

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1334

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to conversion kits on motorcycles.

Brief Description: Concerning conversion kits on motorcycles.

Sponsors: Representatives Shea, Taylor, MacEwen, Schmick, Holy, Short, Kagi, Orcutt, Overstreet, Rodne, Klippert, Hargrove, Condotta and Parker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/5/13, 2/7/13 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Revises and standardizes the definition of "motorcycle."
- Authorizes the use of stabilizing conversion kits on motorcycles.
- Requires a person using a stabilizing conversion kit to have a three-wheel motorcycle endorsement.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Liias, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Bergquist, Farrell, Fitzgibbon, Freeman, Habib, Hayes, Johnson, Klippert, Kochmar, Kretz, Kristiansen, Moeller, Morris, O'Ban, Riccelli, Ryu, Sells, Shea, Takko, Tarleton and Zeiger.

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306).

Background:

Motorcycle means a motor vehicle designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, on which the driver:

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- 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. There are some states that authorize the use of stabilization kits.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The definition of a motorcycle is revised to mean a motor vehicle designed to travel on not more than three wheels not including any stabilizing conversion kits.

The definition of a "motorcycle" in the Motorcycle Skills Education Program is updated to be the same definition as the chapter definition and clarifies that it excludes off-road motorcycles.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill adds the requirement for a person operating a motorcycle with a stabilizing conversion kit to have a valid driver's license specially endorsed for a three-wheel motorcycle.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: 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 accessory allows veterans that are disabled and other riders requiring additional stability the opportunity to enjoy motorcycle riding and the kits add enhanced safety for other riders. The stabilizing conversion kit is a valid accessory for existing motorcycles. The kits have been in production for at least 15 years. Once a rider uses a kit, many riders never remove them. Baby boomers are getting older; with the kits the motorcycles are more stable. There are 300 people in Washington that have purchased a kit and there are 180 dealerships in the United States. Some police departments in other states

have installed the kits so law enforcement officers can utilize motorcycles in bad weather. Eight insurance companies insure the kit as an accessory on a motorcycle, as they consider the stabilizer conversion kit like any other motorcycle accessory.

(Other) The Department of Licensing has some concerns since motorcycles with stabilizing conversion kits are not defined in law. Motorcycle fatalities are trending upward, and additional training requirements are needed so a rider will understand how the motorcycle will react with a stabilization kit. A three-wheel motorcycle endorsement is recommended for riders operating a motorcycle with a stabilization conversion kit.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Shea, prime sponsor; Larry Walker, Washington Road Riders Association; and Charles and JoAnne Monroe, Motorcycle Tour Conversions.

(Other) Tony Sermonti, Department of Licensing; and Rob Huss, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.