

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5735

As Passed Senate, February 1, 2002

Title: An act relating to motorcycle taillights.

Brief Description: Allowing motorcycles to have blue dot taillights.

Sponsors: Senators Gardner, Roach, Haugen, Hochstatter, Honeyford, Stevens, Deccio, Rossi, Zarelli, Benton, Horn, T. Sheldon, Sheahan, Spanel, Shin, Finkbeiner, Hargrove, West, Long and Franklin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/20/01, 3/5/01 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/13/01, 48-0; 2/1/02, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Dean Carlson (786-7305)

Background: Under current law, taillights on the back of motor vehicles must be the color red and must be visible from a distance of one thousand feet to the rear. There is an exception for vehicles 40 years old or older, in that their taillights may also contain a blue or purple insert of not more than one inch in diameter.

Summary of Bill: Any motorcycle may use a taillight that contains a blue or purple insert of not more than one inch in diameter.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The blue dot inserts make motorcycles more visible. Other states allow them. They are currently allowed on older automobiles that have smaller tail lights.

Testimony Against: There is no data that proves blue dot inserts increase safety. We see it as cosmetic and generally oppose lighting uniformity changes.

Testified: Rich Bright, ABATE of Washington (pro); Argie Martin, Cowlitz County ABATE (pro); Lt. Coral Estes, Washington State Patrol (concerns).

