
Transportation Committee

HB 1159

Brief Description: Concerning teen driving safety.

Sponsors: Representatives Pike, Wylie, Moeller, Zeiger, Kochmar, Harmsworth and Ryu.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires that a "New Driver" decal be displayed on any vehicle operated by a person who is under 19 years of age.• Establishes a traffic infraction for a driver's failure to display a "New Driver" decal.
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Hearing Date: 1/29/15

Staff: Andrew Russell (786-7143).

Background:

In Washington, a driver who is under 18 years of age may operate a motor vehicle only if he or she holds either an instruction permit or an intermediate license. A driver who is over 18 years of age may also operate a vehicle with an instruction permit, but he or she will be issued only a regular driver's license upon completion of the instruction period. The Department of Licensing (DOL) may issue an instruction permit to applicants who are at least 15 years of age and who have passed the knowledge portion of the driver test. The instruction permit is valid for up to one year and allows the holder to operate a motor vehicle on public highways if an instructor or experienced driver occupies the seat beside the driver.

The DOL may issue an intermediate license to applicants who are at least 16 years of age, but younger than 18 years of age. Additionally, the applicant must not have committed a traffic infraction in the six months preceding his or her application for an intermediate license and must not have committed any offense relating to drugs or alcohol while he or she held an instruction permit. An intermediate license authorizes the holder to drive without supervision, but it imposes conditions relating to the time of day the holder may drive and the number of passengers in the vehicle.

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.

Finally, a regular driver's license entitles the holder to operate a motor vehicle without any restrictions regarding the time of day he or she may drive or the number of passengers in the vehicle.

Summary of Bill:

A driver under 19 years of age must affix to any vehicle he or she is driving a decal that reads "NEW DRIVER." This decal must be least 12 inches wide, 4 inches high, and be printed in white lettering on a red background. The DOL must provide such decal to any person applies to the DOL for an instruction permit, intermediate license, or a driver's license, and the decal may be offered to any other applicant. Additionally, the DOL may charge a fee for this decal, equal to the cost of producing the decal. Finally, a failure to properly display the decal when required is traffic infraction that carries a monetary penalty of up to \$250.

The Act expires on December 31, 2021.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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