
HOUSE BILL 1815

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

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

Prefiled 01/06/22. Read first time 01/10/22. Referred to Committee on Public Safety.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

34 (xi) One member representing the Washington organized retail
35 crime association; and

36 (xii) Two members representing individuals with lived experience
37 being charged with, or convicted of, organized theft.

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

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

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

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

8 (b) Developing tools to identify and recover stolen catalytic
9 converters; and

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

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

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

14 (b) Traceability of payments related to transactions involving
15 catalytic converters.

16 (7) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations
17 to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by
18 October 1, 2023.

19 (8) The Washington state patrol shall administer and provide
20 staff support and facilitation services to the task force. The
21 Washington state patrol may, when deemed necessary by the task force,
22 contract with one or more appropriate consultants to provide data
23 analysis, research, and other services to the task force for the
24 purposes provided in subsections (5) and (6) of this section.

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

31 (10) This section expires November 1, 2023.

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