

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESB 5581

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to suncreening devices.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions relating to sunscreening devices.

Sponsors: Senators Delvin, Marr and Shin; by request of Washington State Patrol.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 3/17/09, 3/23/09 [DP].

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Aligns Washington sunscreening regulations to federal standards.
- Defines "light transmission," "net film screening," "reflectance," and "safety glazing materials."
- Establishes permissible levels of sunscreening permitted on motor vehicles.
- Defines a "collector vehicle" and allows darker window tinting on collector vehicles, hearses, ambulances, and other emergency vehicles.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Liias, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Rodne, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Campbell, Cox, Driscoll, Eddy, Ericksen, Finn, Flannigan, Herrera, Johnson, Klippert, Kristiansen, Moeller, Rolfes, Sells, Shea, Simpson, Springer, Takko, Upthegrove, Wallace, Williams and Wood.

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306)

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Current laws regarding the suncreening (window tinting) materials that may be applied to the windows of motor vehicles reference federal standards, as well as standards established by the Washington State Patrol (WSP).

References to several different window tinting standards has resulted in confusion among motorists, the window tinting industry, and law enforcement.

Summary of Bill:

References to suncreening standards established by the WSP are changed to refer to the federal standards. All vehicles sold must be equipped with safety glazing material that meets federal requirements.

The bill establishes definitions in statute for "light transmission," "net film screening," "reflectance," and "safety glazing materials." The maximum level of net film suncreening applied to any window, except the windshield, shall have a reflectance of 35 percent or less, and a light transmission of 24 percent or more when the vehicle is equipped with outside rearview mirrors on both the right and left. A greater degree of light reduction is permitted on a windshield as long as it is transparent and does not extend more than six inches from the top of the windshield.

The safety glazing material will not be etched or permanently altered on the windshield or other window in the passenger compartment, except for the vehicle identification number up to one-half inch and cannot interfere with the vision of any occupant.

Certificates or decals that are required by law are permitted on vehicles so long as neither their size, nor placement on the vehicle, impair the driver's ability to safely operate the motor vehicle. Recreational products, such as toys or signs, may be applied to windows behind the driver provided they do not interfere with the driver's ability to see other vehicles, people, or objects.

A "collector vehicle" is defined as any vehicle more than 30 years old. Collector vehicles, hearses, ambulances, and other emergency medical vehicles are added to the list of vehicles that may have window tinting that is darker than otherwise allowable applied to the windows behind the driver.

A truck, motor home, or multipurpose passenger vehicle may have net film suncreening applied on any window to the rear of the driver that has less than 24 percent light transmittance, if the light reflectance is 35 percent or less and the vehicle is equipped with outside rearview mirrors on both the right and left.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The bill helps to clarify the regulations concerning window tinting along with helping law enforcement enforce the laws. Actual light meters, which give a true reading of the light that is transmitted through a window, are \$400 each. Installers must place a sticker on the vehicle that the window tinting is in conformance with state laws. This bill does not change anything in WAC or statute, and it makes the existing rules and laws easier to understand for law enforcement, the public, and the window tinting installers.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jeff DeVere, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.