

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6630

---

As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Transportation, February 7, 2000

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

**Brief Description:** Funding traffic safety improvements.

**Sponsors:** Senators Haugen, Oke, Gardner, Horn, Goings, Heavey, Morton, Costa and Rasmussen.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 2/1/2000, 2/7/2000 [DPS, DNP].

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6630 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Goings, Vice Chair; Costa, Eide, Finkbeiner, Jacobsen, Morton, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Sellar, Sheahan, T. Sheldon, Shin and Swecker.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Heavey.

**Staff:** Chris Reykdal (786-7321)

**Background:** The Washington Traffic Safety Commission has responded to the need for increased traffic safety education and enforcement by establishing a number of programs aimed at increasing awareness and decreasing fatalities. As a result of these programs, the level of traffic safety in Washington today is higher than it has ever been. Traffic fatalities are decreasing while overall miles traveled continues to rise, seatbelt use is at its highest level, and a greater awareness of the dangers of drinking and driving has translated into significant decreases in alcohol related fatalities. The following three accounts were created to exclusively address traffic safety:

- The bicycle and pedestrian safety account was established in 1998 to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety. This account is funded from a one-time appropriation, to be repaid from private contributions.
- The impaired driving safety account was established in 1998 to provide funding for projects designed to reduce impaired driving and to offset local governments' costs of enforcing laws related to impaired driving and boating. This account is funded from 63 percent of the \$150 driver license reinstatement fee.

- The school zone safety account was established in 1996 to serve as a repository for fines assessed against persons speeding in school/playground speed zones. This account is funded from 50 percent of fines assessed for speeding violations in school zones.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The bicycle and pedestrian safety account, impaired driving safety account, and school zone safety account are combined into a single traffic safety improvement account (TSIA) to provide funding through the Washington Traffic Safety Commission for programs that improve traffic safety. Revenues in the new traffic safety improvement account includes:

- 63 percent of the \$150 driver license reinstatement fee;
- 50 percent of fine revenues for speeding in school/playground zones and construction zones;
- \$10 additional penalty for traffic violations; and
- \$50 additional penalty for traffic crimes.

Finally, there is a provision that states that the courts cannot waive or reduce either of the additional penalties, unless the courts find the offender to be indigent.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The substitute bill added language that would allow the courts to waive the additional \$10 and \$50 fines when the court finds the offender to be indigent.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 27, 2000.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2000.

**Testimony For:** Those who are most unsafe in their driving will be the ones who primarily fund the new account. Also, the smaller jurisdictions will have a greater chance at significant traffic safety projects if we move away from distribution by population.

**Testimony Against:** Cities and counties that currently receive impaired driver safety money based on population will no longer receive those automatic distributions.

**Testified:** Steve Lind, Deputy Director, WA Traffic Safety Commission (pro); Michael Shaw, Assn. of WA Cities (con).