

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5230

As of February 6, 2003

Title: An act relating to motorcycle equipment.

Brief Description: Revising motorcycle equipment laws.

Sponsors: Senators T. Sheldon, Zarelli, Roach, Hargrove, Poulsen, Benton, Stevens and Mulliken.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 2/6/03.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Dean Carlson (786-7305)

Background: Since 1990, it has been illegal for any person to ride a motorcycle, motor-driven cycle or moped without wearing a helmet approved by the Washington State Patrol (WSP), except when operating an antique motorcycle, an automobile that is licensed as a motorcycle, or when the cycle is equipped with seat belts and roll bars approved by the WSP.

The WSP is responsible for adopting guidelines for motor vehicle equipment standards and procedures through administrative rule. Motorcycle helmets, goggles, glasses and face shields must conform with WSP rules. It is illegal to rent out a motorcycle, motor-driven cycle or moped unless the person also has helmets on hand to rent that conform to WSP rules; the same applies to the person who rents the cycle.

Mirrors are not required on a motorcycle manufactured prior to January 1, 1931. Mirrors also are not required on a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle over 25 years old that is ridden in conjunction with an antique or classic motorcycle event.

Summary of Bill: Persons 21 years old or older are not required to wear a motorcycle helmet while riding a motorcycle, motor-driven cycle, or moped. Persons under the age of 21 are required to wear a commercially manufactured motorcycle helmet.

The requirement that motorcycle equipment (glasses, goggles, face shields and helmets) conforms with WSP rules is deleted. The helmet standard is simply a "commercially manufactured motorcycle helmet."

A person who sells or rents out motorcycles must have commercially manufactured helmets on hand; a person under the age of 21 years who rents a motorcycle must have a helmet in his or her possession. Mirrors are not required on a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle over 25 years old. The clause relating to antique or classic motorcycle events is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 3, 2003.

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