

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1790

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**As Passed House:**  
February 23, 2022

**Title:** An act relating to the creation, display, and material durability of temporary license plates.

**Brief Description:** Addressing the creation, display, and material durability of temporary license plates.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Ramos, Robertson, Fitzgibbon, Ryu, Callan, Fey, Ramel, Donaghy and Riccelli).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 1/18/22, 2/7/22 [DPS].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/23/22, 79-18.

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Replaces temporary permits with temporary license plates following application for the registration of a vehicle.
- Requires that temporary license plates be composed of durable material and be displayed in the same manner as a license plate.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Wylie, 1st Vice Chair; Bronoske, 2nd Vice Chair; Ramos, 2nd Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Eslick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Robertson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Volz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berry, Chapman, Dent, Donaghy, Duerr, Entenman,

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

Goehner, Griffey, Hackney, Klicker, Orcutt, Paul, Ramel, Riccelli, Slatter, Taylor, Valdez and Wicks.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Sutherland and Walsh.

**Staff:** Michael Hirsch (786-7195).

**Background:**

*Temporary Permits.*

The Department of Licensing (DOL) authorizes the administration of temporary permits for the operation of a vehicle issued after an application for registration has been made. The DOL also issues temporary permits such as the vehicle trip permit, a temporary off-road vehicle use permit, and temporary permits for nonresident members of the Armed Forces.

Temporary permits which allow for the operation of a vehicle for which an application for registration has been made must be consecutively numbered, displayed where visible from the outside of the vehicle, and remain on the vehicle only until the receipt of permanent license plates. These temporary permits may be issued by an authorized vehicle dealer, the DOL, county auditor or other agent, or subagent appointed by the Director of the DOL. The DOL, county auditor or other agent, or subagent appointed by the Director requires the applicant to pay a permit fee before accepting an application for a permit.

*License Plate Display.*

Each license plate must be kept clean and be able to be plainly seen and read and be attached 4 feet or less from the ground in a horizontal position. If two license plates have been issued, license plates must be attached conspicuously at the front and rear of each vehicle. If one license plate has been issued, the plate must be attached to the rear of the vehicle. The Washington State Patrol (WSP) may grant exceptions to license plate display requirements if the body construction of the vehicle prevents compliance.

*International Registration Plan.*

The International Registration Plan (IRP) is an international program that allows commercial vehicles registration reciprocity among states and Canadian provinces. It also facilitates uniformity of laws regarding the registration of interstate commercial vehicles and provides each jurisdiction with a prorated share of fees based on distance traveled and weight. In order for states to be eligible to receive certain federal transportation funds they must participate in an IRP.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The DOL may grant a temporary license plate to operate a vehicle when an application for registration has been made. Required fees remain unchanged. Requirements for issuing a

temporary license plate remain the same as the previous requirements for issuing a temporary permit, except that: the temporary license plate must be displayed as is required for a permanent license plate; and must be composed of durable material and remain unaltered in field conditions for a minimum of four months. The DOL is given authority to adopt rules for the design and display of temporary license plates.

A temporary license plate is defined as a plate or placard that may be issued to a vehicle owner by the DOL or by an authorized entity for the purposes of temporary vehicle licensing.

A license plate is defined as a plate that may be issued to a vehicle owner by the DOL or by any authorized entity for vehicle licensing or identification purposes. Neither temporary license plates nor metal tags issued for licensing wheeled all-terrain vehicles are license plates.

Temporary operating authority is defined as a paper or electronic credential issued under proportional registration in compliance with the IRP requirements for temporary evidence of apportioned registration.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2023.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Current temporary permits are often unreadable. This bill would create plates readable by law enforcement and would increase law enforcement safety. The clear expiration date would encourage people to install permanent license plates. This bill would increase collection of tolls. Other states have switched to durable temporary plates mounted like typical license plates. People drive better when they can be identified. The new plate paper should be compatible with printers at auditor and subagent offices.

(Opposed) Current temporary permits are printed on demand by the dealer. The current process removed delays dealers used to experience. The change in plate location should not be an issue for dealers. Dealers pay \$15 for every plate issued and a new paper standard would create an additional cost for dealers. The DOL rulemaking authority could create additional costs for dealers.

(Other) This bill is not part of the Governor's budget. This is a good policy and the DOL would incur a significant cost for the durable paper. The temporary plate requirement would help identify vehicle owners and would increase removing old vehicle plates when changing ownership. A temporary plate is a government document and the DOL should

have rulemaking authority. Temporary permits are a challenge for the tolling system. Mounting temporary plates in a standard location on the front and rear of the vehicle would assist toll readers.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Bill Ramos, prime sponsor; Robert Milligan; Joe DePinto and Anita Marcelo, Washington Association of Vehicle Subagents; and Thad Duvall, Washington State Association of County Auditors.

(Opposed) Scott Hazlegrove, Washington State Auto Dealers Association.

(Other) Beau Perschbacher, Washington Department of Licensing; and Tyler Patterson, Washington State Department of Transportation.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.