
HOUSE BILL 2317

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Representatives Van De Wege, Tharinger, Pettigrew, Moeller, and Magendanz

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1 AN ACT Relating to expanding the use of neighborhood and medium-
2 speed electric vehicles; amending RCW 46.61.723 and 46.61.725;
3 providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.61.723 and 2011 c 171 s 82 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (1) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, a
8 person may operate a medium-speed electric vehicle upon a highway of
9 this state having a speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour or
10 less, or forty-five miles per hour or less as provided in subsection
11 (4) of this section, if:

12 (a) The person does not operate a medium-speed electric vehicle
13 upon state highways that are listed in chapter 47.17 RCW along
14 segments where the posted speed limit exceeds thirty miles per hour;

15 (b) The person does not operate a medium-speed electric vehicle
16 upon a highway of this state without first having obtained and having
17 in full force and effect a current and proper vehicle ((license))
18 registration and display vehicle license ((number)) plates in
19 compliance with chapter 46.16A RCW. The department must track medium-
20 speed electric vehicles in a separate registration category for
21 reporting purposes;

1 (c) The person does not operate a medium-speed electric vehicle
2 upon a highway of this state without first obtaining a valid driver's
3 license issued to Washington residents in compliance with chapter
4 46.20 RCW;

5 (d) The person does not operate a medium-speed electric vehicle
6 subject to registration under chapter 46.16A RCW on a highway of this
7 state unless the person is insured under a motor vehicle liability
8 policy in compliance with chapter 46.30 RCW; and

9 (e) The person operating a medium-speed electric vehicle does not
10 cross a roadway with a speed limit in excess of thirty-five miles per
11 hour, or forty-five miles per hour as provided in subsection (4) of
12 this section, unless the crossing begins and ends on a roadway with a
13 speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour or less, or forty-five
14 miles per hour or less as provided in subsection (4) of this section,
15 and occurs at an intersection of approximately ninety degrees, except
16 that the operator of a medium-speed electric vehicle must not cross
17 an uncontrolled intersection of streets and highways that are part of
18 the state highway system subject to Title 47 RCW unless that
19 intersection has been authorized by local authorities under
20 subsection (3) of this section.

21 (2) Any person who violates this section commits a traffic
22 infraction.

23 (3) This section does not prevent local authorities, with respect
24 to streets and highways under their jurisdiction and within the
25 reasonable exercise of their police power, from regulating the
26 operation of medium-speed electric vehicles on streets and highways
27 under their jurisdiction by resolution or ordinance of the governing
28 body, if the regulation is consistent with this title, except that:

29 (a) Local authorities may not authorize the operation of medium-
30 speed electric vehicles on streets and highways that are part of the
31 state highway system subject to Title 47 RCW along segments where the
32 posted speed limit exceeds thirty miles per hour;

33 (b) Local authorities may not prohibit the operation of medium-
34 speed electric vehicles upon highways of this state having a speed
35 limit of thirty-five miles per hour or less; and

36 (c) Local authorities may not establish requirements for the
37 registration (~~and licensing~~) of medium-speed electric vehicles.

38 (4) In counties consisting of islands whose only connection to
39 the mainland are ferry routes, a person may operate a medium-speed
40 electric vehicle upon a highway of this state having a speed limit of

1 forty-five miles per hour or less. A person operating a medium-speed
2 electric vehicle as authorized under this subsection must not cross a
3 roadway with a speed limit in excess of forty-five miles per hour,
4 unless the crossing begins and ends on a roadway with a speed limit
5 of forty-five miles per hour or less and occurs at an intersection of
6 approximately ninety degrees, except that the operator of a medium-
7 speed electric vehicle must not cross an uncontrolled intersection of
8 streets and highways that are part of the state highway system
9 subject to Title 47 RCW unless that intersection has been authorized
10 by local authorities under subsection (3) of this section.

11 (5) Accidents must be recorded and tracked in compliance with
12 chapter 46.52 RCW. An accident report must indicate and be tracked
13 separately when any of the vehicles involved are a medium-speed
14 electric vehicle.

