

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2317

As of February 25, 2016

Title: An act relating to expanding the use of neighborhood and medium-speed electric vehicles.

Brief Description: Expanding the use of neighborhood and medium-speed electric vehicles.

Sponsors: Representatives Van De Wege, Tharinger, Pettigrew, Moeller and Magendanz.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/10/16, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/22/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: Neighborhood electric vehicles are self-propelled, electrically powered four-wheeled motor vehicles that can attain a speed between 20 and 25 miles per hour and must meet federal regulations for low-speed vehicles. Medium-speed electric vehicles are self-propelled, electrically powered four-wheeled motor vehicles that can attain a speed between 25 and 35 mph, are equipped with a roll cage or crush-proof body design, and must otherwise meet federal regulations for low-speed vehicles. Federal equipment standards for low-speed vehicles include headlamps, turn signals, exterior mirrors and other necessary equipment. In order to be operated on public roads, these vehicles must be registered, display a vehicle license plate, and the person operating them must have a valid driver's license and a valid motor vehicle liability policy.

Neighborhood and medium-speed electric vehicles are currently prohibited from being operated on a state highway. These vehicles are generally allowed to operate on other roadways in the state with a speed limit of 35 mph or less.

Local authorities may regulate the operation of neighborhood and medium-speed electric vehicles, but may not: (1) authorize the operation on a state highway; (2) prohibit the operation on streets and roads with a speed limit of 25 mph or less, or (3); establish requirements for registration and licensing for these vehicles.

Summary of Bill: Neighborhood and medium-speed electric vehicles are permitted on segments of state highways with speed limits of 30 mph or less.

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.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on April 1, 2016.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There is a new company in Port Townsend that would like to use medium-speed vehicles as a shuttle service on a fixed route on a portion of a state highway that has a low speed limit. We can't get around the area without using this segment of highway. There are quite a few communities that have state highways that go through them and have reduced speed limits. This can help out other communities just like Port Townsend.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Van De Wege, prime sponsor; Myron Gauger, PTeRIDER.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.