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**SENATE BILL 6597**

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**State of Washington**

**66th Legislature**

**2020 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Sheldon and O'Ban

1 AN ACT Relating to vehicle combinations that may be operated on  
2 public highways; and amending RCW 46.44.030 and 46.44.037.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.44.030 and 2018 c 105 s 1 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 (1) It is unlawful for any person to operate upon the public  
7 highways of this state any vehicle having an overall length, with or  
8 without load, in excess of forty feet. This restriction does not  
9 apply to (a) a municipal transit vehicle, (b) auto stage, private  
10 carrier bus, school bus, or motor home with an overall length not to  
11 exceed forty-six feet, (c) an articulated auto stage with an overall  
12 length not to exceed sixty-one feet, excluding a bike rack up to four  
13 feet in length, or (d) an auto recycling carrier up to forty-two feet  
14 in length manufactured prior to 2005.

15 (2)(a) It is unlawful for any person to operate upon the public  
16 highways of this state any combination consisting of a tractor and  
17 semitrailer that has a semitrailer length in excess of fifty-three  
18 feet or a combination consisting of a tractor and two trailers in  
19 which the combined length of the trailers exceeds sixty-one feet,  
20 with or without load.

1 (b) The restriction under this subsection does not apply to two  
2 trailers or semitrailers with a total weight that does not exceed  
3 twenty-six thousand pounds and when the two trailers or semitrailers  
4 do not carry property but constitute inventory property of a  
5 manufacturer, distributor, or dealer of such trailers. The total  
6 combination under this subsection (2)(b) may not exceed eighty-two  
7 feet of overall length.

8 (c) The restriction under this subsection does not apply to  
9 combinations of commercial vehicles operating on highways federally  
10 approved and designated by the state department of transportation as  
11 authorized by RCW 46.44.037(4).

12 (3) It is unlawful for any person to operate on the highways of  
13 this state any combination consisting of a truck and trailer, or log  
14 truck and stinger-steered pole trailer, with an overall length, with  
15 or without load, in excess of seventy-five feet. "Stinger-steered,"  
16 as used in this section, means the coupling device is located behind  
17 the tread of the tires of the last axle of the towing vehicle.

18 (4)(a) The length limitations under this section do not apply to  
19 vehicles transporting poles, pipe, machinery, or other objects of a  
20 structural nature that cannot be dismembered and operated by a public  
21 utility when required for emergency repair of public service  
22 facilities or properties, but in respect to night transportation  
23 every such vehicle and load thereon shall be equipped with a  
24 sufficient number of clearance lamps on both sides and marker lamps  
25 upon the extreme ends of any projecting load to clearly mark the  
26 dimensions of the load.

27 (b) Excluded from the calculation of length under this section  
28 are certain devices that provide added safety, energy conservation,  
29 or are otherwise necessary, and are not designed or used to carry  
30 cargo. The length-exclusive devices must be identified in rules  
31 adopted by the department of transportation under RCW 46.44.101.

32 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.44.037 and 2016 c 22 s 7 are each amended to read  
33 as follows:

34 Notwithstanding the provisions of RCW 46.44.036 and subject to  
35 such rules and regulations governing their operation as may be  
36 adopted by the state department of transportation, operation of the  
37 following combinations is lawful:

38 (1) A combination consisting of a truck tractor, a semitrailer,  
39 and another semitrailer or a full trailer. In this combination a

1 converter gear used to convert a semitrailer into a full trailer  
2 shall be considered to be a part of the full trailer and not a  
3 separate vehicle. A converter gear being pulled without load and not  
4 used to convert a semitrailer into a full trailer may be substituted  
5 in lieu of a full trailer or a semitrailer in any lawful combination;

6 (2) A combination consisting of a truck tractor carrying a  
7 freight compartment no longer than eight feet, a semitrailer, and  
8 another semitrailer or full trailer that meets the legal length  
9 requirement for a truck and trailer combination set forth in RCW  
10 46.44.030;

11 (3) A motor home or travel trailer with a cargo extension,  
12 provided that there are no trailers or secondary cargo extensions or  
13 units attached to the cargo extension.

14 (4) Upon federal approval of a variance to the freeze of state  
15 law imposed by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act  
16 of 1991, the state department of transportation must implement rules  
17 to allow combinations of vehicles consisting of a truck tractor and  
18 three trailing units to operate on designated public highways of the  
19 state. The state department of transportation may also specify by  
20 rule other operating conditions to ensure a safe and efficient  
21 highway system.

22 (a) The state department of transportation must collect data to  
23 describe the:

24 (i) Volumes of combinations of vehicles consisting of a truck  
25 tractor with three trailing units and segments of the trucking  
26 industry taking advantage of the variance; and

27 (ii) Impacts on highway safety, traffic movement, and the  
28 environment.

29 (b) By January 1st of each year after federal approval, the state  
30 department of transportation must submit a status and performance  
31 report on the implementation of the variance.

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