
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1815

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By House Public Safety (originally sponsored by Representatives Ryu, Boehnke, J. Johnson, Berry, Fitzgibbon, Orwall, Shewmake, Leavitt, Chase, Sells, Gregerson, Bateman, Fey, Goodman, Robertson, Macri, Ramos, Santos, Wylie, Simmons, Slatter, Bergquist, Tharinger, Valdez, Thai, Wicks, Pollet, Graham, Young, and Frame)

READ FIRST TIME 01/31/22.

1 AN ACT Relating to deterring catalytic converter theft; amending
2 RCW 19.290.020; creating new sections; and providing expiration
3 dates.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that rates of
6 catalytic converter theft have rapidly increased statewide and
7 nationwide, due in part to existing challenges with accurately
8 identifying stolen catalytic converters. The legislature further
9 finds that victims of catalytic converter theft often incur costs
10 that far exceed the monetary value of the catalytic converters
11 themselves. The legislature further finds that catalytic converter
12 theft is a multifaceted issue that requires collaborative effort
13 between law enforcement agencies, insurance companies, scrap metal
14 dealers, and other involved parties to identify comprehensive
15 solutions.

16 Therefore, the legislature intends to establish a pilot project
17 to mark catalytic converters with unique, permanent identifiers,
18 thereby enabling law enforcement agencies, insurance companies, and
19 scrap metal dealers to more effectively track the ownership of
20 catalytic converters and identify stolen property. The legislature
21 further intends to gather and utilize data from the pilot project to

1 inform additional efforts to address catalytic converter theft in
2 Washington state. The legislature further intends to establish a task
3 force with the goal of developing effective tools and methods for
4 deterring catalytic converter theft, identifying and recovering
5 stolen catalytic converters, and lowering costs to victims of
6 catalytic converter theft.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) Subject to the availability of the
8 amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the Washington state
9 patrol shall establish the catalytic converter tracking pilot
10 project. The purpose of the pilot project is to deter the theft of
11 catalytic converters by marking them with vehicle identification
12 numbers or other unique identifiers.

13 (2) The Washington state patrol shall administer the pilot
14 project as provided in this subsection.

15 (a) The Washington state patrol shall collaborate with law
16 enforcement agencies, insurance companies, and scrap metal dealers to
17 identify vehicles that are most frequently targeted for catalytic
18 converter theft and establish the most effective methods for marking
19 catalytic converters.

20 (b) The Washington state patrol shall establish a procedure to
21 mark the catalytic converters of vehicles most likely to be targeted
22 for theft with unique identification numbers using labels, engraving,
23 theft deterrence paint, or other methods that permanently mark the
24 catalytic converter without damaging its function.

25 (3) Materials purchased under this pilot project may be
26 distributed to dealers, automobile repair shops and service centers,
27 law enforcement agencies, and community organizations to arrange for
28 the marking of the catalytic converters of vehicles most likely to be
29 targeted for theft at no cost to the vehicle owners. The Washington
30 state patrol may prioritize distribution of materials to areas of
31 Washington state experiencing the highest rates of catalytic
32 converter theft.

33 (4) The Washington state patrol shall make any educational
34 information resulting from the pilot project available to law
35 enforcement agencies and scrap metal dealers and is encouraged to
36 publicize the pilot project to the general public.

37 (5) The Washington state patrol shall provide a report on the
38 pilot project to the governor and appropriate committees of the
39 legislature by October 1, 2023. The report must describe the

1 progress, results, and any findings of the pilot project, including
2 the total number of catalytic converters marked under the pilot
3 project, and, to the extent known, whether any catalytic converters
4 marked under the pilot project were stolen and the outcome of any
5 criminal investigation into the thefts.

6 (6) This section expires November 1, 2023.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The Washington state catalytic
8 converter theft task force is established.

9 (2) The task force is comprised of members as provided in this
10 subsection.

11 (a) The president of the senate shall appoint one member to the
12 task force from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.

13 (b) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint one
14 member to the task force from each of the two largest caucuses in the
15 house of representatives.

