

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1820

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 21, 2007

Title: An act relating to reducing air pollution through the licensing and use of medium-speed electric vehicles.

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 History: Passed House: 3/07/07, 94-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/20/07, 3/21/07 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Marr, Vice Chair; Murray, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Clements, Delvin, Eide, Holmquist, Jacobsen, Kastama, Kauffman, Kilmer, Pflug and Spanel.

Staff: Martha Hankins (786-7429)

Background: Neighborhood electric vehicles are self-propelled, electrically powered four-wheeled motor vehicles which can, in one mile, reach a speed of between 20 and 25 mph. Medium-speed electric vehicles are self-propelled, electrically powered four-wheeled motor vehicles which can, in one mile, reach a speed of between 30 and 35 mph.

Neighborhood electric vehicles must be equipped with a roll cage or crush proof body, and must conform to federal regulations. Under certain conditions, they are permitted on public highways having a speed limit of 35 mph or less but are not permitted on state highways. The vehicles must be registered, and drivers must have a valid driver's license and insurance. Seat belt and child restraint laws apply. Local authorities may regulate these vehicles on roads under their jurisdiction provided the regulations are consistent with state law, but may not require additional registration or licensing.

Summary of Bill: Medium-speed electric vehicles are added to the definition of motor vehicles. As with neighborhood electric vehicles, they must be equipped with a roll cage or crush proof body, must conform to federal regulations, and are permitted on public highways having a speed limit of 35 mph or less but are not permitted on state highways. They must be

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registered, and drivers must have a valid driver's license and insurance. Seat belt and child restraint laws apply. Local authorities may regulate these vehicles on roads under their jurisdiction provided the regulations are consistent with state law, but may not require additional registration or licensing.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: These electric vehicles are environmentally friendly and provide significant energy savings. They are not golf carts; they are cars designed for running errands in town. The current speed of 25 mph is too slow and puts people at risk. Increasing the allowed speed to 35 mph will improve safety.

Persons Testifying: PRO: David Bellefeuille-Rice, City of Tumwater; Steven S. Lough, Seattle Electric Vehicle Association; Steve Mayeda, MC Electric Vehicles.