

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2410

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to establishing a commercial truck safety and education council.

Brief Description: Establishing a commercial truck safety and education council.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Fey, Barkis, Hall, Zahn, Reed and Donaghy).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/29/26, 2/9/26 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/17/26, 96-1.

Passed Senate: 3/6/26, 47-1.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Establishes the Washington State Commercial Truck Safety and Education Council (Council) to recommend programs and projects that improve the safety of the commercial truck industry.
- Increases the Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement Fee assessed on commercial motor vehicles from \$16 to \$32, directing the additional revenue to be used only for activities recommended by the Council to improve the safety of the commercial truck industry and related administrative costs.
- Directs the Council to annually report its activities, findings, and recommendations during the preceding year to the Transportation Committees of the Legislature beginning December 31, 2027.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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.

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Bernbaum, Vice Chair; Reed, Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Low, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Schmidt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bronoske, Duerr, Engell, Entenman, Hackney, Hall, Klicker, Ley, Nance, Orcutt, Paul, Ramel, Richards, Stuebe, Taylor, Timmons, Volz, Wylie and Zahn.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Mendoza, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Jennifer Harris (786-7143).

Background:

Commercial Motor Vehicle Licensing and Training Requirements.

No person may drive a commercial motor vehicle unless the person holds, and is in immediate possession of, a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and applicable endorsements valid for the vehicle the person is driving—subject to certain limited exceptions, and except when driving under a commercial learner's permit and valid driver's license and accompanied by the holder of a CDL.

No person may be issued a CDL unless that person:

1. is a resident of the state;
2. has successfully completed a course of instruction in the operation of a commercial motor vehicle that has been approved by the Department of Licensing (DOL), or has been certified by an employer as having the skills and training necessary to operate a commercial motor vehicle safely;
3. has been issued a commercial learner's permit; and
4. has passed a knowledge and skills examination for driving a commercial motor vehicle that complies with minimum federal standards established by federal regulation, in addition to other requirements imposed by state law or federal regulation.

Minimum course length requirements for courses certified by the DOL are mandated in administrative code and vary by license classification. Required topics of training include street driving training and backing maneuvers. Minimum course length requirements do not apply to employer training. Training must include classroom instruction and a combination of lab training, range training, and observation.

Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Enforcement Fee.

Commercial motor vehicle carriers with terminals in the state are required to pay a \$16 annual fee. This fee is apportioned for interstate vehicles operating under the International

Registration Plan. After deduction by the DOL for costs of administration, fees must be deposited in the State Patrol Highway Account of the Motor Vehicle Fund.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Establishment of the Washington State Commercial Truck Safety and Education Council.

The Washington State Commercial Truck Safety and Education Council (Council) is established in the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (Commission) to recommend programs and projects that improve the safety of the commercial trucking industry. The Council may:

1. recommend programs and projects that carry out the purpose of the Council, including enhancing safety and training, providing for research and development, and educating the public;
2. request the authorization of the payment of Council costs;
3. coordinate Council activities with industry associations and others to provide the efficient delivery of services;
4. recommend procurements for contracts with entities to carry out the purpose of the Council;
5. recommend the Commission apply for, receive, and accept grants, loans, and gifts; and
6. recommend grants targeted at improving commercial motor vehicle safety and training.

The Council must meet at least quarterly, with an initial meeting to be convened by the Commission no later than January 2027.

Beginning December 31, 2027, the Council is required to annually report its activities, findings, and recommendations during the preceding year to the Transportation Committees of the Legislature.

Council Membership.

The following Council members are required to be appointed by the Governor:

- the Chief of the Washington State Patrol, or the Chief's designee;
- the Director of the DOL, or the Director's designee;
- the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation, or the Secretary's designee;
- the Executive Director of the Washington Trucking Associations (WTA) or the Executive Director's designee;
- the Director of the Commission, or the Director's designee;
- the Executive Director of the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, or the Executive Director's designee;
- one member of the general public;

- three members from a trucking industry association or associations, with consideration given to a list of six nominees submitted by the WTA;
- the Executive Director of the Workforce Training and Education Coordination Board (WTECB), or the Executive Director's designee; and
- one member from a labor organization recommended by the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC).

The Council may consult with other governmental entities or individuals from the public or private sector who have a unique interest or expertise in commercial vehicle safety, training, and efficient operations.

Funding for Council Activities.

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement Fee assessed on commercial motor vehicles is increased from \$16 to \$32. The additional revenue is directed to the Commercial Truck Safety and Education Account (Commercial Truck Safety Account), which is created as a non-appropriated account to be used only for activities recommended by the Council to improve the safety of the commercial truck industry and related administrative costs. Only the Director of the Commission or the Director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account.

Commission costs associated with support of the Council are to be reimbursed for the Commercial Truck Safety Account.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Accidents involving trucks tend to have bigger consequences because of the size of trucks. They can also lead to major traffic delays on the freeway. The WTA is willing to voluntarily tax themselves to provide more training and education. If there are better educated drivers, that will make the roads safer for everyone, including because they can be educated to maintain a greater awareness of how high overpasses on roadways are.

There is a significant need for outreach on United States Department of Transportation regulations. This legislation brings key stakeholders together, and is a practical, collaborative solution. It will strengthen regulatory compliance, which is strongest when industry leads the effort. This approach includes motor carriers to ensure that safety initiatives reflect real world operations.

Trucking is essential to Washington's economy; the industry supports 1 in every 17 jobs in the state. This legislation prioritizes education and centers on compliance. It is a core business investment for the trucking industry. It includes an increase to a small fee that has not been raised since 2007 for the purpose of traffic safety.

For insurance carriers and motor carriers, claims from collisions lead to significant costs that are a lead cost of trucking companies. Fewer collisions lead to fewer claims, which can lead to more stable insurance markets for employers.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The Commission supports the goal of expanding and improving safety education for commercial drivers, but believes certain aspects of the bill need to be worked out related to the respective roles of the Council and the Commission. The Commission supports the role of the Council in setting the strategic direction for the program, but believes that clarity is needed regarding what the operational responsibilities and duties of the Commission are.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Jake Fey, prime sponsor; Joshua Sternberg; Jason McFadden; Abigail Potter, Washington Trucking Associations; and Ken Short, AWB.

(Other) Mark McKechnie, Washington Traffic Safety Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.