

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2908

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to salvage vehicles.

Brief Description: Strengthening accountability for salvage vehicles.

Sponsors: Representatives Mielke, O'Brien, Ahern, Pearson and Boldt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/2/04, 2/4/04 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Adds inspection and documentation requirements for salvage vehicles, authorizes Washington State Patrol to adopt rules relating to salvage vehicles, and amends the definition of salvage vehicle.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Simpson, G., Vice Chair; Ericksen, Ranking Minority Member; Jarrett, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Bailey, Campbell, Clibborn, Cooper, Dickerson, Edwards, Flannigan, Hankins, Hatfield, Hudgins, Kristiansen, Lovick, Mielke, Morris, Nixon, Rodne, Romero, Schindler, Shabro, Sullivan, Wallace, Wood and Woods.

Staff: Page Scott (786-7301).

Background:

Under current law, when a vehicle is wrecked beyond repair or declared a total loss, the owner must surrender the title and registration to the Department of Licensing (DOL) within 15 days of the accident. Once the title is surrendered to the DOL on the grounds of being a total loss, the vehicle is considered a "salvage vehicle." If the salvage vehicle is rebuilt, current law requires that the DOL issue a special title and registration with the words "WA Rebuilt" displayed across the front of the document. After inspecting the rebuilt vehicle, the Washington State Patrol (WSP) inscribes a marking on the inside of the driver's side door indicating the vehicle was previously destroyed or declared a total loss.

In order to be designated as a salvage vehicle, the vehicle must: 1) be damaged to the extent that the cost of repairs plus the salvage value make the vehicle uneconomical to repair; 2) have a model year designation of a calendar year that is less than six years before the calendar year in which the vehicle was wrecked, destroyed, or damaged; or 3) have a model year designation of a calendar year that is less than 20 years before the calendar year in which the vehicle was wrecked, destroyed, or damaged and have a fair market value of at least \$6,500 prior to being destroyed.

The WSP does not have specific rulemaking authority relating to salvage vehicles and salvage vehicle inspections.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A physical examination is required for vehicles declared totaled or salvage under Washington law. The physical examination is also required for salvage vehicles from other states that have not been rebuilt or repaired within the jurisdiction of that state.

An inspection must verify that the vehicle identification number is genuine and agrees with the number shown on the original documents supporting the vehicle purchase or ownership. If the vehicle to be inspected has been rebuilt or repaired, all invoices, including retail sales or use tax, must be shown at the time of inspection. If the presenter is unable to provide proof of ownership for the vehicle or major component parts, an inspection must be completed for ownership-in-doubt purposes.

A vehicle must have all damaged major component parts replaced or repaired and the vehicle presented for inspection must meet all lighting and equipment standards specified in RCW 46.37.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Specific rulemaking authority by the Chief of the Washington State Patrol (WSP) regarding salvage vehicles is removed. Language is added to clarify that the application for a certificate of vehicle ownership be made by the person who is applying to be the registered owner. The definition of salvage vehicle remains as it is in current law.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This bill will eliminate the unfair competitive advantage of people or businesses who use stolen parts to restore salvage vehicles. These requirements will help the

Washington State Patrol in its efforts to combat auto theft by requiring receipts and that all major component parts to be replaced prior to vehicle inspection.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Mielke, Prime sponsor; Willis Christent, Citizen; and Jeff Devere, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.