

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6351

As Reported By House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to electric-assisted bicycles.

Brief Description: Regulating electric-assisted bicycles.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Thibaudeau, Prentice, Owen and Wood).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/14/96, 2/26/96 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 22 members: Representatives K. Schmidt, Chairman; Mitchell, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; R. Fisher, Ranking Minority Member; Hatfield, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Blanton; Buck; Cairnes; Chopp; Elliot; Hankins; Horn; Johnson; McMahan; Ogden; Patterson; Robertson; Romero; D. Schmidt; Scott and Tokuda.

Staff: Jeff Doyle (786-7322).

Background: Current law regulates the use of mopeds, which are two-wheeled vehicles powered primarily by gas engines. mopeds may not be used on trails or in bike lanes. A moped rider must have a valid driver's license, and must comply with helmet laws applicable to motorcycles.

Bicycles are exclusively human-powered. Bicycles may be driven on bicycle paths, recreational trails (unless restricted or prohibited by local ordinance), and on public roads and highways (except for urban-area interstate).

Electric bicycles are a relatively new invention. They have electric motors, but are primarily human-powered. Electric bicycles do not fit the definitions for mopeds or bicycles.

Summary of Bill: An electric bicycle is defined as a bicycle fully operative with pedals, but also having an electric motor capable of propelling the bike up to 20 miles per hour.

Electric bicycles are exempt from vehicle registration and licensing requirements. No driver's license is required to operate an electric bike, although riders must be at least 16 years of age.

Provisions relating to bicycle helmets apply to riders of electric bikes. Electric bikes have the same access to trails, paths, and public roads that regular bikes have.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The bill would allow use of emerging technology that promotes a clean environment.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Pat Thibaudeau, prime sponsor.