

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5358

As Passed Senate, February 19, 1999

Title: An act relating to eliminating motorcycle handlebar height restrictions.

Brief Description: Eliminating motorcycle handlebar height restrictions.

Sponsors: Senators Benton, Snyder, Shin, Patterson, Costa, Rasmussen, Finkbeiner, Swecker, T. Sheldon, Sellar, Haugen, Hochstatter, Zarelli, Jacobsen, Heavey, Gardner, Prentice, Rossi, Horn and Stevens.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/26/99, 2/2/99 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/19/99, 44-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Goings, Vice Chair; Benton, Costa, Eide, Horn, Jacobsen, Johnson, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Sellar, Sheahan, T. Sheldon, Swecker and Swecker.

Staff: Paul Johnson (786-7839)

Background: The maximum height for motorcycle handlebars or grips was established in 1967 at no more than 15 inches higher than the seat or saddle. One of two standards is usually used by the states in establishing the maximum height of the handlebars: (1) a maximum number of inches high measured from the seat, or (2) established at a height that is no higher than the shoulders of the operator.

Summary of Bill: The height restriction for motorcycle handlebars is eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: There is no track record of accidents being attributed to the height of handlebars. It would allow the operator to adjust the handlebars to a height that is comfortable, based on the size of the individual.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Benton, prime sponsor (pro); Pat Schmitt, Argie Martin, Cowlitz County ABATE (pro); Larry Walker, ABATE of Washington (pro).

House Amendment(s): The height restriction for motorcycle handlebars is increased from 15 inches to 30 inches rather than repealed.