

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5514

As of January 31, 2023

Title: An act relating to prohibiting drivers from making a right turn within proximity of certain facilities.

Brief Description: Prohibiting drivers from making a right turn within proximity of certain facilities.

Sponsors: Senators Lovick, Saldaña, Frame, Stanford, Liias, Billig, Nguyen, Pedersen, Valdez and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/31/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits drivers from making right turns on red signals at intersections within 1000 feet of certain facilities.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Brandon Popovac (786-7465)

Background: Right Turns on Red. Any vehicle operator facing a steady circular red signal or red arrow may, after stopping, proceed to make a right turn from a one-way or two-way street into a two-way street or into a one-way street carrying traffic in the direction of the right turn, or a left turn from a one-way or two-way street into a one-way street carrying traffic in the direction of the left turn, unless a sign posted by a competent authority prohibits such a turn. Vehicle operators planning to make such turns must remain stopped to allow other vehicles lawfully within or approaching the intersection to complete their movements, and for pedestrians who or personal delivery devices that are lawfully within the intersection control area.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Signage Control. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) must install, operate, maintain, and control at its own expense all traffic control signals, signs, and devices that regulate both pedestrian and motor vehicular traffic on, entering upon, or leaving state highways in cities and towns having a population of 27,500 or less according to the latest determination of population by the Office of Financial Management (OFM). Cities and towns having a population over 27,500 according to the latest determination of population by OFM must install, maintain, operate, and control such signals, signs, and devices at their own expense, subject to approval of WSDOT for the installation and type only.

Traffic Safety Commission. The Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) is responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating a statewide traffic safety program that is funded by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, and the state of Washington. WTSC, among other activities, promotes information and education campaigns related to traffic safety and promotes uniform enforcement of traffic safety laws. Currently, WTSC is conducting a statewide public awareness campaign on the slow down and move over law.

Summary of Bill: Beginning July 1, 2024, any vehicle operator facing a steady red signal or arrow at a controlled intersection may not proceed to make a right turn from a one-way or two-way street into a two-way street or into a one-way street with traffic traveling in the same direction of the right turn at any such intersection within 1000 feet of the following:

- elementary or secondary school;
- child care center;
- public park or playground;
- recreation center or facility;
- library;
- public transit center;
- hospital;
- senior center; and
- any other facility with high levels of pedestrian traffic determined by the appropriate local jurisdiction or WSDOT.

The appropriate local jurisdiction or WSDOT must erect signage at each affected controlled intersection.

Beginning July 1, 2024, for a two-year period, WTSC must develop a statewide public awareness campaign, to include public service announcements and written and digital materials, about the prohibition of right turns on a red signal at certain intersections as outlined in the act. The campaign must be developed using any available resources, including federal or other grant funds.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2024.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Children should feel safe near their schools. According to crash data, Washington experienced a three-decade high in traffic deaths last year. Drivers often look left without looking right when turning at intersections. The bill is a common sense approach to increase safety for those most vulnerable. Car crashes are life changing, and a free right on red has a cost. Traffic safety laws must keep up with transportation investments. The inability to safely cross streets is a violation of constitutional rights. Guide and service dogs have been hit by drivers turning right on red. The bill represents one of the recommendations of the Cooper Jones active transportation safety council. Limiting right turns where there is a high probability of injury should be considered. The bill appropriately gives locals and the state flexibility to place signs where needed. Local government organizations support the bill but request a consideration of funding for local governments to install signs and of delaying the implementation date to January 1, 2026.

OTHER: The bill is not contemplated in the budget. Intersections are risky places and changing laws can change behavior. Washington D.C. instituted a no right on red policy resulting in significant changes.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator John Lovick, Prime Sponsor; Judy Jones; Chris Jones; Vicky Clarke, Washington Bikes; David Jones, Cooper Jones Active Transportation Safety Council; Sara Kiesler; Bryce Yadon, Transportation Choices Coalition; Jaime Torres; Brandy DeLange, Association of Washington Cities; Stefanie Randolph.

OTHER: Mark McKechnie, Washington Traffic Safety Commission.

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