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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1272**

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**State of Washington**

**65th Legislature**

**2017 Regular Session**

**By** House Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Harmsworth, Orcutt, Bergquist, Rodne, Muri, Stokesbary, MacEwen, Condotta, and Young)

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a motor vehicle registration hiatus  
2 for certain motor vehicles that are not operated on public roads;  
3 amending RCW 46.16A.020, 46.16A.180, and 46.16A.320; reenacting and  
4 amending RCW 46.16A.030; adding a new section to chapter 46.16A RCW;  
5 prescribing penalties; and providing an expiration date.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 46.16A  
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) The motor vehicle registration hiatus pilot project is  
10 created in the department for the purpose of determining the impacts  
11 on revenue to the department when implementing a motor vehicle  
12 registration hiatus program. The department shall administer the  
13 pilot project. The department shall adopt policies and procedures  
14 necessary to administer the pilot project, including for: (a) The  
15 application process, (b) tracking revenue, and (c) measuring fiscal  
16 impacts.

17 (2) A registered owner or the registered owner's authorized  
18 representative may apply for a vehicle registration hiatus to the  
19 department, county auditor, or other agent or subagent appointed by  
20 the director on a form approved by the director. The submission of  
21 the hiatus form relieves the registered owner of the legal obligation

1 to obtain an original vehicle registration upon acquiring a motor  
2 vehicle or to renew the vehicle registration before it expires and  
3 certifies that the motor vehicle will not be operated on the public  
4 roads. For purposes of this section, "motor vehicle" means a moped,  
5 motorcycle, passenger car, or sport utility vehicle.

6 (3) The vehicle registration hiatus must be for at least thirty  
7 days. At any time after this thirty-day time period, the registered  
8 owner or the registered owner's authorized representative may apply  
9 for an original registration or registration renewal for the motor  
10 vehicle. Upon application, a new registration year and month must be  
11 assigned based on the date of the application for vehicle  
12 registration. The vehicle registration is valid for a full twelve-  
13 month period.

14 (4) A motor vehicle with a registration on hiatus status that  
15 needs to be moved from one location to another via the public  
16 roadways must obtain a trip permit in accordance with RCW 46.16A.320.  
17 The registered owner or driver of the motor vehicle, or both, in  
18 violation of this subsection is guilty of a traffic infraction and  
19 subject to a fine of up to five hundred dollars in addition to any  
20 other penalties. It is an affirmative defense for the registered  
21 owner of the motor vehicle if there is a theft of the motor vehicle  
22 or when the driver is responsible for the violation without the  
23 registered owner's knowledge.

24 (5) The department or any other public agency may not require  
25 that the registered owner of a privately owned motor vehicle apply  
26 for a vehicle registration hiatus or impose fees, fines, or penalties  
27 for failure to apply for a vehicle registration hiatus.

28 (6) A person who applies for a vehicle registration hiatus shall  
29 pay a filing fee in accordance with RCW 46.17.005 and a service fee  
30 in accordance with RCW 46.17.040.

31 (7) The department shall submit a final report to the  
32 transportation committees of the legislature on the motor vehicle  
33 registration hiatus pilot project, including an analysis of the data  
34 required under subsection (1) of this section, by December 1, 2019.

35 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.16A.020 and 2014 c 80 s 2 are each amended to  
36 read as follows:

37 (1) The department, county auditor or other agent, or subagent  
38 appointed by the director shall assign a new registration year to a  
39 vehicle if:

1 (a) The registered ownership of the vehicle is being transferred,  
2 except as provided in subsection (4) of this section. The renewed  
3 vehicle registration is valid for a full twelve-month period unless:  
4 (i) The vehicle changes ownership during the twelve-month period, in  
5 which case the registration expires; or (ii) a specific expiration  
6 date is required by law, rule, or program; ((~~or~~))

7 (b) The Washington vehicle registration has expired and the  
8 registered owner:

9 (i) Is a member of the United States armed forces;

10 (ii) Was stationed outside of Washington under military orders  
11 during the prior vehicle registration year; and

12 (iii) Provides the department a copy of the military orders; or

13 (c) The vehicle registration is either obtained for the first  
14 time or renewed after a hiatus status under section 1 of this act.

