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**ENGROSSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1815**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** House Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Ryu, Boehnke, J. Johnson, Berry, Fitzgibbon, Orwall, Shewmake, Leavitt, Chase, Sells, Gregerson, Bateman, Fey, Goodman, Robertson, Macri, Ramos, Santos, Wylie, Simmons, Slatter, Bergquist, Tharinger, Valdez, Thai, Wicks, Pollet, Graham, Young, and Frame)

AN ACT Relating to deterring catalytic converter theft; amending RCW 19.290.020 and 36.28A.240; and creating new sections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that rates of catalytic converter theft have rapidly increased statewide and nationwide, due in part to existing challenges with accurately identifying stolen catalytic converters. The legislature further finds that victims of catalytic converter theft often incur costs that far exceed the monetary value of the catalytic converters themselves. The legislature further finds that catalytic converter theft is a multifaceted issue that requires collaborative effort between law enforcement agencies, insurance companies, scrap metal dealers, and other involved parties to identify comprehensive solutions.

Therefore, the legislature intends to carefully examine the catalytic converter theft issues in Washington state and conduct a study to make a variety of recommendations to the legislature, including recommendations for a potential pilot program, to reduce the occurrence of catalytic converter theft. The legislature further intends to provide funding for a grant program focused on metal theft and unlawfully obtained metal.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The joint transportation committee shall convene a catalytic converter theft work group to study and provide options and recommendations related to reducing catalytic converter theft in Washington state.

(2) The work group shall consist of, but is not limited to, members representing the following:

(a) One member representing the Washington state patrol;

(b) One member representing the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs;

(c) One member representing the Washington association of prosecuting attorneys;

(d) One member representing the office of public defense;

(e) One member representing the superior court judges' association;

(f) One member representing the district and municipal court judges' association;

(g) One member representing the association of Washington cities;

(h) One member representing the office of the attorney general;

(i) One member representing the property and casualty insurance industry;

(j) One member representing the scrap metal recycling industry;

(k) One member representing the auto dealer industry;

(l) One member representing the auto manufacturer industry;

(m) One member representing the catalytic converter manufacturer industry;

(n) One member representing the towing and recovery association of Washington;

(o) One member representing the Washington state independent
auto dealers association;

(p) One member representing the Washington independent business association;

(q) One member representing the Washington organized retail crime association; and

(r) Two members representing individuals with lived experience being charged with, or convicted of, organized theft.

(3) The work group's study shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) A review of state laws related to catalytic converter theft;

(b) A review of national efforts to address catalytic converter theft to determine whether there are best practices from other jurisdictions on how to effectively deter and end catalytic converter theft;

(c) Data collection and analysis of catalytic converter theft incidents across the state;

(d) Options to deter and end catalytic converter theft, including marking of catalytic converters; and

(e) Options and opportunities to reduce costs to victims of catalytic converter theft.

(4) The work group's recommendations shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Changes to state law to reduce catalytic converter theft;

(b) A potential pilot program that could be implemented to decrease catalytic converter theft, including by prioritizing communities with the highest incidence of catalytic converter theft or communities experiencing the most financial impact due to catalytic converter theft; and

(c) Cost estimates for the pilot program and recommendations on evaluation criteria and metrics to determine the efficacy and benefits of the pilot program.

(5) The work group shall provide a preliminary report and recommendations to the transportation and public safety committees of the legislature by November 1, 2022. The work group shall provide a final report and recommendations, including recommendations on a potential pilot program, to the transportation and public safety committees of the legislature by January 1, 2023.

**Sec.**  RCW 19.290.020 and 2013 c 322 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) At the time of a transaction, every scrap metal business doing business in this state shall produce wherever that business is conducted an accurate and legible record of each transaction involving private metal property or nonferrous metal property. This record must be written in the English language, documented on a standardized form or in electronic form, and contain the following information:

(a) The signature of the person with whom the transaction is made;

(b) The time, date, location, and value of the transaction;

(c) The name of the employee representing the scrap metal business in the transaction;

(d) The name, street address, and telephone number of the person with whom the transaction is made;

(e) The license plate number and state of issuance of the license plate on the motor vehicle used to deliver the private metal property or nonferrous metal property subject to the transaction;

(f) A description of the motor vehicle used to deliver the private metal property or nonferrous metal property subject to the transaction;

(g) The current driver's license number or other government-issued picture identification card number of the seller or a copy of the seller's government-issued picture identification card; ((~~and~~))

(h) A description of the predominant types of private metal property or nonferrous metal property subject to the transaction, utilizing the institute of scrap recycling industries' generally accepted terminology, and including weight, quantity, or volume; and

(i) For every transaction specifically involving a catalytic converter that has been removed from a vehicle, documentation indicating that the private metal property in the seller's possession is the result of the seller replacing private metal property from a vehicle registered in the seller's name.

(2) For every transaction that involves private metal property or nonferrous metal property, every scrap metal business doing business in the state shall require the person with whom a transaction is being made to sign a declaration. The declaration may be included as part of the transactional record required under subsection (1) of this section, or on a receipt for the transaction. The declaration must state substantially the following:

"I, the undersigned, affirm under penalty of law that the property that is subject to this transaction is not to the best of my knowledge stolen property."

The declaration must be signed and dated by the person with whom the transaction is being made. An employee of the scrap metal business must witness the signing and dating of the declaration and sign the declaration accordingly before any transaction may be consummated.

(3) The record and declaration required under this section must be open to the inspection of any commissioned law enforcement officer of the state or any of its political subdivisions at all times during the ordinary hours of business, or at reasonable times if ordinary hours of business are not kept, and must be maintained wherever that business is conducted for five years following the date of the transaction.

**Sec.**  RCW 36.28A.240 and 2013 c 322 s 24 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) When funded, the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs shall establish a grant and training program to assist local law enforcement agencies in the support of special enforcement ((~~emphasis~~)) targeting metal theft. Grant applications shall be reviewed ((~~and awarded~~)) through peer review panels after coordination with other appropriate entities, such as those involved in enforcement against metal theft. Grant applicants with a demonstrated increase in metal theft over the previous 24 months are encouraged to ((~~utilize multijurisdictional efforts~~)) focus solely on metal theft and unlawful purchasing and selling of unlawfully obtained metal in their jurisdiction, but may coordinate with other jurisdictions.

(2) Each grant applicant shall:

(a) Show a significant metal theft problem in the jurisdiction or jurisdictions receiving the grant;

(b) Verify that grant awards are sufficient to cover increased investigation, prosecution, and jail costs;

(c) Design an enforcement program that best suits the specific metal theft problem in the jurisdiction or jurisdictions receiving the grant;

(d) Demonstrate community coordination focusing on prevention, intervention, and suppression; and

(e) Collect data on performance.

(3) The cost of administering the grants shall not exceed ((~~sixty thousand dollars~~)) $60,000, or three percent of appropriated funding, whichever is greater.

(4) Grant awards may not be used to supplant preexisting funding sources for special enforcement targeting metal theft.

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