

Assembly Bill No. 251

CHAPTER 320

An act to add and repeal Section 14527.3 of the Government Code, relating to the California Transportation Commission.

[Approved by Governor October 7, 2023. Filed with Secretary of State October 7, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 251, Ward. California Transportation Commission: vehicle weight safety study.

Existing law establishes the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to advise and assist the Secretary of Transportation and the Legislature in formulating and evaluating state policies and plans for transportation programs in the state. Existing law tasks the CTC with various transportation-related studies and reports to the Legislature.

This bill would require the CTC to convene a task force to study the relationship between vehicle weight and injuries to vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists, and degradation to roads, and to study the costs and benefits of imposing a passenger vehicle weight fee to include consideration of vehicle weight. The bill would require the CTC, by no later than January 1, 2026, to prepare and submit a report to the Legislature, as specified.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 14527.3 is added to the Government Code, to read:

14527.3. (a) The commission shall convene a task force to study the relationship between vehicle weight and road user injuries and fatalities, and degradation of road infrastructure, and appropriate responses, including the potential costs and benefits of imposing a passenger vehicle weight fee to factor in passenger vehicle weight to offset unreasonable impacts.

(b) The task force shall consist of state agencies, including the Office of Traffic Safety and the Department of Motor Vehicles, local transportation agencies, safety advocates, and representatives from the automobile industry.

(c) The task force shall prepare a report summarizing its findings that includes the following topics:

(1) An analysis of the relationship between passenger vehicle weight and vulnerable road user injuries and fatalities.

(2) An analysis of the relationship between passenger vehicle weight and degradation of road infrastructure.

(3) A discussion of how a passenger vehicle weight fee may change driver behavior.

(4) A discussion of how any revenues generated by the imposition of a passenger vehicle weight fee could be directed to enhance road infrastructure that increases safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vulnerable road users.

(5) An analysis of the equity considerations relating to different population groups in the state, including persons of various demographic groups, persons residing in various regions of the state, persons with low incomes, and persons using a vehicle for commercial use versus personal use, and any appropriate adjustments for these considerations.

(d) The commission shall, in consultation with relevant agencies, take into consideration the differential weights of comparable zero-emission vehicles and internal combustion engine vehicles and the existing incentives and environmental goals to promote zero-emission vehicle adoption.

(e) The commission shall, by no later than January 1, 2026, prepare and submit a report to the Legislature detailing the findings of the study and including any legislative recommendations.

(f) The report required by this section shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795.

(g) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2027, and as of that date is repealed.