

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2932

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 2, 1998

Title: An act relating to requiring stops at intersections with nonfunctioning signal lights.

Brief Description: Requiring stops at intersections with nonfunctioning signal lights.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation Policy & Budget (originally sponsored by Representatives Zellinsky, O'Brien, Talcott and Wensman).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/26/98, 3/2/98 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Prince, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Haugen, Goings, Heavey, Horn, Jacobsen, Morton, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Rasmussen and Sellar.

Staff: Mary McLaughlin (786-7309)

Background: The basic right-of-way rule for a vehicle approaching an intersection is that when two vehicles from different roads approach an unmarked intersection at the same time, the vehicle on the left yields to the vehicle on the right. The right-of-way rule for a vehicle turning left is that the vehicle intending to turn left must yield to the vehicle approaching from the opposite direction. There appears to be some confusion as to who has the right of way when proceeding through an intersection with a traffic control signal that is not functioning.

Summary of Amended Bill: Except when directed to proceed by a flagger, police officer or firefighter, a driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection whose traffic signal is not functioning, must stop and yield the right of way in compliance with the basic right-of-way rule for (1) a vehicle approaching an intersection, and (2) a vehicle turning left at an intersection. The red/yellow/green traffic signal is specified to preclude having to stop at an intersection with a control beacon or other traffic control device.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The intent of this legislation remains the same; the format is different. The House bill sets forth the provisions in a new statute. The striking amendment incorporates the provisions in two existing statutes: approaching an unmarked intersection and preparing to turn left.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This is a safety issue. It will eliminate the confusion of who has the right of way at an intersection by making each vehicle stop and proceed according to the rules of the road.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Marsh Pugh, WSP (pro).