

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2242

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to travel trailers.

Brief Description: Concerning travel trailers.

Sponsors: Representatives Wylie, Orcutt, Chapman, Bergquist, Dufault, Blake, Shewmake, Gildon and Irwin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/22/20, 1/29/20 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows operation of a travel trailer not to exceed 46 feet.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 31 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Wylie, 1st Vice Chair; Slatter, 2nd Vice Chair; Valdez, 2nd Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Young, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Chambers, Chapman, Dent, Doglio, Duerr, Dufault, Entenman, Eslick, Goehner, Gregerson, Irwin, Kloba, Lovick, McCaslin, Mead, Orcutt, Ortiz-Self, Paul, Ramos, Riccelli, Shewmake, Van Werven and Volz.

Staff: Beth Redfield (786-7140).

Background:

No person may operate on the public highways any vehicle with an overall length, with or without load, in excess of 40 feet.

This restriction does not apply to:

- a municipal transit vehicle;

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- an auto stage, private carrier bus, school bus, or motor home with an overall length not to exceed 46 feet;
 - an articulated auto stage with an overall length not to exceed 61 feet, excluding a bike rack up to 4 feet in length; or
 - an auto recycling carrier up to 42 feet in length manufactured prior to 2005.
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Summary of Bill:

A person may operate a travel trailer not to exceed 46 feet.

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) Most other states allow travel trailers to have an overall length of up to 45 feet. Idaho allows towable recreational vehicles up to 48 feet; Oregon allows towable recreational vehicles up to 45 feet. This is a technical fix. Travel trailers over 40 feet in overall length are already operated by consumers on the public highways of this state. Furthermore, travel trailers over 40 feet overall length have been produced, sold, and registered for many decades. Washington is one of only two states regulating the manufacturing of recreational vehicles. Recreational vehicle manufacturers submit plans to the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) for approval. A recreational vehicle manufacturer has to purchase a state seal for the vehicle. Without the seal the manufacturer cannot sell to the dealer, and the dealer cannot sell to the consumer. In June 2019 the L&I notified the industry they would stop approving these plans because of the maximum length statute. If the legislative change is not enacted, the L&I will discontinue approving plans for travel trailers longer than 40 feet. The bill would bring the state into line with the everyday practice of manufacturers, dealers, and consumers. If the bill does not pass, local dealers will be at a significant economic disadvantage. Customers will buy out of state.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Wylie, prime sponsor; Grant Nelson and Nick Rudowich, RV Industry Association; and Michael Kummerfeldt, Tacoma RV Center.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.