

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill establishes a distinction in registration and license plate display between commercial and noncommercial full-size pickup trucks. It (1) defines and modifies vehicle classifications, (2) eliminates an impending provision allowing registration of certain pickup trucks and vans as passenger automobiles instead of trucks (set to go into effect in 2012), (3) establishes a "noncommercial" plate inscription for certain one-ton pickup trucks not used for commercial purposes, and (4) clarifies that certain commercial one-ton pickups can display special plates, if it is otherwise allowed for one-ton pickups. Under current law, pickup trucks with a rated capacity of one ton are registered as trucks, whereas smaller pickup trucks are registered as passenger automobiles (paying a registration tax on the same schedule as other passenger-type vehicles). A 2008 provision, set to go into effect in 2012, will allow certain pickup trucks that are under a weight limit, or not used for commercial purposes and not subject to commercial motor vehicle regulations, to be registered as passenger automobiles.

- 1 Noncommercial vehicle.** Defines "noncommercial vehicle" for the chapter on vehicle registration and plates, to be a one-ton pickup truck (1) that is registered as a truck, (2) that has a gross vehicle weight of 15,000 pounds or less, and (3) for which the vehicle owner has submitted a declaration that the vehicle is solely for personal use.
- 2 One-ton pickup truck.** Defines "one-ton pickup truck" for the chapter on vehicle registration and plates, to be a pickup truck that (1) has a rated carrying capacity of one ton, or (2) if the carrying capacity is not known, a gross vehicle weight that is between 10,001 and 15,000 pounds.
- 3 Passenger automobile.** Modifies the definition of "passenger automobile" for the chapter on vehicle registration and plates, to eliminate a provision that has not yet gone into effect allowing certain noncommercial pickup trucks and vans to be registered and pay registration taxes in the same manner as passenger automobiles (such as cars, station wagons, and SUVs).
- 4 Pickup truck.** Modifies the definition of "pickup truck" for the chapter on vehicle registration and plates, to include pickup trucks with a gross vehicle weight of less than 10,000 pounds when the rated carrying capacity of the truck is unknown.

- 5 **Van.** Modifies the definition of "van" for the chapter on vehicle registration and plates, to include vans with a gross vehicle weight of less than 10,000 pounds when the rated carrying capacity of the van is unknown.
- 6 **Disability plates; application.** Replaces a description of one-ton pickup trucks with the term defined in the bill.
- 7 **Plates; design, visibility, periods of issuance.** Requires the design of plates issued to noncommercial vehicles (defined in section 1 of the bill) to include the inscription "noncommercial" unless a special plate is issued for the vehicle.

Clarifies that special plates, if authorized for one-ton pickup trucks, can be issued for one-ton pickups that are used for commercial purposes and required to display a US DOT number.
- 8 **Firefighters; special plates, rules.** Replaces a description of one-ton pickup trucks with the term defined in the bill. Makes technical changes.
- 9 **General requirements; fees.** Replaces a description of one-ton pickup trucks with the term defined in the bill.
- 10 **Effective date.** Makes a conforming change, to eliminate a delayed effective date of March 1, 2012, on a pickup truck definition provision.