

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5449

As of January 31, 2023

Title: An act relating to the requirements for school buses used for purposes other than the transportation of students.

Brief Description: Concerning the requirements for school buses used for purposes other than the transportation of students.

Sponsors: Senators Warnick, Dozier and Torres.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/31/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires school buses purchased for purposes other than to transport students to have certain equipment removed, and to be painted any color except chrome yellow.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Brandon Popovac (786-7465)

Background: A school district that sells a school bus to any person other than another school district is responsible for removing the school district's name and number, and all lettering and markings identifying the vehicle as a school bus before its delivery to the purchaser. If the school district sells the school bus to a private party who certifies in writing that the school bus will be used as a private carrier bus, the school district need not remove the four or eight light warning system and stop signal arm.

A private carrier bus is a motor vehicle designed for carrying passengers, with a seating capacity for at least 11 persons, used in furtherance of any organized agricultural, religious, or charitable purpose. Private carrier buses do not include any buses operated by common

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carriers under a franchise granted by any city or town, or the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission.

Private carrier buses must, in addition to any other required equipment and distinctive markings, be equipped with a stop signal and with signal lamps mounted as high and as widely spaced laterally as practicable, and capable of displaying to the front two alternately flashing red lights located at the same level and to the rear two alternately flashing red lights located at the same level. The driver of a private carrier bus must activate the stop signal and flashing red lights only when such bus is stopped on the roadway for receiving or discharging passengers.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): Any person who purchases a school bus to be used for any purpose except to transport students must:

- remove the bus's flashing red lights and stop signal arm; and
- paint the bus any color except the national standard school bus chrome yellow.

Any person who purchases a school bus to be used as a private carrier bus must paint the bus any color except the national standard school bus chrome yellow.

School districts and private school transportation contractors that use school buses primarily to transport students are not subject to these new requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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 On Proposed Substitute: PRO: The idea for this bill comes from a constituent. Lots of employers with agricultural workers use former school buses for transportation purposes. There is a safety risk when children might become confused if they encounter a decommissioned school bus since children trust yellow school buses to get them home. The bill will protect children from nefarious individuals using decommissioned school buses to lure them.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Judy Warnick, Prime Sponsor; Joyce Edie.

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