
Transportation Committee

HB 2127

Brief Description: Creating a pedestrian fatality and serious injury review panel.

Sponsors: Representatives Farrell, Tarleton, Robinson, Walkinshaw, Riccelli, Gregerson, Lytton, Bergquist, Ormsby, Fitzgibbon, Pollet and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Washington Traffic Safety Commission to establish a panel composed of various stakeholders to review each pedestrian serious injury and fatality in Washington and to provide a report including recommendations that could improve pedestrian safety.

Hearing Date: 2/24/15

Staff: Andrew Russell (786-7143).

Background:

The Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) was established in 1967, and oversees efforts to improve safety on Washington's public highways. In directing its work, the WTSC uses Target Zero, Washington State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The Commission also collects fatal and serious injury crash data, engages in research studies, oversees highway safety pilot projects, and maintains a registry of driving under the influence (DUI) Victim Impact Panels. These panels meet with DUI offenders and focus on the emotional, physical, and financial suffering of DUI victims.

Summary of Bill:

The WTSC must convene a Pedestrian Fatality and Serious Injury Review Panel (Panel). This Panel must include a representative from the WTSC, a county coroner, a law enforcement representative, a Washington State Department of Transportation official, a representative from the planning department of each municipality in which a pedestrian fatality occurred, and a

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pedestrian advocate. This Panel must meet at least once each year, and it must identify all pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries in the preceding calendar year. The Panel must then examine each incident and make recommendations that could improve pedestrian safety. By December 31 of each year, the Panel must report findings and recommendations to the Transportation Committees of the Legislature and all municipal governments and state agencies that participated in the Panel.

In addition, if it is relevant, necessary, and permitted by law or court rule, the Panel must review law enforcement incident documentation, probable cause statements, 911 call reports, and any other supplemental reports. Any oral or written communication or document shared within or produced by the panel is confidential and not subject to disclosure or discovery by a third party.

If acting in good faith, without malice, and within the provisions of the Act, members of the Panel are immune from civil liability for an activity related to the reviews conducted by the Panel. Additionally, the Act does not provide a private civil cause of action.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 23, 2015.

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