
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6176

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Senate Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators King and Llias)

READ FIRST TIME 02/06/26.

1 AN ACT Relating to the enforcement of failure to renew an expired
2 vehicle registration; reenacting and amending RCW 46.16A.030; and
3 prescribing penalties.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.16A.030 and 2019 c 459 s 3 and 2019 c 423 s 203
6 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

7 (1) Vehicles must be registered as required by this chapter and
8 must display license plates or decals assigned by the department.

9 (2) It is unlawful for a person to operate any vehicle on a
10 public highway of this state without having in full force and effect
11 a current and proper vehicle registration and displaying license
12 plates on the vehicle.

13 (3) Vehicle license plates or registration certificates, whether
14 original issues or duplicates, may not be issued or furnished by the
15 department until the applicant makes satisfactory application for a
16 certificate of title or presents satisfactory evidence that a
17 certificate of title covering the vehicle has been previously issued.

18 (4) Failure to make initial registration before operating a
19 vehicle on the public highways of this state is a traffic infraction.
20 A person committing this infraction must pay a fine of (~~five hundred~~
21 ~~twenty-nine dollars~~) \$529, which may not be suspended or reduced.

1 This fine is in addition to any delinquent taxes and fees that must
2 be deposited and distributed in the same manner as if the taxes and
3 fees were properly paid in a timely fashion. The (~~five hundred~~
4 ~~twenty-nine dollar~~) \$529 fine must be deposited into the vehicle
5 licensing fraud account created in the state treasury in RCW
6 46.68.250.

7 (5)(a) Failure to renew an expired registration before operating
8 a vehicle on the public highways of this state is a traffic
9 infraction.

10 (b) Failure to renew an expired registration of a vehicle that is
11 parked, standing, and unoccupied on the public right-of-way or on
12 publicly owned property is a traffic infraction to the registered
13 owner. Such an infraction under this subsection (5)(b) is not part of
14 the registered owner's driving record under RCW 46.52.101 and
15 46.52.120, and must be processed in the same manner as a parking
16 infraction, including for the purposes of RCW 3.50.100, 35.20.220,
17 46.16A.120, and 46.20.270(2). The penalty for failure to renew an
18 expired registration as enforced under this subsection (5)(b) is \$150
19 if the registration is expired for two months or less and \$242 if the
20 registration is expired for more than two months.

21 (6) It is a gross misdemeanor for a resident, as identified in
22 RCW 46.16A.140, to register a vehicle in another state, evading the
23 payment of any tax or vehicle license fee imposed in connection with
24 registration. It is punishable, in lieu of the fine in subsection (4)
25 of this section, as follows:

26 (a) For a first offense:

27 (i) Up to (~~three hundred sixty-four~~) 364 days in the county
28 jail;

29 (ii) Payment of a fine of (~~five hundred twenty-nine dollars~~)
30 \$529 plus any applicable assessments, which may not be suspended or
31 reduced. The fine of (~~five hundred twenty-nine dollars~~) \$529 must
32 be deposited into the vehicle licensing fraud account created in the
33 state treasury in RCW 46.68.250;

34 (iii) A fine of (~~one thousand dollars~~) \$1,000 to be deposited
35 into the vehicle licensing fraud account created in the state
36 treasury in RCW 46.68.250, which may not be suspended or reduced; and

37 (iv) The delinquent taxes and fees, which must be deposited and
38 distributed in the same manner as if the taxes and fees were properly
39 paid in a timely fashion, and which may not be suspended or reduced;

40 (b) For a second or subsequent offense:

1 (i) Up to (~~three hundred sixty-four~~) 364 days in the county
2 jail;

3 (ii) Payment of a fine of (~~five hundred twenty-nine dollars~~)
4 \$529 plus any applicable assessments, which may not be suspended or
5 reduced, except as provided in RCW 10.05.180. The fine of (~~five
6 hundred twenty-nine dollars~~) \$529 must be deposited into the vehicle
7 licensing fraud account created in the state treasury in RCW
8 46.68.250;

9 (iii) A fine of (~~five thousand dollars~~) \$5,000 to be deposited
10 into the vehicle licensing fraud account created in the state
11 treasury in RCW 46.68.250, which may not be suspended or reduced; and

12 (iv) The amount of delinquent taxes and fees, which must be
13 deposited and distributed in the same manner as if the taxes and fees
14 were properly paid in a timely fashion, and which may not be
15 suspended or reduced.

16 (7) A vehicle with an expired registration of more than (~~forty-
17 five~~) 45 days parked on a public street may be impounded by a police
18 officer under RCW 46.55.113(2).

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