
SENATE BILL 5387

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Senators Sheldon, Delvin, Jacobsen, Swecker, Pridemore, Jarrett, Kilmer, Regala, Kline, Hatfield, Shin, McAuliffe, Becker, and Holmquist

Read first time 01/21/09. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to vehicle-activated traffic control signals;
2 adding a new section to chapter 47.36 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds and declares that it
5 is the policy of the state of Washington to provide for the safe and
6 efficient use of public roads and highways by all types of vehicles
7 that are authorized to use these roads and highways. In furtherance of
8 this policy, the legislature finds that many existing vehicle-activated
9 traffic control signals are operated or installed in a manner that does
10 not allow for the routine and reliable detection of motorcycles and
11 bicycles necessary for signal change. It is the policy of the
12 legislature that this problem be avoided in all new and substantially
13 upgraded vehicle-activated traffic control signals and that existing
14 vehicle-activated traffic control signals be operated to detect
15 motorcycles and bicycles where currently capable consistent with safe
16 traffic control.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 47.36 RCW
18 to read as follows:

1 (1) For the purposes of this section:

2 (a) "Arterial" means a public road or highway that is designated or
3 qualifies as a principal or minor arterial under a state or local law,
4 ordinance, regulation, or plan.

5 (b) "Bicycle" means a human-powered vehicle with metallic wheels at
6 least sixteen inches in diameter or with metallic braking strips and
7 metallic components, not necessarily including the frame or fork, which
8 may be lawfully ridden on a public road or highway.

9 (c) "Bicycle route" means a route (i) that is designated as a route
10 for bicycle use in a state or local law, ordinance, rule, or plan, or
11 (ii) that provides bicycle access to urban areas that are not
12 reasonably and conveniently accessible through other bicycle routes.
13 The level of existing or projected use by bicyclists is a factor to
14 consider in determining whether a bicycle route provides access that is
15 not reasonably and conveniently available from other bicycle routes.
16 An intersection that provides necessary linkages in a bicycle route or
17 between routes is considered a part of the bicycle route or routes.

18 (d) "Design complete" means that all major design work for a new
19 vehicle-activated traffic control signal has been completed and that
20 the funding necessary for complete construction of the vehicle-
21 activated traffic control signal has been firmly secured.

22 (e) "Existing vehicle-activated traffic control signal" means a
23 vehicle-activated traffic control signal that is in use or design
24 complete on or before the effective date of this section.

25 (f) "Motorcycle" means a motor vehicle (i) designed to travel on
26 not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, (ii) ridden by
27 a driver astride the motor unit or power train, (iii) designed to be
28 steered with a handle bar, and (iv) capable in its present condition of
29 being lawfully operated on a public road or highway.

30 (g) "Restricted right turn lane" means a right turn only lane where
31 a right turn is not allowed after stopping but only upon a green
32 signal.

33 (h) "Routinely and reliably detect motorcycles and bicycles" means
34 that the detection equipment at a vehicle-activated traffic control
35 signal is capable of detecting and will reliably detect a motorcycle or
36 bicycle (i) when the motorcycle or bicycle is present immediately
37 before a stop bar or crosswalk in the center of a lane at an

1 intersection or road entrance to such an intersection, or (ii) when the
2 motorcycle or bicycle is present at marked detection areas.

3 (i) "Vehicle-activated traffic control signal" means a traffic
4 control signal on a public road or highway that detects the presence of
5 a vehicle as a means to change a signal phase.

6 (2) During routine maintenance or monitoring activities, but no
7 later than four years after the effective date of this section:

8 (a) All existing vehicle-activated traffic control signals that do
9 not currently routinely and reliably detect motorcycles and bicycles
10 must be adjusted to do so to the extent that the existing equipment is
11 capable consistent with safe traffic control; and

12 (b) Where motorcycle and bicycle detection is limited to certain
13 areas other than immediately before the stop bar or crosswalk in the
14 center of a lane at a vehicle-activated traffic control signal, those
15 detection areas must be clearly marked on the pavement at left turn
16 lanes, through lanes, and limited right turn lanes. These detection
17 areas must also be marked to allow a bicyclist to leave a bicycle lane
18 to enter a detection area, if necessary, to cross an intersection.
19 Pavement markings must be consistent with the standards described in
20 the state of Washington's "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
21 for Streets and Highways" obtainable from the department of
22 transportation.

23 (3)(a) If at least a substantial portion of detection equipment at
24 an existing vehicle-activated traffic control signal on an arterial or
25 bicycle route is scheduled to be replaced or upgraded, the replaced or
26 upgraded detection equipment must routinely and reliably detect
27 motorcycles and bicycles. For purposes of this subsection (3)(a),
28 "substantial portion" means that the proposed replacement or upgrade
29 will cost more than fifteen percent of the cost of full replacement or
30 upgraded detection equipment that would routinely and reliably detect
31 motorcycles and bicycles.

32 (b) If at least a substantial portion of detection equipment at an
33 existing vehicle-activated traffic control signal on a public road or
34 highway that is not an arterial or bicycle route is scheduled to be
35 replaced or upgraded, the replaced or upgraded detection equipment must
36 routinely and reliably detect motorcycles and bicycles. For purposes
37 of this subsection (3)(b), "substantial portion" means that the

1 proposed replacement or upgrade will cost more than fifty percent of
2 the cost of full replacement or upgraded detection equipment that would
3 routinely and reliably detect motorcycles and bicycles.

4 (4) All vehicle-activated traffic control signals that are design
5 complete and put in operation after the effective date of this section
6 must be designed and operated, when in use, to routinely and reliably
7 detect motorcycles and bicycles, including the detection of bicycles in
8 bicycle lanes that cross an intersection.

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