
SENATE BILL 6176

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Senators King and Llias

Read first time 01/15/26. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

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 (i) on the public right-of-way; (ii)
12 on publicly owned property; or (iii) within a privately owned, off-
13 street parking facility imposing vehicle parking fees, is a traffic
14 infraction to the registered owner. Enforcement under (b)(iii) of
15 this subsection is only authorized if the facility owner consents to
16 such enforcement and sufficient notice is provided to persons
17 accessing such facilities. Such an infraction under this subsection
18 (5)(b) is not part of the registered owner's driving record under RCW
19 46.52.101 and 46.52.120, and must be processed in the same manner as
20 a parking infraction, including for the purposes of RCW 3.50.100,
21 35.20.220, 46.16A.120, and 46.20.270(2). The penalty for failure to
22 renew an expired registration as enforced under this subsection
23 (5)(b) is \$145 if the registration is expired for two months or less
24 and \$248 if the registration is expired for more than two months.

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

30 (a) For a first offense:

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

33 (ii) Payment of a fine of (~~five hundred twenty-nine dollars~~)
34 \$529 plus any applicable assessments, which may not be suspended or
35 reduced. The fine of (~~five hundred twenty-nine dollars~~) \$529 must
36 be deposited into the vehicle licensing fraud account created in the
37 state treasury in RCW 46.68.250;

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

1 (iv) The delinquent taxes and fees, which must be deposited and
2 distributed in the same manner as if the taxes and fees were properly
3 paid in a timely fashion, and which may not be suspended or reduced;
4 (b) For a second or subsequent offense:
5 (i) Up to (~~three hundred sixty-four~~) 364 days in the county
6 jail;
7 (ii) Payment of a fine of (~~five hundred twenty-nine dollars~~)
8 \$529 plus any applicable assessments, which may not be suspended or
9 reduced, except as provided in RCW 10.05.180. The fine of (~~five~~
10 ~~hundred twenty-nine dollars~~) \$529 must be deposited into the vehicle
11 licensing fraud account created in the state treasury in RCW
12 46.68.250;
13 (iii) A fine of (~~five thousand dollars~~) \$5,000 to be deposited
14 into the vehicle licensing fraud account created in the state
15 treasury in RCW 46.68.250, which may not be suspended or reduced; and
16 (iv) The amount of delinquent taxes and fees, which must be
17 deposited and distributed in the same manner as if the taxes and fees
18 were properly paid in a timely fashion, and which may not be
19 suspended or reduced.
20 (7) A vehicle with an expired registration of more than (~~forty-~~
21 ~~five~~) 45 days parked on a public street may be impounded by a police
22 officer under RCW 46.55.113(2).

--- END ---