

SB 107 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Olsen

Senate Committee On Business and General Government

Action Date: 02/19/19

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Dembrow, Girod, Hass, Olsen, Riley

Fiscal: No fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Exempts vehicles owned or operated by natural gas utility from offense of illegal stopping, standing, or parking when the vehicle is used in the investigation or repair of natural gas leak if immediate investigation is necessary and natural gas utility vehicle displays sign denoting emergency responder status.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Need for timely investigation and repair of reported natural gas leak
- Challenges of finding legal parking when responding to natural gas leak reports in high congestion and high consequence areas
- Need for legislation to secure negotiated agreement between NW Natural and the Portland Bureau of Transportation

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Narrows exemption to natural gas utility vehicle used in investigation or repair of natural gas leak if immediate investigation is necessary and natural gas utility vehicle displays sign denoting emergency responder status.

BACKGROUND:

Natural gas is combustible, and natural gas leaks must be addressed quickly to ensure public safety. When natural gas leaks are reported to the utility, technicians are dispatched to investigate and repair. If a parking space is not readily available, responding technicians may be forced to park utility vehicles in a roadway or other location when investigating and repairing a natural gas leak.

Parking, stopping, or leaving a vehicle in roadways and other specified locations is a Class D traffic violation. Senate Bill 107-A creates an exemption for vehicles owned or operated by a natural gas utility when immediate investigation is necessary and the vehicle displays a sign denoting emergency responder status.