

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6222

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Transportation, January 28, 1998

**Title:** An act relating to traffic safety.

**Brief Description:** Enhancing traffic safety by the Cooper Jones Act.

**Sponsors:** Senators Brown, West and Patterson.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 1/28/98 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6222 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prince, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Goings, Haugen, Heavey, Horn, Jacobsen, Morton, Newhouse, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Rasmussen and Sellar.

**Staff:** Jennifer Hanlon (786-7316)

**Background:** The Legislature created the Washington Traffic Safety Commission to plan and supervise programs for the prevention of accidents on streets and highways. The commission also coordinates the development of traffic safety programs and works to promote and improve driver education.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Licensing, and driver training schools provide information on traffic safety in traffic education courses and instructional materials.

The Department of Licensing may require a driver to submit to an examination if the department determines that the driver is incompetent or otherwise not qualified to be licensed. Following the examination, the department may suspend or revoke the license of the driver or issue the driver a license subject to restrictions.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The Washington State Traffic Safety Commission must establish a program for administering grants for educational programs on pedestrian safety and the safe operation of bicycles. The Safety Commission should cooperate with the Criminal Justice Training Commission, the Bicycle Federation of America, the League of American Bicyclists, and other organizations in developing the program. Grants are made to programs that include instruction on the safe handling of bicycles, the correct use of bicycle helmets, and traffic laws and regulations.

The bicycle and pedestrian safety education account is created in the state treasury. On each retail sale of a bicycle, an amount equal to 1 percent of the selling price is levied and must be collected. Revenue generated by the 1 percent fee must be divided between the bicycle and pedestrian safety education account and the transportation fund. Expenditures from the account may only be used for programs that teach safe and effective bicycling.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Licensing, and driver training schools must provide information on the use of the left-hand lane by motor vehicles. Additionally, they must provide educational information on bicyclists' and pedestrians' rights and responsibilities.

When a driver is involved in an accident resulting in serious injury to or the death of a person, the Department of Licensing must require the driver to submit to an examination. The examination must be completed within 90 days after the department receives the accident report.

Bicycles used at night must be equipped with a rear reflector that is visible from 600 feet to the rear when directly in front of the lower beams of the headlamps of a vehicle. A flashing taillight visible from 500 feet to the rear may be used in addition to the reflector. The use of a flashing light on a bicycle is not prohibited.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** Equipment requirements for bicycles used at night are changed. Flashing lights on a bicycle are not prohibited.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 19, 1998.

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

**Testimony For:** It is beneficial to duplicate educational programs across the state. This legislation provides a mechanism for educating more people on traffic safety. This bill will result in better cyclists and better drivers. Retesting drivers is not enough, but it is a step in the right direction.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Senator Brown, prime sponsor; Representative Sommers; David and Martha Jones, parents of Cooper Jones.