
Transportation Committee

HB 1491

Brief Description: Addressing when vehicles overtake and pass pedestrians or bicycles.

Sponsors: Representatives Pedersen, Rodne, Rolfes, Seaquist, Kenney, Upthegrove, Cody, Chase, Nelson, Moeller, Carlyle, Hunter, Roberts, Morrell, White, Wood, Dickerson and Goodman.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires vehicles passing bicyclists and pedestrians to pass at a distance of no less than three feet.
- Creates a specific exemption allowing vehicles passing bicycles or pedestrians to travel on the left side of the center of the roadway.

Hearing Date: 2/12/09

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315)

Background:

The driver of a vehicle passing other traffic on the roadway, or approaching a pedestrian or bicyclist on the roadway or on the shoulder of the roadway, must pass at a safe distance to the left. The driver must also be safely clear of the overtaken pedestrian or bicyclist before returning to his or her original position on the roadway.

Generally, a driver of a vehicle may drive on the left side of the roadway, from the driver's perspective, in order to pass another vehicle, including a bicycle, so long as it is safe to do so. However, the driver of a vehicle may not do so in order to pass other traffic proceeding in the same direction unless the left side of the roadway is visible and free of oncoming traffic for a sufficient distance to permit the passing to take place without coming within 200 feet of oncoming traffic.

Summary of Bill:

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.

The requirement of passing bicyclists and pedestrians at a safe distance is modified to define that distance as no less than three feet.

A specific exemption is created that allows vehicles passing bicycles or pedestrians to travel on the left side of the center of the roadway.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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