

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1129

As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

Title: An act relating to a bicycle and pedestrian traffic safety curriculum.

Brief Description: Including a bicycle and pedestrian traffic safety curriculum in certain traffic schools and safety courses.

Sponsors: Representatives Klippert, Lias, Billig, Rolfes, Fitzgibbon, Reykdal, Ryu, Finn and Moscoso.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/20/11 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires traffic schools conducted in connection with a condition of a deferral, sentence, or penalty for a traffic infraction or a traffic-related criminal offense to utilize the curriculum for driving safely among bicyclists and pedestrians approved by the Department of Licensing as part of the traffic school curriculum.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Billig, Vice Chair; Lias, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Asay, Eddy, Finn, Fitzgibbon, Jinkins, Johnson, Klippert, Kristiansen, Ladenburg, McCune, Moeller, Moscoso, Reykdal, Rivers, Ryu, Shea, Takko, Upthegrove and Zeiger.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

In Washington, individuals may defer one moving and one non-moving violation every seven years. As a condition of this deferral, courts may impose such conditions as the court feels

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appropriate, which often includes attendance at a driver improvement school or traffic school. If the individual meets all of the required conditions and has not committed another infraction, the court may dismiss the infraction at the end of the deferral period.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) is responsible for overseeing the commercial driver training school program. The Driver Instructors' Advisory Committee reviews and updates the curriculum for driver training schools. The DOL is responsible for providing the driver training school curriculum to each applicant for an instructor or driver training school permit. In addition to information on the safe, lawful, and responsible operation of motor vehicles, the curriculum must include information regarding the intermediate driver's license restrictions and sanctions, the effects of alcohol and drug use on motor vehicle operators, and the importance of safely sharing the road with bicycles, pedestrians, and motorcycles.

Summary of Bill:

Jurisdictions that conduct traffic schools in connection with a condition of a deferral, sentence, or penalty for a traffic infraction or a traffic-related criminal offense are required to utilize the curriculum for driving safely among bicyclists and pedestrians approved by the DOL. This addition to the traffic school curriculum is limited to no more than 30 minutes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill passed the House unanimously last year, but did not pass out of the Senate due to various complications. The underlying reasons for the bill remain the same, however, so the bill should be passed again this year.

Collisions between vehicles and bicyclists and vehicles and pedestrians occur quite often, and are always tragic. Not just for the people directly involved, but often for the families of those involved as well. Approximately 70,000 people are injured and 4,300 people are killed in accidents between vehicles and pedestrians every year. The fault for the accident is often split between the parties, so it is important to educate the drivers as well as the pedestrians if these numbers are going to be reduced.

The Bicycle Alliance of Washington (Alliance) wants to help make the roads safe for everyone. As part of this effort, the Alliance already use funds from a special license plate to distribute, at no charge to the recipients, a curriculum that was originally developed by the Illinois Department of Transportation regarding driving safely among bicycles and

pedestrians. Requiring the use of this curriculum in traffic schools would provide an opportunity to teach or remind drivers about the rules that guide interactions between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians on the road.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Klippert, prime sponsor; Kay Olson; Dave Janis and Brian Fuller, Bicycle Alliance of Washington; and Chris Van Dyke, BYG Taxi Cooperative Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.