

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1262

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Transportation*

**Title:** An act relating to weight, height, and length exemptions for tow trucks operated by registered tow truck operators.

**Brief Description:** Lessening emergency service tow truck restrictions.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Zellinsky, Lisk, R. Meyers, Van Luven, Ferguson, Prentice, Chandler, Orr, Bowman, Prince, Day, Cooper, R. Fisher, Betrozoff, Cantwell, Forner, Paris, Wilson, P. Johnson, Fuhrman, Winsley, Hochstatter, Nealey, Wynne, D. Sommers, Broback, Wood, Morton, Horn, Mielke, Brough, Miller, Jacobsen and Silver.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Transportation, February 26, 1991, DP.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
TRANSPORTATION**

**Majority Report:** *Do pass.* Signed by 20 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; R. Meyers, Vice Chair; Betrozoff, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cantwell; Cooper; Day; G. Fisher; Forner; Horn; P. Johnson; R. Johnson; Jones; Mitchell; Orr; Prentice; Prince; Schmidt; Wilson; and Wood.

**Minority Report:** *Do not pass.* Signed by 2 members: Representatives Brough and Heavey.

**Staff:** Brad Lovaas (786-7307).

**Background:** The Department of Transportation (DOT) is responsible for the issuance of overdimensional and overweight permits to vehicles that exceed the legal weight, height, length and width requirements. By policy, when a tow truck operator removes a disabled overweight or overdimensional vehicle from a public highway, the initial move may be made without first having obtained the proper permits in order to protect the public safety.

If the vehicle is over 34,000 pounds and up to 43,000 pounds on a tandem axle and is a non-reducible load, a DOT-issued permit must be obtained before the vehicle can be transported to its final destination. To expedite the permitting process for a tow truck operator's subsequent move, the DOT and Washington State Patrol have agreed to issue overweight permits by telephone for weights between 34,000 and 43,000 pounds on the rear tandem axle. A permit number is given to the tow truck operator that is carried in the vehicle. After the move is completed, the tow truck operator pays the DOT permit fee.

For non-reducible load tandem axle weights over 43,000 pounds, application must be made to the DOT specifying the proposed routes to be used. The DOT then determines if the movement can be made without damage to the highway and bridge structures. The department may accept, modify or deny the proposed route after review by the Bridge Division.

**Summary of Bill:** A tow truck performing an initial tow is not subject to the statutory height, weight, length, axle loading and spacing requirements, regardless of the destination.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Vehicles which break down on the roadway are licensed and need to be towed from the scene of the breakdown.

**Testimony Against:** Some of the vehicles to be towed cause the tow truck to exceed weight limit restrictions.

**Witnesses:** Barry Diseth, Department of Transportation (con); Al Runte', Washington Tow Truck Association (pro); and Melvin Dickey, Tukwila Towing (pro).