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HOUSE BILL 1157

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State of Washington                      65th Legislature                      2017 Regular Session

By Representatives MacEwen, Stanford, and Haler

Read first time 01/12/17. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1            AN ACT Relating to modifying the operation of motorcycles on  
2 roadways laned for traffic; amending RCW 46.61.608; creating new  
3 sections; and prescribing penalties.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**    The legislature finds that Washington  
6 state has a Target Zero goal of no deaths on its highways. According  
7 to the traffic safety commission's 2016 Target Zero plan, "Washington  
8 has not seen any notable reduction in motorcycle fatalities over the  
9 last decade." Researchers at the safe transportation research and  
10 education center at the University of California Berkeley, after  
11 evaluating thousands of motorcycle collisions in California,  
12 concluded that "lane-splitting motorcyclists were much less often  
13 injured during their collisions. They were considerably less likely  
14 to suffer head injury, torso injury, extremity injury, and fatal  
15 injury than riders who were not lane-splitting." The legislature  
16 intends with this act to provide new options to save lives by giving  
17 operators of motorcycles a way to legally avoid being rear-ended by  
18 other vehicles.

19            **Sec. 2.**    RCW 46.61.608 and 2013 c 139 s 1 are each amended to  
20 read as follows:

1 (1) All motorcycles are entitled to full use of a lane and no  
2 motor vehicle shall be driven in such a manner as to deprive any  
3 motorcycle of the full use of a lane. This subsection shall not apply  
4 to motorcycles operated two abreast in a single lane.

5 (2) The operator of a motorcycle (~~shall not~~) may overtake and  
6 pass in the same lane occupied by the vehicle being overtaken.  
7 (~~However, this subsection shall not apply when the operator of a~~  
8 ~~motorcycle overtakes and passes a pedestrian or bicyclist while~~  
9 ~~maintaining a safe passing distance of at least three feet.~~)

10 (3) No person shall operate a motorcycle between lanes of traffic  
11 or between adjacent lines or rows of vehicles unless the operator of  
12 a motorcycle is traveling at a rate of speed no more than ten miles  
13 per hour over the speed of traffic flow and not more than thirty-five  
14 miles per hour. Any operator of a motor vehicle that intentionally  
15 impedes or attempts to prevent any operator of a motorcycle from  
16 operating his or her motorcycle as permitted under this subsection is  
17 guilty of a traffic infraction.

18 (4) Motorcycles shall not be operated more than two abreast in a  
19 single lane.

20 (5) Subsection(~~s (2) and~~) (3) of this section shall not apply  
21 to police officers in the performance of their official duties.

22 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. This act may be known and cited as the  
23 lane sharing for safety act.

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