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HOUSE BILL 1722

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State of Washington

53rd Legislature

1993 Regular Session

By Representatives Zellinsky, R. Fisher, Wood, Schmidt, Sheldon, Orr  
and Johanson

Read first time 02/05/93. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to regulating the use of optical strobe light  
2 devices controlling traffic control lights; amending RCW 46.37.190; and  
3 creating a new section.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.37.190 and 1987 c 330 s 710 are each amended to  
6 read as follows:

7 (1) Every authorized emergency vehicle shall, in addition to any  
8 other equipment and distinctive marking required by this chapter, be  
9 equipped with at least one lamp capable of displaying a red light  
10 visible from at least five hundred feet in normal sunlight and a siren  
11 capable of giving an audible signal.

12 (2) Every school bus and private carrier bus shall, in addition to  
13 any other equipment and distinctive markings required by this chapter,  
14 be equipped with a "stop" signal upon a background not less than  
15 fourteen by eighteen inches displaying the word "stop" in letters of  
16 distinctly contrasting colors not less than eight inches high, and  
17 shall further be equipped with signal lamps mounted as high and as  
18 widely spaced laterally as practicable, which shall be capable of  
19 displaying to the front two alternately flashing red lights located at

1 the same level and to the rear two alternately flashing red lights  
2 located at the same level and these lights shall have sufficient  
3 intensity to be visible at five hundred feet in normal sunlight.

4 (3) Vehicles operated by public agencies whose law enforcement  
5 duties include the authority to stop and detain motor vehicles on the  
6 public highways of the state may be equipped with a siren and lights of  
7 a color and type designated by the state patrol for that purpose. The  
8 state patrol may prohibit the use of these sirens and lights on  
9 vehicles other than the vehicles described in this subsection.

10 (4) The lights described in this section shall not be mounted nor  
11 used on any vehicle other than a school bus, a private carrier bus, or  
12 an authorized emergency or law enforcement vehicle. Optical strobe  
13 light devices shall not be installed or used on any vehicle other than  
14 an emergency vehicle authorized by the state patrol ~~((or))~~, a  
15 publicly((-)owned law enforcement or emergency vehicle, a department  
16 of transportation maintenance vehicle, or a public transit vehicle.

17 (a) An "optical strobe light device" used by emergency vehicles  
18 means a strobe light device which emits an optical signal at a specific  
19 frequency to a traffic control light enabling the emergency vehicle in  
20 which the strobe light device is used to obtain the right of way at  
21 intersections.

22 (b) An "optical strobe light device" used by department of  
23 transportation maintenance vehicles means a strobe light device which  
24 emits an optical signal at a specific frequency to a traffic control  
25 light enabling the department of transportation maintenance vehicle in  
26 which the strobe light device is used to perform maintenance tests.

27 (c) An "optical strobe light device" used by public transit  
28 vehicles means a strobe light device which emits an optical signal at  
29 a specific frequency to a traffic control light enabling the public  
30 transit vehicle in which the strobe light device is used to accelerate  
31 the cycle of the traffic control light. For the purposes of this  
32 section, "public transit vehicle" means vehicles, owned by a  
33 governmental entity, with a seat capacity for twenty-five or more  
34 persons and used to provide mass transportation. Public transit  
35 vehicles operating an optical strobe light will have second degree  
36 priority to emergency vehicles when simultaneously approaching the same  
37 traffic control light.

38 (5) The use of the signal equipment described herein, except the  
39 optical strobe light devices used by public transit vehicles and

1 department of transportation maintenance vehicles which are not used in  
2 conjunction with emergency equipment, shall impose upon drivers of  
3 other vehicles the obligation to yield right of way and stop as  
4 prescribed in RCW 46.61.210, 46.61.370, and 46.61.350.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The state patrol shall adopt rules to  
6 implement RCW 46.37.190.

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