

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5284

As Passed House:

April 17, 2003

Title: An act relating to failure to use required traction equipment.

Brief Description: Penalizing failure to use required traction equipment.

Sponsors: By Senators Stevens, Horn, Benton, Haugen, Oke, Swecker, Esser and Mulliken.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 4/1/03, 4/2/03 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/17/03, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- The penalty classification for failing to use required traction equipment is reduced from being a misdemeanor, to being a traffic infraction.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 24 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Simpson, Vice Chair; Ericksen, Ranking Minority Member; Jarrett, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Bailey, Campbell, Clibborn, Cooper, Dickerson, Edwards, Hankins, Hatfield, Kristiansen, Lovick, Mielke, Morris, Nixon, Romero, Schindler, Shabro, Wood and Woods.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Anderson.

Staff: Reema Griffith (786-7301).

Background:

Under current law, failure to use particular tires, tire chains or traction equipment when advised to do so by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is a misdemeanor. A misdemeanor is a crime punishable by up to 90 days in jail, a fine of

up to \$1,000 or both.

Summary of Bill:

Failure to use required traction equipment is reclassified as a traffic infraction with a fine of \$500.

Technical amendments are made which update the terminology used to describe road conditions and required traction devices to reflect that which is currently used by the WSDOT.

The WSDOT or the Washington State Patrol is authorized to specify different traction recommendations or requirements for four-wheel drive vehicles in gear.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill will make the enforcement of traction device requirements more effective as law enforcement will be more likely to issue traffic infractions, rather than issue criminal citations for this violation. Also, the fine is set high enough that it will still serve as a strong deterrent for people who may choose to disregard travel advisories.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Stevens, prime sponsor.