

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6423

As Passed House:
February 28, 2012

Title: An act relating to the definition of farm vehicle.

Brief Description: Concerning the definition of farm vehicle.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators King and Holmquist Newbry).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/15/12, 2/16/12 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/12, 97-1.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Updates the definition of a farm vehicle to conform with the specific commercial driver's license exemption provided for farmers operating farm vehicles.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Billig, Vice Chair; Lias, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Asay, Finn, Fitzgibbon, Hansen, Johnson, Klippert, Kristiansen, Ladenburg, McCune, Moeller, Morris, Moscoso, Reykdal, Rivers, Rodne, Shea, Takko, Upthegrove and Zeiger.

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306).

Background:

Generally under current state law, drivers of commercial motor vehicles must first obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL) and applicable endorsements valid for the vehicle they are driving. The operator of a farm vehicle, and the vehicle controlled and operated by a farmer,

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are exempt from the CDL requirements when: (1) the vehicle is used to transport either agricultural products, which in this section includes Christmas trees and wood products harvested from private tree farms and transported by vehicles weighing no more than 40,000 pounds licensed gross vehicle weight, farm machinery, farm supplies, animal manure, animal manure compost, or any combination of those materials to or from a farm; (2) not used in the operations of a common or contract motor carrier; and (3) used within 150 miles of the person's farm.

The general definition of farm vehicle, applicable throughout the broader Motor Vehicles code (Title 46 RCW), is limited to those vehicles only incidentally operated on public highways for the purpose of going from one farm to another.

Summary of Bill:

The definition of a farm vehicle is updated to include not only the operation on public highways for the purpose of going from one farm to another, but also when the farm vehicle is used to transport agricultural products, farm machinery, farm supplies, or any combination of these materials to or from a farm. The vehicle must: not have a vehicle gross weight of more than 40,000 pounds if hauling Christmas trees and wood products, be used within 150 miles of the person's farm, and not used in the operations of a common or contract motor carrier.

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 brings the definition of a farm vehicle in sync with the existing policy decisions made by the Legislature in the past. The bill makes the definition of a farm vehicle clearer for the operators of farm equipment and for law enforcement.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator King, prime sponsor; and Tim Boyd, Washington State Potato Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.