

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5273

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Transportation

**Title:** An act relating to motorcycle driver's license endorsement and education.

**Brief Description:** Modifying motorcycle driver's license endorsement and education provisions.

**Sponsors:** Senators Swecker, Murray and Keiser; by request of Department of Licensing, Washington Traffic Safety Commission and Washington State Patrol.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 3/15/07, 3/28/07 [DP].

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the maximum fee for motorcycle skills education program from \$100 to \$125 and directs the motorcycle endorsement application fee to the Motorcycle Safety Education Account.
- Requires that motorcycle awareness information to be provided in driver training courses be approved by the Director of the Department of Licensing, rather than the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 24 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Flannigan, Vice Chair; Jarrett, Ranking Minority Member; Schindler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Armstrong, Campbell, Curtis, Dickerson, Eddy, Ericksen, Hailey, Hankins, Kristiansen, Lovick, Rodne, Rolfes, Simpson, Springer, B. Sullivan, Takko, Upthegrove, Wallace and Wood.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Hudgins.

**Staff:** David Munnecke (786-7315).

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Background:**

When applying for a special endorsement for a motorcycle, there is a \$5 application fee which goes to the Highway Safety Account. There is also an initial endorsement fee of \$10 and a renewal endorsement fee of \$25, both of which are deposited in the Motorcycle Safety Education Account.

Washington residents under the age of 18 are required to take a driver training class in order to obtain a driver's license, except under limited circumstances. Courses may be offered at both high schools and commercial driver training schools. The Superintendent of Public Instruction sets the basic course requirements for traffic safety education courses offered in high schools. The Driver's Instructors' Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) is required to create a basic minimum curriculum for courses offered at commercial driver training schools. Both the Superintendent and the Advisory Committee are required to include, among other things, information in driver education courses on the effects of alcohol and drug use on motor vehicle operators, the proper use of the left hand lane, and information on motorcycle awareness. The information on motorcycle awareness must be approved by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

In 1982, legislation passed requiring the Department of Licensing (DOL) to create a voluntary motorcycle operator training and education program to provide public awareness of motorcycle safety and to provide classroom and on-cycle training. The DOL may waive all or a portion of the motorcycle endorsement examination for people who satisfactorily complete the motorcycle operator training and education program. Persons taking the motorcycle safety education class offered by the DOL must pay no more than \$100 and persons under the age of 18 must pay no more than \$50.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The \$5 special endorsement application fee is directed to the Motorcycle Safety Education Account. The maximum fee that may be charged to persons taking the motorcycle safety education class is increased from \$100 to \$125.

The information on motorcycle awareness required to be provided in driver training courses must be approved by the Director of the Department of Licensing (DOL), rather than the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

The requirement that the DOL motorcycle safety education class encourage the use of radio- or intercom-equipped helmets is removed.

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**Appropriation:** None.**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) There is currently an upward trend in motorcycle fatalities in Washington. This trend is going up particularly fast among people over the age of 40. More than one-third of the motorcycle riders involved in fatal accidents do not have a motorcycle endorsement on their license, and more than half of these accidents are solo crashes.

The best way to deal with these problems is through education. The motorcycle education program in Washington is nationally known, but there is currently a 10 to 12-week wait for a spot in a motorcycle education course.

This bill was developed through a cooperative effort involving state agencies, motorcycle riders, and physicians. It will fund more subsidized courses, add two new sites for these courses, and allow for 3,000 more students to take the motorcycle education course every year.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Lowell Porter, Washington Traffic Safety Commission; Liz Luce and Stephen Stewart, Department of Licensing; Brian Ursino, Washington State Patrol; Ian King, Washington Road Riders Association; and Carl Spurgeon.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.