

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2975

As of February 26, 2018

Title: An act relating to snow bikes.

Brief Description: Concerning snow bikes.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives McCabe, Wylie, Orcutt, Irwin, Chapman, Goodman and Griffey).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/13/18, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/22/18.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows registration of a motorcycle designed for on-road use both for use on public roadways and for use as a snow bike, if the owner submits a declaration providing that vehicle must conform with all federal and state motor vehicle safety standards while in use as a motorcycle upon public roads, streets, or highways.
- Requires that a motorcycle that was previously converted to a snow bike meet applicable federal and state safety standards before use again on public roads as a motorcycle.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: Snow Bikes. A snow bike is a motorcycle to which a conversion kit has been applied that allows the vehicle to be used on snow or ice as a snowmobile.

Motorcycles and snowmobiles are generally regulated as separate vehicles in Washington.

Motorcycles may be dually registered as off-road and on-road, subject to the installation and certification of certain safety equipment meeting federal standards, and a signed liability waiver. On-road operation of a motorcycle requires a valid driver's license with proper endorsement.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

An off-road motorcycle may be registered in Washington for off-road use as a motorcycle and off-road use as a snowmobile, if it has been modified to allow for snowmobile use. However, a motorcycle designed for off-road use that meets the requirements for on-road use may not also be simultaneously registered as a snowmobile and, a motorcycle designed for off-road use that meets the requirements for a snowmobile may not also be registered for on-road use.

Summary of Bill: The DOL must allow a person registering a motorcycle designed for on-road purposes to register the vehicle both for on-road use and for use as a snow bike, provided certain requirements are met. A snow bike is defined as a motorcycle designed for either on-road or off-road use that has been modified with a conversion kit to include an endless belt or cleats or similar means for the purposes of propulsion and a ski or sled-type runner for the purposes of steering.

To register a motorcycle designed for on-road purposes both for on-road use and for use as a snow bike, the owner must meet all registration requirements for both and pay all applicable fees. The owner must submit a declaration established by the DOL that includes a statement signed by the owner that, for any motorcycle that had been previously converted to a snow bike, the vehicle must conform with all federal and state motor vehicle safety standards while in use as a motorcycle upon public roads, streets, or highways.

A person who has a valid driver's license with a motorcycle endorsement may operate upon the public roads of the state a motorcycle designed for on-road purposes and which had been previously converted to a snow bike, if the person files a declaration with the DOL certifying the vehicle is in conformance with all federal and state motor vehicle safety standards while in use as a motorcycle upon public roads, streets, or highways. The vehicle itself, if it was previously converted to a snow bike, must meet applicable federal and state motor vehicle safety standards before it is operated on public roads, streets, or highways.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 21, 2018.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on April 1, 2019.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill addresses a glitch in our vehicle registration system that does not allow an off-road motorcycle that has been converted to a snowbike and registered as a snowmobile to also be converted back and register as an onroad motorcycle. This will generate additional monies for snowmobile recreational users which means more safety projects, sanitation, trail grooming, and maintenance activities will be supported. This bill will likely also boost sales of these snowbike conversion kits, which means more sales tax revenue for the state.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Gina McCabe, Prime Sponsor; Glenn Markovits, Sno-Jammers Snowmobile Club and Washington State Snowmobile Association; Terry Kohl, Washington State Snowmobile Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.