
Transportation Committee

HB 2355

Brief Description: Concerning the use of alternative traction devices on tires under certain conditions.

Sponsors: Representatives Armstrong, Clibborn, Johnson and Rivers.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds "alternative traction devices" to allowable traction devices in addition to chains and studded tires to be used on a vehicle because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid to be approved by the Washington State Patrol.

Hearing Date: 1/17/12

Staff: Jerry Long (786-7306).

Background:

A tire on a vehicle on a highway may not have on its outside surface any block, flange, cleat, or spike or any other protuberance of any material other than rubber which projects beyond the tread of the tire. Exemptions are when for safety, because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid, the use of tire chains or studded tires is permitted between November 1 and April 1. The Department of Transportation may, from time to time, allow the use of studded tires outside this time period due to weather conditions.

Current statutes authorizes the Washington State Patrol (WSP) to adopt rules pertaining to chains and tire studs. Testing of chains or studded tires by the WSP is certified under one of the following:

- conformance to the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; if none, then
- conformance to current standards and specifications of the Society of Automotive Engineers.

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.

In order for the alternative traction device to be approved the device must be tested in accordance with a recognized standard. The alternative device must meet or exceed the standard.

The following information must be provided to the WSP:

- certification of the test results by the tester;
- a copy of the testing standards used; and
- documentation of the testing results.

Summary of Bill:

The bill adds "alternative traction devices" to the list of permissible traction devices that conform to rules adopted by the WSP to be used upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid in addition to chains and studded tires.

The bill changes the word "protuberance" to "device" when listing the items that are prohibited from projecting beyond the tread of a tire.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 13, 2012.

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