

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5113

As Passed Senate, March 12, 2001

Title: An act relating to the regulation of the use of motorized scooters.

Brief Description: Regulating motorized foot scooters.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Costa, Swecker, Kastama, Fairley, Oke, Gardner, Haugen and Eide).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/31/01, 2/7/01 [DPS, DNP].
Passed Senate: 3/12/01, 44-5.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5113 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Eide, Finkbeiner, Jacobsen, Kastama, McAuliffe, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Shin and Swecker.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Benton and Horn.

Staff: Jennifer Ziegler (786-7316)

Background: Motorized scooters have either internal combustion engines or battery-powered motors and can reach speeds of up to 20 miles per hour. Current law regulates bicycles, electric-assisted bicycles, motorcycles and motor-driven cycles, but does not include provisions regarding motorized scooters.

Summary of Bill: Regulations regarding motorized foot scooters are created. A driver's license is not required to operate a motorized foot scooter. It is unlawful to rent out a motorized foot scooter without also renting helmets. It is also unlawful to rent a motorized foot scooter without having a helmet.

A gasoline-powered motorized foot scooter may not be operated on a bicycle path, a fully-controlled limited access freeway or a sidewalk. Electric motorized foot scooters are subject to the same state regulations as bicycles.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: There is some confusion regarding where motorized scooters are permitted. Scooters are an alternative means of transportation and it is best to regulate them before problems arise. Manufacturers have developed state-of-the-art technology, so they are low emission vehicles. Motorized scooters are also a tool for disabled citizens because the scooters have several advantages over electric wheelchairs.

Testimony Against: It is important to make sure that young children on scooters are not using those scooters on limited-access freeways.

Testified: Senator Jeri Costa, prime sponsor (pro); Doug Vieselmeyer, citizen (pro); Brent Vieselmeyer, Power Peds (pro); Dennis Haynes, citizen (con); Toby Rickman, Department of Transportation (concerns); Captain Eric Robertson, Washington State Patrol (concerns); and Clark Holloway, Department of Licensing (concerns).