

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1211

As Reported By House Committee On:

Transportation Policy & Budget

Title: An act relating to making accident reports available to the traffic safety commission.

Brief Description: Making accident reports available to the traffic safety commission.

Sponsors: Representatives DeBolt, Fisher, K. Schmidt, Blalock, Johnson, Mielke, O'Brien and Costa; by request of Washington Traffic Safety Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation Policy & Budget: 1/30/97, 2/6/97 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION POLICY & BUDGET

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives K. Schmidt, Chairman; Hankins, Vice Chairman; Mielke, Vice Chairman; Mitchell, Vice Chairman; Fisher, Ranking Minority Member; Blalock, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cooper, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Buck; Cairnes; Chandler; Constantine; DeBolt; Gardner; Hatfield; Johnson; Murray; O'Brien; Ogden; Radcliff; Robertson; Romero; Scott; Skinner; Sterk; Wood and Zellinsky.

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306).

Background: Currently, the Washington State Patrol (WSP) is required to make accident reports and analysis available to the Director of Licensing, the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Utilities and Transportation Commission, or their duly authorized representatives for further tabulation and analysis. It shall be the duty of the chief of the Washington State Patrol to file, tabulate, and analyze all accident reports. While the Traffic Safety Commission (TSC) is not specifically named in statute as a receiving entity, it has, in fact, been receiving summary data as a duly authorized representative.

One source of data used by the TSC is the traffic collision records from the WSP. The commission currently receives the accident summary data records on a monthly and annual basis. The commission performs statistical and trend analysis on the data

received to identify traffic safety issues. One of the functions of the TSC is to find solutions to the traffic safety problems that have been identified.

A formal attorney general interpretation was recently requested to clarify the commission's authorization to receive this data. The attorney general's recommendation was that a legislative change is necessary in order to allow the Traffic Safety Commission to have access to the accident report. When reviewing the existing entities receiving the accident report data, it was found that even though the attorney general's formal opinion did not mention the other entities, language was required to allow these entities to continue to receive the data that they have been receiving.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Traffic Safety Commission is added to the list of agencies which are to receive accident reports and analysis from the Washington State Patrol, as well as authorizing other public entities to receive the information at the discretion of the chief of the Washington State Patrol.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Other public entities authorized by the chief of the Washington State Patrol are added to the list of agencies which are to receive accident reports and analysis from the WSP.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Public entities already receiving the accident report data will be allowed to continue to receive the information. The chief of the Washington State Patrol may, at the chief's discretion, allow access on a case-by-case basis as future accident reporting data needs arise.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Marsh Pugh, Washington State Patrol; and Craig Olson, Association of Washington Cities.