

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1585

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Appropriations

**Title:** An act relating to increasing the traumatic brain injury fee.

**Brief Description:** Increasing the traumatic brain injury fee.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Doglio, DeBolt, Harris, Dye, Irwin, Stonier, Riccelli, Volz, Lovick, Frame, Fey, Schmick, Appleton, Kretz, Orcutt, Senn, Cody, Macri, Valdez, Jinkins, Kloba and Ormsby.

#### **Brief History:**

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

Appropriations: 2/7/19, 2/13/19 [DP].

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

- Increases the Traumatic Brain Injury Account fee from \$2 per traffic infraction to \$5 per traffic infraction.
- Prohibits the Traumatic Brain Injury Account fee from being reduced or waived.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, 2nd Vice Chair; Robinson, 1st Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Rude, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Cody, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Hansen, Hoff, Hudgins, Jinkins, Kraft, Mosbrucker, Pettigrew, Pollet, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Stanford, Steele, Tarleton, Tharinger, Volz and Ybarra.

**Staff:** Mary Mulholland (786-7391).

#### **Background:**

Traffic Infraction Penalties, Assessments, and Fees.

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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.*

The base penalties for the majority of traffic infractions are set by the Washington Supreme Court. The most common base penalty is \$48. Once additional assessments and fees are included, the total amount owed for infractions with base penalties of \$48 comes to \$136. This total includes the following additional penalties and fees, which are assessed for all traffic offenses: two public safety and education assessments (105 percent of base penalty); a legislative assessment (\$20 assessment); a trauma care fee (\$5 fee); an auto theft prevention fee (\$10 fee); and a Traumatic Brain Injury Account fee (\$2 fee).

The public safety and education assessments, legislative assessment, trauma care fee, and auto theft prevention fee may not be reduced or waived. The Traumatic Brain Injury Account fee may be reduced or waived.

Funds collected from the Traumatic Brain Injury fee must be deposited in the Traumatic Brain Injury Account.

#### Traumatic Brain Injury Account.

The Traumatic Brain Injury Account is an appropriated account administered by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). Funds from this account may only be used:

- to support activities listed in the Statewide Traumatic Brain Injury Comprehensive Plan;
- to provide a public awareness campaign and services relating to traumatic brain injury (including programs that facilitate support groups to individuals with traumatic brain injuries and their families);
- for information and referral services; and
- for costs of the DSHS staff providing support for the Washington Traumatic Brain Injury Strategic Partnership Advisory Council.

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

The Traumatic Brain Injury Account fee is increased from \$2 per traffic infraction to \$5 per traffic infraction, and the fee may no longer be reduced or waived.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) When a driver receives a traffic infraction, the driver may notice a \$2 fee assessed for traumatic brain injuries (TBI). The fee was originally established in 2007 and the amount has not changed. The proposal would modestly increase the fee to \$5 per infraction. Revenue supports everything from education and outreach to helping TBI survivors get treatment. The result is about \$1.9 million more in revenue each year at no administrative cost. This is not a lot of money in the grand scheme, but it can make a big difference. The lives of many TBI survivors depend on support from the TBI Account. The TBI survivor community is an exclusive group that no one wants to join. There are many different stories, but TBI survivors are united in their need for more public awareness and compassion. A TBI can affect one's memory and ability to use one's skills and education. The African-American population is particularly affected by TBIs due to the prevalence of undiagnosed hypertension and resulting strokes. Funding from the TBI Account can help provide resources that are not covered by health insurance. Other populations particularly affected by TBI include the homeless, domestic violence victims, children who are abused, individuals in prison, and athletes. Depression is very prevalent, and one in four TBI survivors considers suicide. Funding would allow support groups to continue to provide TBI survivors and their caregivers with a resource of strength and comradery, and for the annual TBI conference to be held for three days rather than one.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Mike Hoover and Daniella Clark, Traumatic Brain Injury Advocates; Isaac Peterson; Serry Bauer, Scott A. Yoos, and Edwina Waehling, Olympia Traumatic Brain Injury Support Group; and Stephanie Frizzell.

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