

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2765

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to limiting the posting of hazards to motorcycles to paved roadways.

Brief Description: Limiting the posting of hazards to motorcycles to paved roadways.

Sponsors: Representatives Buri, Clibborn, Nixon, Cox, Serben, Kristiansen, Jarrett, Kilmer, Wallace, Woods, Moeller and Kretz.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/23/06, 1/25/06 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Limits the requirement to post a warning for motorcyclists to construction areas on a paved public highway, county road, street, bridge, or other thoroughfare commonly traveled.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Wallace, Vice Chair; Woods, Ranking Minority Member; Skinner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Buck, Campbell, Clibborn, Curtis, Dickerson, Ericksen, Flannigan, Hankins, Holmquist, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kilmer, Lovick, Morris, Nixon, Rodne, Schindler, Shabro, Simpson, B. Sullivan, Takko, Upthegrove and Wood.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

When construction, repair, or maintenance work is conducted on or adjacent to a public highway, county road, street, bridge, or other thoroughfare commonly traveled that interferes with travel on that route, the site must be properly posted by signs, or flagmen or both. Furthermore, the signs used must be consistent with the guidelines established by the Washington State Department of Transportation.

In addition, if the road work involves the use of grooved pavement, abrupt lane edges, steel plates or gravel or earth surfaces, the signs posted must, among other things, warn motorcyclists of the potential hazards. The signs warning the motorcyclists must at least include the language, "MOTORCYCLES USE EXTREME CAUTION."

Violation of these requirements is a misdemeanor, with each noncomplying day of work constituting a separate violation.

Summary of Bill:

Limits the requirement to warn motorcyclists to use extreme caution in areas of construction, repair, or maintenance where grooved pavement, abrupt lane edges, steel plates, or gravel or earth surfaces are present. Signs stating, "MOTORCYCLES USE EXTREME CAUTION" must be posted only when these conditions are present during construction, repair, or maintenance on a paved public highway, county road, street, bridge, or other thoroughfare commonly traveled.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: In many counties, a significant portion of the roads are unpaved. Under current law, local governments undertaking road work on unpaved roads are required to post signs warning motorcyclists even though the changes in the condition of the pavement that the law was designed to address are not present.

The cost of the signs, which are frequently stolen, combined with the crew time needed to post the signs means that the current law creates a significant cost for local government without significant gains in safety. The intent of the original bill was not to require the posting of motorcycle warning signs on gravel roads.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Buri, prime sponsor; Dale Rancour, Washington State Association of County Engineers; Ross Dunfee, Benton County; Paul Bennett, Lincoln County; and Larry Walker, Washington Road Riders Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.