

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1510

As Passed House:
March 13, 2019

Title: An act relating to governing the use of narrow track vehicles.

Brief Description: Governing the use of narrow track vehicles.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Shea, Riccelli, Walsh, Young and McCaslin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/7/19, 2/28/19 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/13/19, 94-2.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Establishes a new class of motor vehicle for "narrow track vehicles" ("NTVs") and a new subclass within this class for "short narrow track vehicles."
- Mandates that short NTVs be permitted to use angled parking when it is permitted of motorcycles and that short NTVs be permitted to park in parking stalls restricted to motorcycle-only parking, unless local authorities expressly prohibit this by ordinance.
- Permits NTVs to operate on roadway lanes in the same manner as motorcycles, except that they may only be operated alongside one another in a single lane when they are stopping or stopped.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Slatter, 2nd Vice Chair; Valdez, 2nd Vice Chair; Wylie, 1st Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Young, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Chambers, Chapman, Dent, Doglio, Dufault, Entenman, Eslick, Goehner, Gregerson, Irwin,

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.

Lovick, McCaslin, Mead, Orcutt, Pellicciotti, Ramos, Riccelli, Shea, Shewmake and Van Werven.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Kloba and Ortiz-Self.

Staff: Jennifer Harris (786-7143).

Background:

Vehicle Classification.

Narrow track vehicles (NTVs) are not a designated category of motor vehicle. As a result, laws that apply to motor vehicles also apply to NTVs.

Triggered Traffic Control Signals.

If the operator of a bicycle, moped, or street legal motorcycle approaches a traffic control signal that is controlled by a triggered traffic control signal using a vehicle detection device that is inoperative due to the size or composition of the bicycle, moped, or street legal motorcycle, the operator must bring the vehicle to a complete stop. If the traffic control signal fails to operate after one cycle of the traffic signal, the operator may, after exercising due care, proceed through the intersection or turn left.

Parking.

In the absence of local law permitting angled parking, vehicles stopped or parked on a roadway must park parallel to the curb. Local authorities may permit angled parking on any roadway, although WSDOT approval is required if the roadway is a federal-aid or state highway.

Roadway Lane Usage.

All motorcycles are entitled to the full use of a roadway lane, and no motor vehicle may be driven in a manner that deprives a motorcycle of the full use of a lane. Notwithstanding this prohibition, motorcycles are permitted to operate two abreast (but no more than two abreast) in a single lane.

The operator of a motorcycle is not permitted to overtake and pass a vehicle in the same lane as that vehicle, unless a pedestrian or bicyclist is being passed and a safe passing distance of at least three feet is being maintained. Neither is a motorcycle permitted to be operated between lanes of traffic or adjacent lines or rows of vehicles. These prohibitions do not apply to police officers in the performance of their official duties.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:

Vehicle Classification.

A new class of motor vehicle is established for NTVs, which are defined as fully enclosed motor vehicles with three or four wheels that do not exceed 40 inches in width. Within this new class of vehicles, a subclass is established for "short narrow track vehicles," which are NTVs that do not exceed 102 inches in length.

Triggered Traffic Control Signals.

The law in place for operators of bicycles, mopeds, and street legal motorcycles approaching traffic control signals controlled by a triggered traffic control signal is expanded to include NTVs. If the operator of an NTV approaches a traffic control signal that is controlled by a triggered traffic control signal using a vehicle detection device that is inoperative due to the size or composition of the NTV, the operator of the NTV must bring it to a complete stop. If the traffic control signal fails to operate after one cycle of the traffic signal, the operator may, after exercising due care, proceed through the intersection or turn left.

Parking.

When local authorities permit angled parking of motorcycles on a roadway, short NTVs must also be permitted to use angled parking, unless they are specifically prohibited from using angled parking by local ordinance.

Short NTVs must be permitted to park in parking stalls restricted to motorcycle-only parking, unless they are specifically prohibited from parking in these stalls by local ordinance.

Roadway Lane Usage.

Laws related to roadway lane usage that are applicable to motorcycles also apply to NTVs: all NTVs are entitled to the full use of a roadway lane, and no motor vehicle may be driven in a manner that deprives an NTV of the full use of a lane. However, NTVs are only permitted to operate two abreast in a single lane when they are in the process of stopping or have come to a complete stop.

The operator of an NTV is not permitted to overtake and pass a vehicle in the same lane as that vehicle, unless a pedestrian or bicyclist is being passed and a safe passing distance of at least three feet is being maintained. An NTV is not permitted to be operated between lanes of traffic or adjacent lines or rows of vehicles.

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) Narrow track vehicles are great. Riding in one is like riding in a cockpit, but it flies on the ground. They offer a creative solution to our congestion problem, and are

manufactured in Spokane, Washington. People want to remain single-occupancy drivers. Carpooling has not been well accepted; despite a great deal of money being invested in its promotion, very few drivers carpool.

It is possible to fit 4,500 NTVs per hour in a lane where only 2,000 standard-size vehicles would fit. The costs of production are very high right now, but will come down to \$15,000 to \$20,000 per vehicle once 100,000 have been produced. This legislation will help other vehicles, like motorcycles, because it will allow for the creation of infrastructure that suits vehicles of the same size.

(Opposed) This legislation includes many positive elements. However, the rules for NTVs riding side by side would add additional hazards to driving. Motorcyclists and drivers of cars have different cultures. Motorcycle students are advised not to ride side by side, and motorcyclists know how other motorcycles will respond.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Shea, prime sponsor; Representative Riccelli; Representative McCaslin; and Rick Woodbury, Commuter Cars Corporation.

(Opposed) Larry Walker, Washington Road Riders Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.