15 (2) Each registration year may be divided into twelve  
16 registration months. Each registration month begins at 12:01 a.m. on  
17 a day of the month assigned by the department and ends at 12:00 a.m.  
18 on the same day the following month.

19 (3) A registration period extends through the end of the next  
20 business day when the final day of a registration year or month falls  
21 on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

22 (4) A vehicle registration does not expire when a change in  
23 vehicle ownership is the result of one or more of the following  
24 circumstances:

25 (a) When adding a lien holder to the certificate of title or  
26 removing a lien holder from the certificate of title;

27 (b) When a vehicle is transferred from one spouse or registered  
28 domestic partner to another;

29 (c) When removing a deceased spouse or registered domestic  
30 partner from the certificate of title;

31 (d) When a vehicle is transferred by gift or inheritance to one  
32 or more members of the registered owner's immediate family;

33 (e) When a vehicle is transferred into or out of a trust in which  
34 the registered owner or one or more immediate family members of the  
35 registered owner is the beneficiary;

36 (f) When a leaseholder buys out the leased vehicle; or

37 (g) When a person changes his or her name.

38 **Sec. 3.** RCW 46.16A.030 and 2011 c 171 s 43 and 2011 c 96 s 31  
39 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

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

3 (2) It is unlawful for a person to operate any vehicle on a  
4 public highway of this state without having in full force and effect  
5 a current and proper vehicle registration or, when the vehicle  
6 registration is on hiatus status under section 1 of this act, a trip  
7 permit and displaying license plates on the vehicle.

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

13 (4) Failure to make initial registration before operating a  
14 vehicle on the public highways of this state is a traffic infraction.  
15 A person committing this infraction must pay a fine of five hundred  
16 twenty-nine dollars, which may not be suspended, deferred, or  
17 reduced. This fine is in addition to any delinquent taxes and fees  
18 that must be deposited and distributed in the same manner as if the  
19 taxes and fees were properly paid in a timely fashion. The five  
20 hundred twenty-nine dollar fine must be deposited into the vehicle  
21 licensing fraud account created in the state treasury in RCW  
22 46.68.250.

23 (5) Except as provided under section 1 of this act, failure to  
24 renew an expired registration before operating a vehicle on the  
25 public highways of this state is a traffic infraction.

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

31 (a) For a first offense:

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

33 (ii) Payment of a fine of five hundred twenty-nine dollars plus  
34 any applicable assessments, which may not be suspended, deferred, or  
35 reduced. The fine of five hundred twenty-nine dollars must be  
36 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 to be deposited into the  
39 vehicle licensing fraud account created in the state treasury in RCW  
40 46.68.250, which may not be suspended, deferred, 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, deferred,  
4 or reduced;

5 (b) For a second or subsequent offense:

6 (i) Up to three hundred sixty-four days in the county jail;

7 (ii) Payment of a fine of five hundred twenty-nine dollars plus  
8 any applicable assessments, which may not be suspended, deferred, or  
9 reduced. The fine of five hundred twenty-nine dollars must be  
10 deposited into the vehicle licensing fraud account created in the  
11 state treasury in RCW 46.68.250;

12 (iii) A fine of five thousand dollars to be deposited into the  
13 vehicle licensing fraud account created in the state treasury in RCW  
14 46.68.250, which may not be suspended, deferred, or reduced; and

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

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

22 **Sec. 4.** RCW 46.16A.180 and 2013 c 157 s 3 are each amended to  
23 read as follows:

24 (1)(a) A registration certificate must be:

25 (~~(a)~~) (i) Signed by the registered owner, or if a firm or  
26 corporation, the signature of one of its officers or other authorized  
27 agent, to be valid;

28 (~~(b)~~) (ii) Carried in the vehicle for which it is issued; and

29 (~~(c)~~) (iii) Provided to law enforcement and the department by  
30 the operator of the vehicle upon demand.

