updated January 30, 2012, studded tires cause an estimated \$17.8 million to \$27.3 million in damage each year to state highways.

**Summary of Bill:** Before using studded tires during the time that they are authorized, a driver must get a studded tire permit and the permit must be displayed on the license plate of the vehicle. A studded tire permit costs \$75 and is valid for one year. The proceeds from the studded tire permit fee are deposited in the Motor Vehicle Fund and used for highway preservation related to damage caused by studded tires.

A vehicle licensing subagent that sells a studded tire permit must collect the \$5 subagent service fee.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

[OFM requested ten-year cost projection pursuant to I-960.]

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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.*

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Studded tires do extensive damage to state highways and local roads. This may not be the right solution but something needs to be done. The use of studded tires greatly reduce the 50-year life cycle of pavements. States that do not allow studded tires such as Texas have older pavements that are in better condition than newer pavements in Washington.

CON: A \$5.2 million tax on the users of studded tires is not the way to go. Not everyone can put on chains, such as senior citizens. Pulling individual components out of a revenue package is the wrong approach and \$75 annually is too much.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Jeff Uhlmeier, WSDOT.

CON: Michael Ennis, Assn. of WA Business; Dick Nordness, NW Tire Dealers Assn.; Mark Johnson, WA Retail Assn.