

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5277

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Highways & Transportation, February 19, 2003

Title: An act relating to certification of entities regulated by the utilities and transportation commission under Title 81 RCW.

Brief Description: Regarding certification of entities regulated by the utilities and transportation commission.

Sponsors: Senators Swecker, Jacobsen and Oke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 2/12/03, 2/19/03 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5277 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Horn, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Esser, Finkbeiner, Haugen, Jacobsen; Kastama, Mulliken, Oke, Prentice and Spanel.

Staff: Michael Groesch (786-7434)

Background: The Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) regulates passenger transportation providers including: private, nonprofit providers for persons with special needs; regular route bus services, including airporter service; charter and excursion services; and commercial ferry companies. The UTC also regulates solid waste collection companies. An operator wishing to provide any of these services for compensation must first obtain a certificate from the UTC. In order to revoke or suspend a transportation company certificate, or to authorize certificates on additional routes, the UTC must hold a public hearing. Hearings must be held in every circumstance of change regardless if the certificate holder agrees or objects to the changes. Unlike other statutory provisions regulating transportation providers, Chapter 81.68 RCW, concerning bus services and airporters, does not provide for temporary certificates.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The UTC is authorized to revoke or suspend a transportation company certificate, or to authorize additional certificates to serve a specific route, without a hearing, when the existing certificate holder does not object to the changes in the status of the certificate. The UTC is authorized to issue temporary certificates for up to 180 days to airporter services or bus services.

RCW 81.68.045, Excursion Service Companies“Certificates, is moved from the auto transportation regulation chapter to the excursion service chapter, 81.70 RCW.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill adds an emergency clause.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The changes provide for efficiency and better timeliness for changes in certification. Notification efforts will ensure that interested parties are aware of actions. The changes will make the WUTC more user friendly. The bill could be improved with an emergency clause.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Beth Redfield, UTC; David Gudgel, Gray Line of Seattle.