

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1436

As of April 2, 2019

Title: An act relating to snow bikes.

Brief Description: Concerning snow bikes.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Mosbrucker, Wylie, Orcutt, Pettigrew, Goodman, Irwin and Griffey).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/12/19, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 4/02/19.

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Allows the owner of a motorcycle to maintain concurrent licenses for the vehicle for use as a motorcycle or for use as a snow bike.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Motorcycles and Snowmobiles. Motorcycles are designed for either on-road or off-road use. Motorcycles designed for on-road use must meet federal motor vehicle safety standards and federal emissions requirements. The motorcycle must carry a label from the manufacturer that indicates the vehicle conforms to all applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards in effect on the date of manufacture shown on the label. Motorcycles designed for off-road use include a manufacturer's statement or certificate of origin as intended for off-road use only, or a similar message in the owner's manual or affixed to the motorcycle. Off-road motorcycles are regulated under state law as a type of off-road vehicle, a category that includes all-terrain vehicles, other four-wheel drive vehicles, dune buggies, off-road motorcycles, and other motorized vehicles not designed for highway use.

A snowmobile is a type of off-road vehicle capable of traveling over snow or ice, that uses an endless belt tread or cleats as a means of propulsion, and is steered by skis or sled-type runners. Snowmobiles are regulated under state law separately from other off-road vehicles.

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.

Whether the vehicle is designed for on-road or off-road use, it is subject to the registration laws of the state. Motorcycles, whether on or off-road, are subject to a rolling registration calendar, whereas the registration period for snowmobiles is October 1st through September 30th. On-road motorcycles are subject to a registration fee of \$30, which is deposited to the Motor Vehicle Account. Off-road motorcycles are subject to a registration fee of \$18, which is deposited to the Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program Account. Snowmobiles are subject to a registration fee of \$50, which is deposited to the Snowmobile Account.

Dual Use of Motorcycles. Under state law, operators of motorcycles designed for on-road use may use the vehicle on nonhighway roads, trails, or other natural terrain for recreational purposes. However, motorcycles designed for off-road use may use public highways only under certain conditions, including meeting various equipment requirements and operational requirements.

Motorcycles designed for off-road use may be registered in Washington both for off-road use as an off-road motorcycle and for off-road use as a snowmobile, if the vehicle has been specifically modified to allow for snowmobile use. The Department of Licensing (DOL) requires the registered owner to complete a declaration stating the vehicle is equipped with skis or sled-type runners used wholly or in part for steering when being used as a snowmobile.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Striking Amendment): Allows the owner of a motorcycle to maintain concurrent licenses for the vehicle for use as a motorcycle, or for use as a snow bike. When registered as a motorcycle, the motorcycle registration laws apply, including applicable fees. When registered as a snow bike, the snowmobile registration laws apply, including applicable fees.

DOL must establish a declaration to be submitted by the motorcycle owner when registering to use the converted motorcycle as a snow bike, which states the motorcycle complies with all applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards while in use as a motorcycle upon public highways.

Snow bike is defined within the snowmobiles chapter of the Revised Code of Washington, and snowmobile, within that chapter, is broadened to include both snowmobiles and snow bikes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on September 1, 2019.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Proposed Striking Amendment: PRO: The striking amendment is the result of a collaborative effort by the sponsor and stakeholders. The bill provides a mechanism for snow bike riders to help pay for the trails they are using. The bill addresses a fairly complex issue as this is a new type of registration process for a new type of vehicle.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Owen Rowe, State Parks, Governmental Affairs Director; Terry Kohl, Washington State Snowmobile Association.

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