
Transportation Committee

HB 1487

Brief Description: Improving motorcycle safety by authorizing the use of the right shoulder of limited access roadways.

Sponsors: Representatives Orcutt and Chapman.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes motorcycles to travel in the right shoulder of a limited-access roadway, subject to certain speed-related and usage restrictions.

Hearing Date: 2/15/23

Staff: Jennifer Harris (786-7143).

Background:

Motorcycles may use a full lane or operate two abreast in a single lane on roadways. Passing is not permitted in the same lane as a vehicle occupied by another vehicle, except where a motorcycle passes a bicyclist or pedestrian while maintaining a safe passing distance of at least three feet. A motorcycle may not be operated between lanes of traffic or between adjacent lines or rows of vehicles.

The driver of any vehicle overtaking other traffic proceeding in the same direction must pass to the left of it at a safe distance. The driver of any vehicle approaching a person traveling as a pedestrian or on a bicycle, riding an animal, or using a farm tractor or implement of husbandry without an enclosed shell, and who is traveling in the right lane of a roadway or on the right-hand shoulder or bicycle lane of a roadway must:

- move into a lane to the left of the person when on a two-lane roadway; or
- on a one-lane roadway, when there is sufficient room to the left of the person, reduce the

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vehicle's speed and pass at a safe distance, when practicable, of at least three feet.

Summary of Bill:

Motorcycles may travel in the right shoulder of a limited access roadway when traffic is stopped or when the average speed of the vehicles on the travel lanes of the limited access roadway is 25 miles per hour (mph) or less. However, a motorcycle may not use a right shoulder at a speed greater than 10 mph faster than the speed of traffic in the lane adjacent to the shoulder.

A motorcycle may not ride past an exit ramp when traveling on the shoulder of a limited access highway; it must either exit the shoulder and reenter the traffic lanes or proceed down the exit ramp. A motorcycle must reenter traffic lanes if the shoulder is occupied by a parked vehicle, emergency vehicle, tow truck, or other vehicle providing roadside assistance.

Motorcycles may not be operated more than one abreast on a right shoulder. The operator of a motorcycle may not overtake and pass in the same shoulder occupied by the vehicle being overtaken, except that a motorcycle operating on a right shoulder may pass a bicyclist (or pedestrian) while maintaining a safe passing distance of at least three feet.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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