

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5046

AS OF JANUARY 29, 1991

Brief Description: Requiring spare tires to be the same size as the other tires.

SPONSORS: Senators Snyder, Madsen, Jesernig, McMullen, Murray, Stratton, A. Smith and Conner.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Gene Baxstrom (786-7303)

Hearing Dates: January 29, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Beginning in the late 1960s, automobile manufacturers began equipping cars with spare tires which were different from the other tires on the vehicle. This practice was expanded rapidly in the late 1970s and in the 1980s. The use of compact spares was first introduced to save space in certain vehicle trunks. As cars were downsized and reduced in weight due to energy efficiency requirements, the policy of making spare tires smaller and lighter was aggressively pursued.

Currently, many vehicle manufacturers offer on portions of their model line the option of a full sized spare tire, primarily on larger sized vehicles. Certain vehicles have as standard equipment conventional spare tires and in other instances a full size spare tire is optional or not available.

State law requires that vehicles have tires which are in safe working condition in order to operate legally on public roads. With certain exceptions, tires are required to be matched in tire size designation, construction and profile to other tire/tires on the same axle. State law also prohibits the use of nonpneumatic tires on vehicles except as described in the following paragraph.

Legislation enacted in 1990 authorized temporary use on vehicles of spare tires which meet federal standards and are installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Federal standards currently authorize temporary use spare tires which are not of the same size and configuration as other tires on the vehicle. Federal regulations permit these temporary use spare tires to be nonpneumatic.

SUMMARY:

All new passenger cars sold in Washington after December 31, 1993 are required to have as standard equipment a spare tire

that is matched in tire size designation, construction and profile to the other tires on the vehicle.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested