

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5968

C 328 L 97
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Regulating electric-assisted bicycles.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau, Wood, Haugen and Prince.

Senate Committee on Transportation

House Committee on Transportation Policy & Budget

Background: Current law regulates the use of mopeds, which are two-wheeled vehicles powered primarily by a gas engine. Mopeds may not be used on trails or in bike lanes. Moped riders must have a valid driver's license, and must comply with helmet laws applicable to motorcycles.

Bicycles are exclusively human-powered. Bicycles may be driven on bicycle paths, recreational trails (unless restricted or prohibited by local ordinance), and on public roads and highways (except for urban-area interstate).

Electric bicycles are a relatively new invention. They have an electric motor, but are primarily human-powered cycles. Electric bicycles do not fit the definitions for mopeds or bicycles.

Summary: Electric bicycles are defined as bicycles fully operative with pedals, but also having an electric motor capable of propelling the bike not more than 20 miles per hour.

Electric bicycles are exempt from vehicle registration and licensing requirements. No driver's license is required to operate an electric bike, although riders must be at least 16 years of age.

Provisions relating to bicycle helmets apply to riders of electric bikes. Electric bikes have the same access to trails, paths and public roads that regular bikes have, unless restricted by ordinance.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0	
House	89	0	(House amended)
Senate	40	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 27, 1997