16 (c) The president of the senate and the speaker of the house of
17 representatives jointly shall appoint the following members:

18 (i) One member representing the Washington state patrol;

19 (ii) One member representing the Washington association of
20 sheriffs and police chiefs;

21 (iii) One member representing the Washington association of
22 prosecuting attorneys;

23 (iv) One member representing the office of public defense;

24 (v) One member representing the superior court judges'
25 association;

26 (vi) One member representing the district and municipal court
27 judges' association;

28 (vii) One member representing the association of Washington
29 cities;

30 (viii) One member representing the office of the attorney
31 general;

32 (ix) One member representing the property and casualty insurance
33 industry;

34 (x) One member representing the scrap metal recycling industry;

35 (xi) One member representing the auto dealer industry;

36 (xii) One member representing the towing and recovery association
37 of Washington;

38 (xiii) One member representing the Washington state independent
39 auto dealers association;

1 (xiv) One member representing the Washington independent business
2 association;

3 (xv) One member representing the Washington organized retail
4 crime association; and

5 (xvi) Two members representing individuals with lived experience
6 being charged with, or convicted of, organized theft.

7 (3) The legislative membership shall convene the initial meeting
8 of the task force no later than September 1, 2022.

9 (4) The membership of the task force shall choose the task
10 force's cochairs, which must include one legislator and one
11 nonlegislative member.

12 (5) The task force shall review state laws related to theft of
13 catalytic converters. The task force shall develop recommendations
14 for the purpose of:

15 (a) Deterring the occurrence of catalytic converter theft;

16 (b) Developing tools to identify and recover stolen catalytic
17 converters; and

18 (c) Lowering costs to victims of catalytic converter theft.

19 (6) The task force may develop recommendations related to:

20 (a) Maintenance and accessibility of law enforcement records
21 related to transactions involving catalytic converters; and

22 (b) Traceability of payments related to transactions involving
23 catalytic converters.

24 (7) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations
25 to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by
26 November 1, 2022.

27 (8) The Washington state patrol shall administer and provide
28 staff support and facilitation services to the task force. The
29 Washington state patrol may, when deemed necessary by the task force,
30 contract with one or more appropriate consultants to provide data
31 analysis, research, and other services to the task force for the
32 purposes provided in subsections (5) and (6) of this section.

33 (9) Legislative members of the task force shall be reimbursed for
34 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative
35 members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they
36 are elected officials or are participating on behalf of an employer,
37 governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for
38 other nonlegislative members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW.

39 (10) This section expires February 1, 2023.

1 **Sec. 4.** RCW 19.290.020 and 2013 c 322 s 5 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) At the time of a transaction, every scrap metal business
4 doing business in this state shall produce wherever that business is
5 conducted an accurate and legible record of each transaction
6 involving private metal property or nonferrous metal property. This
7 record must be written in the English language, documented on a
8 standardized form or in electronic form, and contain the following
9 information:

10 (a) The signature of the person with whom the transaction is
11 made;

12 (b) The time, date, location, and value of the transaction;

13 (c) The name of the employee representing the scrap metal
14 business in the transaction;

15 (d) The name, street address, and telephone number of the person
16 with whom the transaction is made;

17 (e) The license plate number and state of issuance of the license
18 plate on the motor vehicle used to deliver the private metal property
19 or nonferrous metal property subject to the transaction;

20 (f) A description of the motor vehicle used to deliver the
21 private metal property or nonferrous metal property subject to the
22 transaction;

23 (g) The current driver's license number or other government-
24 issued picture identification card number of the seller or a copy of
25 the seller's government-issued picture identification card; ~~((and))~~

26 (h) A description of the predominant types of private metal
27 property or nonferrous metal property subject to the transaction,
28 utilizing the institute of scrap recycling industries' generally
29 accepted terminology, and including weight, quantity, or volume; and

30 (i) For every transaction specifically involving a catalytic
31 converter that has been removed from a vehicle, documentation
32 indicating that the private metal property in the seller's possession
33 is the result of the seller replacing private metal property from a
34 vehicle registered in the seller's name.

35 (2) For every transaction that involves private metal property or
36 nonferrous metal property, every scrap metal business doing business
37 in the state shall require the person with whom a transaction is
38 being made to sign a declaration. The declaration may be included as
39 part of the transactional record required under subsection (1) of

1 this section, or on a receipt for the transaction. The declaration
2 must state substantially the following:

3 "I, the undersigned, affirm under penalty of law that the
4 property that is subject to this transaction is not to the best of my
5 knowledge stolen property."

6 The declaration must be signed and dated by the person with whom
7 the transaction is being made. An employee of the scrap metal
8 business must witness the signing and dating of the declaration and
9 sign the declaration accordingly before any transaction may be
10 consummated.

11 (3) The record and declaration required under this section must
12 be open to the inspection of any commissioned law enforcement officer
13 of the state or any of its political subdivisions at all times during
14 the ordinary hours of business, or at reasonable times if ordinary
15 hours of business are not kept, and must be maintained wherever that
16 business is conducted for five years following the date of the
17 transaction.

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