

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6062

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As of January 24, 2012

**Title:** An act relating to motorcycles.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the definitions of certain motorcycles.

**Sponsors:** Senators Fain, Hargrove, Harper, Kilmer, Haugen, Litzow, Hobbs, Tom, Hill, Conway, King and Roach.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 1/23/12.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Staff:** Kim Johnson (786-7472)

**Background:** A motorcycle is currently defined in statute as a motor vehicle designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, on which the driver: rides on a seat or saddle, and the motor vehicle is designed to be steered with a handlebar; or rides on a seat in a partially or completely enclosed seating area that is equipped with safety belts, and the motor vehicle is designed to be steered with a steering wheel.

Current motorcycle skills training programs are available for two-wheeled and three-wheeled motorcycles. The operator of a motorcycle must have the appropriate two-wheeled or three-wheeled driver's license endorsement in order to operate a two- or three-wheeled motorcycle in Washington.

Private industry has developed equipment kits that may be added to a motorcycle to provide additional stability. Some states have authorized the use of this stabilizing equipment, including Iowa, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

**Summary of Bill:** The definition of motorcycle is amended to include a motor vehicle that is originally designed to travel on two wheels, but is modified using a conversion kit that adds two stabilizing wheels on the rear of the motor vehicle.

A single track motorcycle is defined as a motorcycle that the operator must countersteer to turn at speeds of 30 miles per hour (mph) or greater and that typically leaves a single ground track as it moves forward in a straight line. A multitrack motorcycle means a motorcycle that

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the operator need not countersteer to turn at speeds of 30 mph or greater and that typically leaves two or more ground tracks as it moves forward in a straight line. The statutes governing motorcycle endorsements and the motorcycle skills training program are changed to refer to single-track and multi-track motorcycles, instead of two-wheeled and three-wheeled motorcycles.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 11, 2012.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on January 1, 2013.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** CON: As a motorcycle safety instructor I have some serious concerns with the way this bill is worded. These vehicles are dangerous. If you go into a turn at anything over ten mph it becomes very difficult to steer. We have tried to test these and have concerns about the wheels remaining in contact with the ground, which effects the steering and control. The whole handling dynamic changes based on what rear wheel is in contact with the ground. The definitions of this wheel using counter steer are not accurate.

Endorsement testing on one of these will be dangerous. There is no definition of the standards that these conversion kits need to meet. This bill puts DOL in a no-win situation. There is no curriculum for training for these vehicles. I don't know who would take on the liability for developing training for this type of equipment.

**Persons Testifying:** CON: Dave Wondell, Pacific NW Motorcycle Safety and Sidecar Safety Program.