

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1884

As Passed House:
March 9, 2015

Title: An act relating to the definition of a one-wheeled self-balancing device.

Brief Description: Expanding the definition of an electric personal assistive mobility device to include a one-wheeled self-balancing device.

Sponsors: Representatives Vick, Bergquist, Hayes, Riccelli, Orcutt, Wilson and Pike.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/12/15, 2/16/15 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/9/15, 96-1.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the definition of an electric personal assistive mobility device to include certain single-wheeled, self-balancing devices.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 22 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Gregerson, Harmsworth, Hayes, Kochmar, Moeller, Pike, Riccelli, Rodne, Sells, Shea, Takko, Tarleton, Wilson, Young and Zeiger.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative McBride.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Ortiz-Self.

Staff: Andrew Russell (786-7143).

Background:

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.

An electric personal assistive mobility device (EPAMD) is defined as a self-balancing device, with two wheels not in tandem, which is designed to transport one person by electric power. The power of an EPAMD is limited to 750 watts; and the maximum speed is limited to 20 miles per hour. The EPAMDs are not motor vehicles, and they are excluded from the definition of a motorcycle.

A driver's license is not required to operate an EPAMD. Additionally, an EPAMD may not be operated on a fully controlled limited access highway, but they may be operated on a sidewalk. A municipality may restrict the use of an EPAMD in locations with congested pedestrian and non-motorized traffic. Municipalities may not, however, restrict the speed of an EPAMD in the entire community or in areas in which there is infrequent pedestrian traffic. Finally, the user of an EPAMD is classified as a "vulnerable user of a public way."

Summary of Bill:

The definition of an electric personal assistive mobility device is expanded to include a self-balancing device with one wheel that is designed to transport one person. The power of such devices is limited to 2,000 watts, and their maximum speed is limited to 20 miles per hour.

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 is a bill that was passed out of the House last session, and this version is the same bill with an intent section added. Two companies in Camas, Washington, have been developing this technology, and they have been selling them worldwide. They are trying to break into the United States market, but we have some laws that haven't caught up with current technology.

The two-wheeled electronic devices can operate on sidewalks, while the one-wheeled devices currently cannot; there is no language on the books that say one way or another. The additional power is not about going faster, but ensuring that the rider can stay upright.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Vick, prime sponsor; and Andrew Ross, Inventist.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.