

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2495

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 2, 2026

Title: An act relating to the removal of vehicles by certain cities when obstructing the operation of streetcar vehicles or jeopardizing public safety.

Brief Description: Addressing the removal of vehicles by certain cities when obstructing the operation of streetcar vehicles or jeopardizing public safety.

Sponsors: Representatives Thomas, Reed, Scott, Fitzgibbon, Ryu, Parshley, Macri, Street, Pollet and Obras.

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

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/23/26, 3/02/26 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the city of Seattle to direct the impoundment of vehicles obstructing the operation of streetcar vehicles without having to first contact law enforcement.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Lias, Chair; Krishnadasan, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Goehner, Assistant Ranking Member; Alvarado, Chapman, Christian, Cortes, Fortunato, Harris, Holy, Hunt, Lovelett, MacEwen, Shewmake, Valdez and Wilson, J..

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Unauthorized vehicles may be impounded by a registered tow truck operator (RTTO) at the direction of a law enforcement officer or other public official with jurisdiction, if the vehicle is on public property, or at the direction of the property owner or

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an agent. A vehicle is deemed unauthorized if it is left unattended in certain public or private locations. A vehicle is considered an unauthorized vehicle subject to immediate removal if it is:

- determined by a police officer to be an accident or traffic hazard;
- in a publicly owned or controlled parking facility with proper posted signage;
- on residential property;
- on private, nonresidential property with proper posted signage; or
- within the right-of-way used by a regional transit authority for high-capacity transportation where the vehicle constitutes an obstruction to the operation of high capacity transportation vehicles or jeopardizes public safety.

The city of Seattle is the only city in Washington with a population greater than 700,000.

A streetcar is legally defined as a vehicle other than a train for transporting persons or property and operated upon stationary rails principally within cities and towns.

Summary of Bill: A vehicle is considered an unauthorized vehicle subject to immediate removal by an RTTO if it is left unattended within a right-of-way used by a city with a population greater than 700,000 for streetcar operations, when the vehicle obstructs the operation of a streetcar vehicle or jeopardizes public safety. An authorized representative of the city may request an impound for this type of unauthorized vehicle.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill would provide the city of Seattle with similar authority recently granted to regional transit authorities. Illegally parked vehicles have impeded streetcar operations, and it can typically take up to an hour for law enforcement to remove the obstructing vehicle. With the World Cup coming to Seattle, this bill would help ensure that certain city infrastructure remains clear of obstructions.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Alison Redenz, City of Seattle - SDOT.

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