

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6282

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Judiciary, February 4, 2000

Title: An act relating to duties of drivers involved in traffic accidents resulting in injury or death.

Brief Description: Specifying the duties of drivers involved in traffic accidents resulting in injury or death.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen, Heavey, Gardner, Horn, McCaslin, Winsley and Costa.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Judiciary: 1/28/2000, 2/4/2000 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Heavey, Chair; Kline, Vice Chair; Costa, Goings, Haugen, Long and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: A vehicle operator involved in an accident is required to stop at the scene of the accident and remain there until the operator provides required information and renders reasonable assistance to injured persons. Failure to comply is a gross misdemeanor if the accident only resulted in damage to property. If a person is injured or killed, failure to stop is a class C felony ranked at level IV on the sentencing grid.

Summary of Bill: If an accident causing injury or death occurs in a roadway construction zone and the involved vehicle operator fails to stop at the scene of the accident to provide the required information and render reasonable assistance, the operator is guilty of a class B felony. It is an unranked offense subjecting the offender to up to 12 months confinement or up to 10 years confinement if the court finds substantial and compelling reasons justifying an exceptional sentence.

A roadway construction zone is an area where construction, repair, or maintenance work is being conducted on or adjacent to any public roadway.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: We need to take a tough stand to protect highway workers who are in a vulnerable position while they are working. We have done all we can to enhance safety, now we need to provide a deterrent.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Haugen, prime sponsor; John Conrad, Washington State Department of Transportation.