

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6419

As Passed Senate, February 11, 2000

Title: An act relating to abandoned vehicles.

Brief Description: Increasing penalties for vehicle abandonment.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Swecker, Gardner, Fraser, T. Sheldon, Goings, Rasmussen and Oke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/26/2000, 2/3/2000 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 2/11/2000, 34-10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6419 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Goings, Vice Chair; Benton, Costa, Eide, Horn, Jacobsen, Johnson, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Sheahan, T. Sheldon, Shin and Swecker.

Staff: Jennifer Ziegler (786-7316)

Background: If an unauthorized vehicle is found abandoned and removed at the discretion of law enforcement, the last registered owner is liable for the costs incurred in removing and storing the abandoned vehicle.

Summary of Bill: Failure of a registered owner to remove a vehicle from a highway right-of-way within 24 hours constitutes the traffic infraction of littering--abandoned vehicle. The infraction has a mandatory fine of \$250, and the court must suspend the driver's license of the person committing the infraction for 90 days and until all penalties are paid, whichever is later.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 17, 2000.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: There are a substantial number of abandoned vehicles along Washington roads and tow truck operators are rarely compensated for removing those vehicles.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Swecker, prime sponsor; John O'Callahan, International Towers of Washington; Jackie Currie, Columbia Towing/Totem Towing, Seattle; Linda Olson, G.T. Towing, Yelm; Wally Curl, Wally's Towing, Snohomish; Richard Churchill, R&R Star Towing, Lynnwood.