

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5824

As of January 22, 2026

Title: An act relating to fifth-wheel travel trailers.

Brief Description: Concerning fifth-wheel travel trailers.

Sponsors: Senators King, Chapman, Dozier and Shewmake.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/22/26.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the operation of fifth-wheel travel trailers on public highways with an overall length up to 46 feet.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Brandon Popovac (786-7465)

Background: It is unlawful to operate on the public highways any vehicle with an overall length, with or without load, in excess of 40 feet. This restriction does not apply to:

- a municipal transit vehicle;
- an auto stage, private carrier bus, school bus, travel trailer, or motor home with an overall length not to exceed 46 feet;
- an articulated auto stage with an overall length not to exceed 61 feet, excluding a back rack up to 4 feet in length; or
- an auto recycling carrier up to 42 feet in length, manufactured prior to 2005.

The director of the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) is responsible for adopting rules governing the safety of body and frame design, and the installation of plumbing, heating, and electrical equipment in mobile homes, commercial coaches, recreational vehicles, and park trailers, for purposes of the manufacture and sale of such vehicles.

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.

Recreational vehicles, for such purposes, include fifth-wheel travel trailers. L&I enforces such rules through vehicle inspections where recreation vehicles are manufactured, sold, or leased.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): A person may operate on a public highway a fifth-wheel travel trailer having an overall length up to 46 feet. Overall length for a fifth-wheel travel trailer is calculated as the measurement between the centermost point of the kingpin and the rearmost point of the vehicle.

Fifth-wheel travel trailer is defined as, for purposes of calculating overall vehicle length, a vehicle primarily designed for recreational camping or travel use that does not have its own motive power and is primarily mounted on or hitched within the bed of a pickup truck. A clarifying definition for kingpin is also provided.

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 On Proposed Substitute: PRO: Some current fifth-wheel models cannot legally be sold in Washington state even though they are typically sold industry and nationwide. The bill addresses concerns by making fifth-wheel length measurements consistent, and is very similar to a law enacted in California based on input from its state patrol. A fifth-wheel has overlap with the towing truck, thus reducing its overall length. Traffic safety and public safety are central to this proposal, and reflects the actual fifth-wheel roadway footprint. The fifth-wheel kingpin ensures a safer towing experience with increased maneuverability and turning radius. The bill promotes fairness and competitive sales for fifth-wheels between western state RV dealers.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Michael Ochs, RV Industry Association; LaDonna Meadows, Tacoma RV; Randy Edwards, RV Country; John McLeod, Camper's Choice RV; Charlie Power, RV Country ; Ken Short, AWB; Keith Goehner, WA State Senate; Mike Chapman, WA State Senate.

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