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**Transportation Committee**

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**HB 1820**

**Brief Description:** Reducing air pollution through the licensing and use of medium-speed electric vehicles.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Dickerson, Hankins, Lovick, B. Sullivan, Simpson, Hasegawa and Moeller.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Includes medium-speed electric vehicles in the definition of a motor vehicle and legalizes their use on local roads at speeds up to 35 miles per hour.

**Hearing Date:** 2/14/07

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

**Background:**

Neighborhood electric vehicles (NEV) are included in the definition of a motor vehicle. The vehicles are defined as four-wheeled motor vehicles that are self-propelled and electrically powered, can reach a speed between 20 and 25 miles per hour, and conform to federal regulations.

Neighborhood electric vehicles may be operated on a public highway having a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less if certain conditions are met. The conditions are: that the vehicle is licensed and displays plates, the vehicle is insured for liability, the vehicle may not operate on a state highway, and that the vehicle may not cross a highway with a speed limit over 35 miles per hour, unless certain criteria are met.

The NEV operator must have a valid driver's license. The operator of a NEV in violation of the above provisions is guilty of a traffic infraction. Seatbelt and child restraint laws are applicable, and the vehicle must meet federal standards for that type of vehicle.

Local authorities may regulate the operation of these types of vehicles on public highways under their jurisdiction if the regulations are consistent with the motor vehicle code. The local

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authorities may not permit vehicles on state highways or require additional registration or licensing.

**Summary of Bill:**

A medium-speed electric vehicle (MEV) is included in the definition of a motor vehicle. The vehicles are defined as four-wheeled motor vehicles that are self-propelled and electrically powered, can reach a speed a between 30 and 35 miles per hour, are equipped with a roll cage or a crush-proof body design, and otherwise meet or exceed the federal regulations for neighborhood electric vehicles.

Medium-speed electric vehicles may be operated on a public highway having a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less if certain conditions are met. The conditions are that the vehicle is licensed and displays plates, the vehicle is insured for liability, the vehicle may not operate on a state highway, and that the vehicle may not cross a highway with a speed limit over 35 miles per hour, unless certain criteria are met.

The MEV operator must have a valid driver's license. The operator of a MEV in violation of the above provisions is guilty of a traffic infraction. Seatbelt and child restraint laws are applicable, and the vehicle must meet or exceed federal standards for that type of vehicle.

Local authorities may regulate the operations of these types of vehicles on public highways under their jurisdiction if the regulations are consistent with the motor vehicle code. The local authorities may not permit vehicles on state highways or require additional registration or licensing.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 9, 2007.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect August 1, 2007.