31 (~~(d)~~) (b) The registration certificate required by this section  
32 may be provided in either paper or electronic format. Acceptable  
33 electronic formats include the display of electronic images on a  
34 cellular phone or any other type of portable electronic device.

35 (2) Except as provided under section 1 of this act, it is  
36 unlawful for any person to operate or be in possession of a vehicle  
37 without carrying a registration certificate for the vehicle. Any  
38 person in charge of a vehicle shall, upon demand of any of the local  
39 authorities or of any police officer or of any representative of the

1 department, permit an inspection of the vehicle registration  
2 certificate unless the vehicle registration is on hiatus status under  
3 section 1 of this act. This section does not apply to a vehicle for  
4 which registration is not required to be renewed annually and is a  
5 publicly owned vehicle marked as required under RCW 46.08.065.

6 **Sec. 5.** RCW 46.16A.320 and 2012 c 74 s 15 are each amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 (1)(a) A vehicle owner may operate an unregistered vehicle on  
9 public highways under the authority of a trip permit issued by this  
10 state. For purposes of trip permits, a vehicle is considered  
11 unregistered if:

12 (i) Under reciprocal relations with another jurisdiction, the  
13 owner would be required to register the vehicle in this state;

14 (ii) Not registered when registration is required under this  
15 chapter;

16 (iii) The license tabs have expired; (~~(e)~~)

17 (iv) The vehicle registration is on hiatus status under section 1  
18 of this act; or

19 (v) The current gross weight license is insufficient for the load  
20 being carried. The licensed gross weight may not exceed eighty  
21 thousand pounds for a combination of vehicles or forty thousand  
22 pounds for a single unit vehicle with three or more axles.

23 (b) Trip permits are required to move mobile homes or park model  
24 trailers and may only be issued if property taxes are paid in full.

25 (2) Trip permits may not be:

26 (a) Issued to vehicles registered under RCW 46.16A.455(5) in lieu  
27 of further registration within the same registration year; or

28 (b) Used for commercial motor vehicles owned by a motor carrier  
29 subject to RCW 46.32.080 if the motor carrier's department of  
30 transportation number has been placed out of service by the  
31 Washington state patrol. A violation of or a failure to comply with  
32 this subsection is a gross misdemeanor, subject to a minimum monetary  
33 penalty of two thousand five hundred dollars for the first violation  
34 and five thousand dollars for each subsequent violation.

35 (3)(a) Each trip permit authorizes the operation of a single  
36 vehicle at the maximum legal weight limit for the vehicle for a  
37 period of three consecutive days beginning with the day of first use.  
38 No more than three trip permits may be used for any one vehicle in  
39 any thirty consecutive day period. No more than two trip permits may

1 be used for any one recreational vehicle, as defined in RCW  
2 43.22.335, in a one-year period. Every trip permit must:

- 3 (i) Identify the vehicle for which it is issued;  
4 (ii) Be completed in its entirety;  
5 (iii) Be signed by the operator before operation of the vehicle  
6 on the public highways of this state;  
7 (iv) Not be altered or corrected. Altering or correcting data on  
8 the trip permit invalidates the trip permit; and  
9 (v) Be displayed on the vehicle for which it is issued as  
10 required by the department.

11 (b) Vehicles operating under the authority of trip permits are  
12 subject to all laws, rules, and regulations affecting the operation  
13 of similar vehicles in this state.

14 (4) Prorate operators operating commercial vehicles on trip  
15 permits in Washington shall retain the customer copy of each permit  
16 for four years.

17 (5) Trip permits may be obtained from field offices of the  
18 department of transportation, department of licensing, county  
19 auditors or other agents, and subagents appointed by the department  
20 for the fee provided in RCW 46.17.400(1)(h). Exchanges, credits, or  
21 refunds may not be given for trip permits after they have been  
22 purchased.

23 (6) Except as provided in subsection (2)(b) of this section, a  
24 violation of or a failure to comply with this section is a gross  
25 misdemeanor.

26 (7) The department may adopt rules necessary to administer this  
27 section.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act expires January 31, 2020.

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