

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1698

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

**Title:** An act relating to school speed zone signs.

**Brief Description:** Requiring the installation and maintenance of signs indicating the end of school speed zones.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hunt, Ryu and Appleton.

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 2/19/13, 2/26/13 [DPS].

#### **Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Requires the installation and maintenance of signs indicating the end of a school zone on any street upon which the beginning of such a zone is also marked.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Liias, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Bergquist, Farrell, Fitzgibbon, Freeman, Habib, Hayes, Johnson, Klippert, Kochmar, Moeller, Morris, O'Ban, Riccelli, Ryu, Sells, Takko, Tarleton, Upthegrove and Zeiger.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Kristiansen, Rodne and Shea.

**Staff:** Andrew Russell (786-7143).

#### **Background:**

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*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.*

A school speed zone is automatically established surrounding a marked school crosswalk, if the crosswalk is fully posed with standard school speed limit signs. Alternatively, any county or incorporated city may create a school speed zone on a highway bordering a marked school. Such a zone extends for 300 feet in either direction of the crosswalk or boundary of school property. Within such a zone, it is a traffic infraction for a driver to operate a vehicle in excess of 20 miles per hour. Additionally, the monetary penalty is doubled for a driver who exceeds this limit.

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), which has been adopted by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and local jurisdictions, provides guidance on the installation of school speed limit zones. The MUTCD requires that a sign be installed to indicate the beginning points of a designated school zone. When increased fines are imposed, the MUTCD requires that a sign be installed to inform drivers of the higher fines. Finally, the MUTCD requires a sign be installed to indicate the end of a higher fine zone, school zone, or both.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The end of a school speed limit zone must be indicated with an "END SCHOOL ZONE" sign on any road where the beginning of such a zone is also marked. This sign must conform to requirements in the MUTCD, and may be installed on an already-existing sign assembly that is located at the border of a school zone. The responsibility for the installation and maintenance of such a sign depends upon the type of road at issue. The WSDOT must install and maintain such a sign on a state highway. A county is responsible for the installation and maintenance on county roads. Finally, a city is responsible for installing and maintaining these signs on a city street that is within its jurisdiction. Finally, these signs must be installed by January 1, 2015.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill clarifies that signs required by this bill must conform to the standards incorporated into the MUTCD. Additionally, it clarifies that these signs may be installed on sign assemblies that are already placed at the border of a school zone. Finally, the substitute bill requires that these signs be installed by January 1, 2015.

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**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) Driving through parts of Washington, it is not always clear when a school zone ends. If we have traffic enforcement in these school zones, it makes sense to have an "end school zone" sign.

(With concerns) Counties support putting up signs that conform with the MUTCD. Up until 2009, these signs were optional under the MUTCD. The MUTCD allows the necessary changes be done through regular maintenance and upkeep on signs in that area. Hopefully the implementation date can be delayed to allow local governments time to fit these changes within their budgets.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Hunt, prime sponsor.

(With concerns) Gary Rowe, Washington State Association of Counties; and Alison Hellberg, Association of Washington Cities.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.