

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6218

As Passed Senate, February 9, 2018

Title: An act relating to bringing the state into compliance with the federal FAST act.

Brief Description: Bringing the state into compliance with the federal FAST act.

Sponsors: Senators King, Hobbs and Darneille; by request of Department of Transportation.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/30/18, 2/05/18 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed Senate: 2/09/18, 45-1.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Aligns the overall length limitations for certain trailer and semi-trailer vehicle combinations with federal law.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hobbs, Chair; Saldaña, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Chase, Cleveland, Dhingra, Fortunato, Liias, McCoy, O'Ban, Sheldon, Takko, Wellman and Zeiger.

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: State law sets the maximum allowable lengths for operating a vehicle on public highways, limiting the overall length to 40 feet unless the vehicle meets certain specified exceptions. Additionally, operation of any combination of a tractor and semi-trailer is limited to a length that may not exceed 53 feet, except in the case of a tractor and two trailers, in which case the length is limited to 61 feet.

The federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), signed into law on December 4, 2015, included a change to 49 U.S.C. 31111 (Length Limitations), affecting towaway trailer transporter combinations and prohibited states from enforcing a length limitation of less than 82 feet on such vehicle combinations.

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.

Summary of Bill: An exception is provided for the length limitation for a vehicle towing two trailers or semi-trailers in instances where the weight does not exceed 26,000 pounds and when the trailers or semi-trailers do not carry property, but constitute inventory property of a manufacturer, distributor, or dealer of such trailers. Vehicle combinations meeting these criteria are limited to an overall length that may not exceed 82 feet.

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: The Washington State Department of Transportation is required to comply with federal laws related to vehicle size limitations. This bill would align state statute with an exemption that was provided in the FAST Act allowing a vehicle combination towing two trailers or semi-trailers that are empty and are inventory property of a manufacturer or dealer to be operated on the highway so long as the total combination does not exceed 82 feet in length. A failure to comply with federal law can result in the withholding of federal-aid highway funds.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Travis Snell, Government Relations Liaison, Department of Transportation.

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