

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5402

As of February 7, 2017

Title: An act relating to the Cooper Jones bicyclist safety advisory council.

Brief Description: Creating the Cooper Jones bicyclist safety advisory council.

Sponsors: Senators Liias, Walsh, Billig, Hobbs, King and Sheldon.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/07/17.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Cooper Jones Bicycle Safety Advisory Council for the purpose of reducing and eventually eliminating bicycle-related injuries and fatalities in the state.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kellee Keegan (786-7429)

Background: In 1998, the Legislature passed the Cooper Jones Act establishing a program for improving bicycle and pedestrian safety within the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC). The Cooper Jones Act established an advisory group of stakeholders and independent representatives for the purpose of developing programs and creating public-private partnerships for the promotion of bicycle and pedestrian safety. The advisory group also provided input on a report due in December of that year which made recommendations regarding pedestrians' and bicyclists' rights and responsibilities. The Cooper Jones Act also directed that the instructional publication information for new drivers provided by the Department of Licensing (DOL), and the statutory purpose of driving schools, include language regarding bicycles.

WTSC is the designated highway safety office for the state of Washington.

Summary of Bill: WTSC must convene a Bicycle Safety Advisory Council (Council). The Council may include, but is not limited to, the following members:

- a representative from WTSC;

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- an emergency medical technician from the county in which the most bicycle deaths have occurred;
- a representative from the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs;
- multiple members of law enforcement who have investigated bicycle fatalities;
- a traffic engineer;
- a representative from the Department of Transportation;
- a representative of cities, and up to two stakeholders, chosen by the Council, who represent municipalities where a bicycle death occurred in the previous three years;
- a representative from a bicyclist stakeholder group;
- an attorney that has worked in areas of the law related to bicycles;
- a transportation planner with a focus in multimodal planning;
- a public health official, researcher, or epidemiologist; and
- a member of an academic transportation research organization.

WTSC may invite other representatives as deemed appropriate.

The Council must meet at least quarterly and publish an annual report each year detailing any findings and recommendations. The report must be submitted to the Governor, the transportation committees of the Legislature, and all municipal governments and state agencies that participate in the Council that calendar year. Any budgetary or fiscal recommendations must be submitted to the Office of Financial Management and the Legislature by August 1st on a biennial basis.

The Council may only review, to the extent necessary, the following: law enforcement incident documentation; 911 call-taker reports and other supplemental reports; and any other information determined relevant to review. Neither WTSC or the Council may disclose confidential information.

The Council may receive gifts, grants, or endowments from public or private sources for the use or benefit of the Council.

A report to the transportation committees of the Legislature on the strategies that have been deployed to improve bicyclist safety by the Council, as well as any improvements the Legislature can make to the Council, is due on December 1, 2020. The Council would conclude on June 30, 2021.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: In 1998, the Legislature passed the Cooper Jones Act. Legislation at the time brought together different stakeholders to work together to work on challenges facing pedestrian and bicyclist issues in this state. About 400 residents of this state are involved in accidents with bicycles. This advisory council would have experts look at data, trends, and make recommendations. It is important that the streets and the

broader transportation system is as safe as possible. We need a multimodal transportation system that is safe for all users. Bicyclist fatalities are increasing and when cars collide with bikes, nine out of ten times it results in an injury. Cooper Jones was a 13 year old boy who lost his life while bicycling. This would allow for the continuation of the work that began as a result of the Cooper Jones Act.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Marko Liias, Prime Sponsor; Alex Alston, Washington Bikes; Erin Dziedzic, WA Bikes.

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