

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1272

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

**Title:** An act relating to creating a motor vehicle registration hiatus for certain motor vehicles that are not operated on public roads.

**Brief Description:** Creating a motor vehicle registration hiatus for certain motor vehicles that are not operated on public roads.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Harmsworth, Orcutt, Bergquist, Rodne, Muri, Stokesbary, MacEwen, Condotta and Young.

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 1/25/17, 2/15/17 [DPS].

#### **Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Creates a motor vehicle registration hiatus process.
- Allows the registered owner of a vehicle, or the owner's authorized representative, to apply for a vehicle registration hiatus, relieving the registered owner of the legal obligation to obtain an original vehicle registration upon acquiring a motor vehicle or to renew the registration before it expires.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Wylie, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Harmsworth, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chapman, Gregerson, Hayes, Irwin, Kloba, Lovick, McBride, Morris, Ortiz-Self, Pellicciotti, Pike, Riccelli, Rodne, Shea, Stambaugh, Tarleton, Van Werven and Young.

**Staff:** Patricia Hasan (786-7292).

#### **Background:**

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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.*

In Washington, vehicles must be registered and must display license plates or decals assigned by the Department of Licensing (DOL) as indication. A person operating a vehicle on public highways without first obtaining initial registration is guilty of a traffic infraction and must pay a fine of \$529. Failure to renew an expired registration before operating a vehicle on public highways is a traffic infraction. Vehicle owners must also carry the registration certificate when operating the vehicle and must permit an inspection of the vehicle registration certificate by any local authorities, police officers, or any representative of the DOL.

A vehicle owner may operate an unregistered vehicle on public highways if issued a trip permit from the field offices of the Department of Transportation, the DOL, county auditors, or other agents or subagents appointed by the Director of the DOL (Director). The trip permit allows the operation of a single vehicle for a period of three consecutive days beginning with the day of first use. No more than three trip permits may be used for any one vehicle in a consecutive 30-day period. No more than two trip permits may be used for any one recreational vehicle in a one-year period.

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### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

A vehicle registration hiatus pilot project is created. A registered owner of a vehicle, or the owner's authorized representative, may apply for a vehicle registration hiatus from the DOL, county auditor, or other agent or subagent appointed by the Director. The submitted hiatus form relieves the registered owner of the legal obligation to obtain an original vehicle registration upon acquiring a motor vehicle or to renew the registration. Eligible vehicles include mopeds, motorcycles, passenger cars, or sport utility vehicles.

The hiatus form also certifies that the motor vehicle will not be operated on public roads. If the need arises to transport the motor vehicle, a trip permit must first be obtained from the state. The registered owner of the vehicle, the driver, or both found operating a vehicle with a registration on hiatus status and without a trip permit is guilty of a traffic infraction and subject to a fine of up to \$500. The registered owner of the vehicle is not guilty in cases of theft of the motor vehicle or when the driver of the vehicle is responsible for the infraction without the registered owner's knowledge.

A vehicle registration hiatus must be for at least 30 days. At any time after the 30-day period, the registered owner or the owner's authorized representative may apply for an original vehicle registration or a renewal for the motor vehicle. The registration will be assigned a year and month based on the date of application for registration, and the vehicle registration is valid for a full 12-month period. The DOL or any other public agency may not require a registered owner of a privately owned motor vehicle to apply for a vehicle registration hiatus nor impose penalties on a registered vehicle owner for failure to apply for a registration hiatus.

The DOL will administer the pilot project and adopt policies and procedures as necessary. The DOL will submit a report to the transportation committees of the Legislature on their evaluation of the fiscal impacts of this pilot project.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

A pilot project is established to determine the fiscal impacts of a vehicle registration hiatus program. A person applying for a vehicle registration hiatus must pay a service fee and a filing fee upon submitting the application.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The registration hiatus is useful for people who are taking their vehicle off public roads for the purpose of servicing the vehicle. It exempts them from paying registration fees for the months the vehicle is not in use. Trip permits are available for the times when the vehicle needs to be moved, and there are penalties in place to prevent people from driving while on registration hiatus without a trip permit.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) There is interest in seeing how the registration hiatus process and rules will develop. The registration hiatus process will work from a technical standpoint.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Harmsworth, prime sponsor.

(Other) Charlene Winzler, Washington Association of Vehicle Subagents; and Tony Sermonti, Department of Licensing.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.