

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5710

As of February 25, 2019

Title: An act relating to the active transportation safety advisory council.

Brief Description: Establishing the active transportation safety advisory council.

Sponsors: Senators Liias, Saldaña, Cleveland, Takko, Billig, King, Nguyen and Dhingra; by request of Washington Traffic Safety Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/18/19.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Combines the Pedestrian Safety Advisory Council and the Cooper Jones Bicyclist Safety Advisory Council into the Cooper Jones Active Transportation Safety Council (Council).
- Directs the Council to review and analyze data on programs related to fatalities and serious injuries involving pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorists and issue an annual report on the Council's findings and recommendations to the Governor and the transportation committees of the Legislature.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: A 2015 law directed the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) to convene a Pedestrian Safety Advisory Council (Pedestrian Council) to review and analyze data related to pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries to identify points at which the transportation system could be improved and to identify patterns in pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries. The Pedestrian Council is required to meet at least quarterly and to provide a report and make recommendations on measures that could improve pedestrian safety by December 31st of each year. By December 1, 2020, the Pedestrian Council is required to report to the Legislature on the strategies deployed to improve pedestrian safety and to make recommendations on whether they should be continued and how it could be improved. The Pedestrian Council expires June 30, 2019.

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.

In 2017 the legislature created the Cooper Jones Bicyclist Safety Advisory Council, convened by WTSC, to review and analyze data related to bicycle fatalities and serious injuries, and to identify opportunities for safety improvements. The final report to the transportation committees of the Legislature on the strategies deployed to improve bicyclist safety, as well as any improvements the Legislature can make to the Council, was due by December 1, 2018. The Cooper Jones Bicyclist Safety Advisory Council expires on June 30, 2019.

WTSC reported both the Pedestrian Council and the Cooper Jones Bicycle Safety Advisory Council recommended the councils be consolidated and authorized to continue their original work plan, expanding their purpose of monitoring implementation of past recommendations, and include the examination of the safety of other nonmotorized active transportation participants.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): The WTSC is to convene the Council comprised of stakeholders who have a unique interest or expertise in the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorists.

The Council's purpose is to:

- review and analyze data and programs related to fatalities and serious injuries involving pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorists;
- identify points at which the transportation system can be improved; and
- identify patterns in pedestrian, bicyclist, and other nonmotorist fatalities and serious injuries.

Additionally, the Council may:

- monitor progress on implementation of existing recommendations; and
- seek opportunities to expand consideration and implementation of the principles of systematic safety.

The membership of the Council includes:

- a representative from the WTSC;
- a coroner from the county in which pedestrian, bicyclist, or nonmotorist deaths have occurred;
- a representative from the Department of Transportation;
- a representative from the Association of Cities;
- a representative from the Washington State Association of Counties;
- a traffic engineer;
- a representative from a pedestrian advocacy group; and
- representatives from law enforcement who have investigated pedestrian, bicyclist, or nonmotorist fatalities; and
- a representative from a bicyclist or other nonmotorist advocacy group.

If funds are appropriated to the Council, it may provide grants targeted at improving pedestrian, bicyclist, or nonmotorist safety in accordance with their recommendations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on June 30, 2019.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Proposed Substitute: PRO: Over the last four years the Legislature created two Councils with the direction to examine fatality and serious injury data for pedestrians and bicyclists and to make recommendations on how to improve the safety of the transportation for these users.

Every three days in Washington a pedestrian is killed. Twenty percent of all traffic deaths and serious injuries are related to a person who is walking or biking. A combined Council focused on how to make the system safer for our most vulnerable users of the road makes sense.

In 2017, 109 people died who were walking. The majority were crossing a road, many struck by a hit and run driver. Under a combined purpose, the Council will search for the best infrastructure, policy, education and enforcement strategies. There are many ideas left to explore and the combination of the two Councils will lead to more collaboration and administrative efficiencies.

We believe the Councils worked as intended and their reauthorization and reorganization will help us to continue to work towards our goal of Target Zero. Implementing the strategies of the Council will help get more people to be active, which will improve the health of our communities.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Marko Liias, Prime Sponsor; Alex Alston, Washington Bikes; Vic Colman, Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition; Pam Pannkuk, Deputy Director, Washington Traffic Safety Commission.

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