

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5487

As of January 26, 2023

Title: An act relating to parking at rest areas.

Brief Description: Concerning parking at rest areas.

Sponsors: Senator King; by request of Department of Transportation.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/26/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Subjects vehicles that are not disabled to impoundment for violation of safety rest area parking time limits.
- Changes the requirements for signage about parking time limits and impoundment at safety rest areas.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Daniel Masterson (786-7454)

Background: The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) owns and operates 47 safety rest areas, most open to the public 24 hours a day. Features of the safety rest areas include parking, restrooms, drinking water, traveler information, vending machines, and public telephones. WSDOT estimates that about 24 million visitors use the state's safety rest areas annually.

It is unlawful for vehicles—which includes trailers, campers, and motorcycles—that are not disabled to park at safety rest areas for more than eight hours within a 24-hour period. Disabled vehicles may be parked at safety rest areas up to 48 hours before they are subject to mandatory impoundment. WSDOT may also designate parking zones with shorter time

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limits for operational efficiency and safety. Washington State Patrol is charged with enforcing these safety rest area parking limitations to the maximum extent practicable.

Commercial vehicles may park at safety rest areas up to an hour beyond federally mandated rest periods. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulates commercial vehicle working hours. Most rest periods are either eight or ten hours, depending on the circumstances.

WSDOT must post appropriate signage at all safety rest areas regarding parking time limits and impoundment. The signage must include the times a vehicle may be impounded as an unauthorized vehicle, and the name, telephone number, and address of the towing firm where the vehicle may be redeemed.

Summary of Bill: Vehicles that are not disabled are subject to impoundment for violating safety rest area parking limits, in addition to disabled vehicles.

Signage regarding safety rest area parking time limits is required to be posted near each entrance, and on the property in a clearly conspicuous and visible location to all who park on the property. The signage must indicate a phone number for contacting the law enforcement agency, or WSDOT to locate the impounded vehicle.

The definition of unauthorized vehicle for the purposes of statutes related to towing and impoundment is amended to include vehicles subject to impoundment after being left unattended, and in violation of safety rest area parking time limits.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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: PRO: This bill addresses an issue that needs to be addressed. Truck parking has been an important issue in our state and around the country. Truck drivers need these spaces during working hours for the safety of all on the road. The public need to be able to access safety rest areas when they need them. This bill would subject all vehicles to impoundment, whether disabled or not.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Curtis King, Prime Sponsor; Travis Snell, Washington State Department of Transportation.

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