

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5770

As Passed Senate, March 18, 2003

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

Brief Description: Regulating motorized foot scooters.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Highways & Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Horn, Haugen, Swecker and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 2/18/03, 2/25/03 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/18/03, 28-19.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5770 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Horn, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Esser, Finkbeiner, Haugen, Jacobsen; Mulliken, Oke and Prentice.

Staff: Greg Doss (786-7341)

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: A motorized foot scooter is defined. Motorized foot scooters cannot be defined as a motorcycle. Vehicle licensing and registration provisions do not apply to motorized foot scooters. No drivers' licenses are required to operate a motorized foot scooter. Motorized foot scooters may be operated during daylight hours without reflectors approved by the State Patrol. Most provisions regulating mopeds do not apply to motorized foot scooters.

Motorized foot scooters have the same highway access as bicycles. When signed accordingly, motorized foot scooters may be operated on non-federal funded multi-purpose trails or bicycle lanes. State Parks may regulate use of motorized foot scooters within the boundaries of a park. Local jurisdictions may restrict access of motorized foot scooters to multipurpose trails or bicycle lanes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Motorized foot scooters need a clarification in statute. Tanaka sold over 35,000 last year. Owners do not know if they need a driver's license or special endorsement. Many other states have exempted motorized foot scooters from licensing requirements.

Testimony Against: WSDOT may realize a fiscal impact to change highway shoulder signage. Highway shoulders may not be safe for foot scooter operation.

Testified: Brian Ziegler, WSDOT; Dave Cockrill, Tanaka Scooters.