

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6084

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 10, 2020

Title: An act relating to roundabouts.

Brief Description: Concerning roundabouts. [**Revised for 1st Substitute:** Concerning circular intersections.]

Sponsors: Senators Takko, Hobbs, Mullet and Padden.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/28/20, 2/10/20 [DPS].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Defines a circular intersection, which includes roundabouts and traffic circles.
- Authorizes certain commercial motor vehicles to deviate from the lane of travel in order to approach and travel through a roundabout safely.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6084 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hobbs, Chair; Saldaña, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Cleveland, Das, Lovelett, Nguyen, O'Ban, Padden, Randall, Takko, Wilson, C. and Zeiger.

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: A vehicle passing around a rotary traffic island must be driven to the right of the island.

Whenever a roadway is divided into two or more clearly marked lanes for traffic, a vehicle must be driven as nearly as practicable entirely within a single lane and may not be moved from the lane until the driver concludes that the movement can safely be made.

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.

It is unlawful for any person to operate on public roadways any vehicle with an overall length, with or without load, over 40 feet, subject to the following exceptions:

- a municipal transit vehicle;
- an auto stage—which carries passengers or incidental baggage and freight or both, private carrier bus, school bus, or motor home with an overall length no greater than 46 feet;
- an articulated auto stage with an overall length no greater than 61 feet—excluding a bike rack up to 4 feet long; and
- an auto recycling carrier up to 42 feet in length manufactured prior to 2005.

It is unlawful for any person to operate on public roadways any combination of vehicles consisting of a tractor and semitrailer that has a semitrailer length over 53 feet or a combination consisting of a tractor and two trailers in which the combined length of the trailers exceeds 61 feet, with or without load, subject to certain exceptions, including specified exceptions for two trailers or semitrailers; a truck and trailer; a log truck and stinger-steered pole trailer; and vehicles transporting poles, pipe, machinery, or certain objects required for emergency public utility repair.

Federal law permits a maximum vehicle width of 8 feet on the interstate highway system, except for buses and commercial trucks, which are permitted to have a maximum vehicle width of 8.5 feet. Under state law, vehicle widths are limited to 8.5 feet on public roadways, unless a special permit is obtained for greater widths within certain maximum vehicle widths by roadway type. On two-lane roadways outside the limits of a city or town, a special permit may be obtained for vehicles with a maximum width of 14 feet.

A "semitrailer" includes every vehicle without motive power designed to be drawn by a vehicle, motor vehicle, or truck tractor, that is constructed so an appreciable part of its weight and its load rests on and is carried by another vehicle, motor vehicle, or truck tractor.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): A "circular intersection" is defined as an intersection characterized by a circulatory roadway, encompassing the area up to the outermost curb line, or the edge of the pavement if there is no curb, and includes crosswalks. A circular intersection includes roundabouts, traffic circles, and rotaries.

The operator of certain commercial motor vehicles approaching and traveling through a circular intersection may, with due regard for other traffic, deviate from the lane in which the operator is driving.

Commercial motor vehicles authorized to deviate from the lane of travel to navigate a circular intersection include a commercial motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 pounds or more, a motor vehicle designed to carry 16 passengers or more, all school buses, and any motor vehicle transporting hazardous materials.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (First Substitute):

- Removes definition of "roundabout" and provides a new definition of a "circular intersection", which includes the area up to the outermost curb line, or the edge of the pavement if there is no curb, and includes crosswalks. A circular intersection includes roundabouts, traffic circles, and rotaries.
- Broadens the class of vehicles that may deviate from a lane of travel as the vehicle approaches and travels through a circular intersection to include commercial motor vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 pounds or more, is designed to carry 16 passengers or more, all school buses, and any vehicle transporting hazardous materials.
- Amends the title to reflect circular intersections instead of roundabouts.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Proposed Substitute: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: I love roundabouts. People complain about them at first, but after they get used to using them, they see that it is better than sitting at a light or a stop sign. They really are efficient.

This bill is putting into statute some clear operational guidelines that need to be there. Over width or very long vehicles cannot navigate a roundabout without deviating from a single lane. Physics does not allow it. This bill provides relief for the operator of very wide, or a vehicle in excess of 40 feet to straddle the lanes prior to entering a roundabout and as the vehicle moves through the roundabout.

The contract logging industry thanks you for this bill. The log trucks physically cannot track in a single lane around the tight corners in a roundabout.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Dean Takko, Prime Sponsor; Jerrold Bonagofsky, Washington Contract Loggers Association; Jeff DeVere, Washington Trucking Associations.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.