15 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.61.725 and 2011 c 171 s 83 are each amended to
16 read as follows:

17 (1) Absent prohibition by local authorities authorized under this
18 section and except as prohibited elsewhere in this section, a person
19 may operate a neighborhood electric vehicle upon a highway of this
20 state having a speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour or less, or
21 forty-five miles per hour or less as provided in subsection (4) of
22 this section, if:

23 (a) The person does not operate a neighborhood electric vehicle
24 upon state highways that are listed in chapter 47.17 RCW along
25 segments where the posted speed limit exceeds thirty miles per hour;

26 (b) The person does not operate a neighborhood electric vehicle
27 upon a highway of this state without first having obtained and having
28 in full force and effect a current and proper vehicle ((~~license~~)
29 registration and display vehicle license ((~~number~~)) plates in
30 compliance with chapter 46.16A RCW. The department must track
31 neighborhood electric vehicles in a separate registration category
32 for reporting purposes;

33 (c) The person does not operate a neighborhood electric vehicle
34 upon a highway of this state without first obtaining a valid driver's
35 license issued to Washington residents in compliance with chapter
36 46.20 RCW;

37 (d) The person does not operate a neighborhood electric vehicle
38 subject to registration under chapter 46.16A RCW on a highway of this

1 state unless the person is insured under a motor vehicle liability
2 policy in compliance with chapter 46.30 RCW; and

3 (e) The person operating a neighborhood electric vehicle does not
4 cross a roadway with a speed limit in excess of thirty-five miles per
5 hour, or forty-five miles per hour as provided in subsection (4) of
6 this section, unless the crossing begins and ends on a roadway with a
7 speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour or less, or forty-five
8 miles per hour or less as provided in subsection (4) of this section,
9 and occurs at an intersection of approximately ninety degrees, except
10 that the operator of a neighborhood electric vehicle must not cross
11 an uncontrolled intersection of streets and highways that are part of
12 the state highway system subject to Title 47 RCW unless that
13 intersection has been authorized by local authorities provided
14 elsewhere in this section.

15 (2) Any person who violates this section commits a traffic
16 infraction.

17 (3) This section does not prevent local authorities, with respect
18 to streets and highways under their jurisdiction and within the
19 reasonable exercise of their police power, from regulating the
20 operation of neighborhood electric vehicles on streets and highways
21 under their jurisdiction by resolution or ordinance of the governing
22 body, if the regulation is consistent with the provisions of this
23 title, except that:

24 (a) Local authorities may not authorize the operation of
25 neighborhood electric vehicles on streets and highways that are part
26 of the state highway system subject to the provisions of Title 47 RCW
27 along segments where the posted speed limit exceeds thirty miles per
28 hour;

29 (b) Local authorities may not prohibit the operation of
30 neighborhood electric vehicles upon highways of this state having a
31 speed limit of twenty-five miles per hour or less; and

32 (c) Local authorities are prohibited from establishing any
33 requirements for the registration (~~and licensing~~) of neighborhood
34 electric vehicles.

35 (4) In counties consisting of islands whose only connection to
36 the mainland are ferry routes, a person may operate a neighborhood
37 electric vehicle upon a highway of this state having a speed limit of
38 forty-five miles per hour or less. A person operating a neighborhood
39 electric vehicle as authorized under this subsection must not cross a
40 roadway with a speed limit in excess of forty-five miles per hour,

1 unless the crossing begins and ends on a roadway with a speed limit
2 of forty-five miles per hour or less and occurs at an intersection of
3 approximately ninety degrees, except that the operator of a
4 neighborhood electric vehicle must not cross an uncontrolled
5 intersection of streets and highways that are part of the state
6 highway system subject to Title 47 RCW unless that intersection has
7 been authorized by local authorities under subsection (3) of this
8 section.

9 (5) Accidents must be recorded and tracked in compliance with
10 chapter 46.52 RCW. An accident report must indicate and be tracked
11 separately when any of the vehicles involved are a neighborhood
12 electric vehicle.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act is necessary for the immediate
14 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
15 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
16 effect April 1, 2016.

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