
Transportation Committee

HB 2418

Brief Description: Regulating individual mobility transportation devices.

Sponsors: Representatives Cooper, Hankins and Lovick.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Guidelines for the use of all motorized scooters are provided.
- Local jurisdictions can regulate where and how fast the motorized scooters can be ridden.
- Motorized scooters cannot be operated on freeways, or on public streets or highways where the speed limit exceeds 25 miles per hour.
- Operators must be 16 years old and must wear helmets.
- Operators cannot be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Lighting equipment is required during times of limited visibility.
- Traffic Safety Commission can extend their bicycle and pedestrian safety program to include use of motorized scooters.

Hearing Date: 1/31/02

Staff: Penny Nerup (786-7335).

Background:

Because of the increased use of motorized scooters by the citizens of Washington and the confusion over whether or not they should be regulated as motor vehicles, the House Transportation Committee conducted a study identifying the safety issues associated with the use of all motorized scooters, including their use by children, commuters and the disabled. Participants included legislators, effected agencies, law enforcement, and operators and sellers of motorized scooters.

This bill is the result of the discussions of that study and is consistent with motorized scooter regulations in California and Oregon.

Summary of Bill:

Motorized scooters are defined and are specifically excluded from the definition of a motor vehicle. No driver's license is required to operate a motorized scooter. Manufacturers are required to disclose that insurance policies may not provide coverage for accidents involving use of the motorized scooters.

Local jurisdictions may determine, by ordinance, where motorized scooters can be ridden (including trails and sidewalks) and at what speed, with the following limitations: 1) the Department of Transportation can regulate which of its trails motorized scooters can be operated upon; 2) they cannot be operated on freeways, or on public streets or highways where the speed limit exceeds 25 miles per hour; 3) operators must be 16 years old; 4) operators must wear helmets; 5) operators cannot be under the influence of alcohol or drugs; and 6) lighting equipment is required during times of limited visibility.

The Traffic Safety Commission is given the authority to extend its bicycle and pedestrian safety program (also know as the Cooper Jones committee) to include safety education on the use of motorized scooters.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2002.

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