
Transportation Committee

SSB 6217

Brief Description: Retroactively applying certain intermediate license law amendments made during the 2009 legislative session.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senator Rockefeller).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Makes the 2009 revision to the intermediate driver's license (IDL) law, which exempted certain accidents from the general requirement to extend IDL restrictions for IDL holders involved in an accident, retroactive to two years before the effective date of the act.

Hearing Date: 2/26/10

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

Washington's intermediate drivers' license (IDL) law, which went into effect on July 1, 2001, prohibits drivers who hold an IDL from carrying passengers under 20 years of age in their car for the first six months after issuance of the license, unless the passenger is an immediate family member. During the remaining period of the IDL, up to the age of 18, the driver may not carry more than three non-family member passengers under the age of 20. Drivers who hold an IDL are also prohibited from driving between 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. unless a licensed driver age 25 or older is also in the vehicle. These restrictions may only be enforced as secondary infractions.

Beginning with the issuance of the IDL and until the age of 18:

- If a driver commits a traffic infraction, violates any IDL license restrictions, or is involved in certain accidents, the driver is sent a warning letter by the Department of Licensing (DOL).
- If a second offense is committed, a letter suspending the driver for six months (or until age 18, whichever is shorter) is sent to the driver.

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- For a third offense, the driver is suspended until age 18.
- The driver's parents also receive a copy of any warning or suspension letter sent to the driver.

After a year of driving safely without an infraction, violation, or certain accidents, the IDL driving restrictions expire and will not be reimposed. However, the driver is still subject to receiving the IDL warning letter and license suspension penalties until age 18. Driving with a suspended IDL is a misdemeanor.

In 2009 the IDL statute was amended so that being in an accident is no longer grounds for denying the lifting of the IDL restrictions, if there is another party to the accident and the other party was cited in connection with the accident.

Summary of Bill:

The intermediate driver's license statute revision made in 2009 is retroactive to two years before the effective date of the act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 2/25/2010.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.