

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1543

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to limiting the issuance of motorcycle instruction permits.

Brief Description: Limiting the issuance of motorcycle instruction permits.

Sponsors: Representatives Rolfes, Frockt, Anderson and Kirby.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/9/11, 2/15/11 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Limits the Department of Licensing to issuing a third motorcycle instruction permit only upon presentation of documented evidence that the permittee is enrolled in an authorized motorcycle skills education program.
- Limits the Department of Licensing to issuing no more than three motorcycle instruction permits to an applicant within a five-year period.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Billig, Vice Chair; Liias, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Asay, Eddy, Finn, Fitzgibbon, Jinkins, Johnson, Klippert, Kristiansen, Ladenburg, McCune, Moeller, Moscoso, Overstreet, Reykdal, Rivers, Rolfes, Ryu, Shea, Takko, Upthegrove and Zeiger.

Staff: Wendy Malkin (786-7114).

Background:

A person holding a valid driver's license may apply for a motorcycle instruction permit. The Department of Licensing (DOL) may issue an instruction permit after the applicant has successfully passed all parts of the motorcycle examination other than the driving test. A

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person holding an instruction permit may drive a motorcycle upon the public highways but may not carry passengers on his or her motorcycle and may not operate his or her motorcycle during the hours of darkness. An instruction permit is valid for 90 days from the date of issue.

The DOL may issue a third instruction permit if it finds after an investigation that the permittee is diligently seeking to improve his or her driving proficiency.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The DOL may issue a third motorcycle instruction permit only upon presentation of documented evidence that the permittee is enrolled in an authorized motorcycle skills education program with a class start date prior to the expiration of the third instruction permit. The DOL may not issue more than three motorcycle instruction permits to an applicant within a five-year period.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The original bill limits the DOL to issuing a third and final motorcycle instruction permit only upon presentation of documented evidence that the permittee is enrolled in an authorized motorcycle skills education program. The substitute bill removes the language that restricts the third permit to the final permit, and limits the DOL to issuing no more than three motorcycle instruction permits to an applicant within a five-year period.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The problem with the current law is that the DOL has no means of determining whether someone is diligently trying to improve other than giving a test and seeing whether the person passes. This bill gives the DOL a way to determine whether a person is really trying to improve. A lot of people have more than three permits issued; some people skirt the skills test by continually getting permits. In a car, someone with a permit must ride with a licensed driver. With a motorcycle, the person is on his or her own so there is nobody there to correct or help the person.

(Opposed) It might be true that a lot of people are getting more than three permits. However, 90 days to learn to ride a motorcycle for recreational riders is too short. The Legislature should solve the core of the problem by extending the 90 days time to six months. It might

take someone longer than 90 days for several reasons. In Washington, there could be 90 days of rain, and new riders might prefer to avoid riding in the rain. A problem with motorcycle classes is that there are not classes for all types of vehicles.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Rolfes, prime sponsor; and Dave Wendall and Larry Walker, Washington Road Rider's Association.

(Opposed) Darcy Mugartegiu, A Brotherhood Against Totalitarian Enactments of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.