

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1510

As of March 26, 2019

Title: An act relating to governing the use of narrow track vehicles.

Brief Description: Governing the use of narrow track vehicles.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Shea, Riccelli, Walsh, Young and McCaslin).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/13/19, 94-2.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/25/19.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a new class of motor vehicle called narrow track vehicles (NTVs) and a new subclass within this class for short NTVs.
- Mandates that short NTVs be permitted to use angled parking when it is permitted for motorcycles, and that short NTVs be permitted to park in parking stalls restricted to motorcycle-only parking, unless local authorities expressly prohibit this by ordinance.
- Permits NTVs to operate on roadway lanes in the same manner as motorcycles, except they may only be operated alongside one another in a single lane when they are stopping or stopped.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: Vehicle Classification. NTVs are not a designated category of motor vehicle. As a result, laws that apply to motor vehicles also apply to NTVs.

Triggered Traffic Control Signals. If the operator of a bicycle, moped, or street legal motorcycle approaches a traffic control signal that is controlled by a triggered traffic control signal using a vehicle detection device which is inoperative due to the size or composition of the bicycle, moped, or street legal motorcycle, the operator must bring the vehicle to a

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complete stop. If the traffic control signal fails to operate after one cycle of the traffic signal, the operator may, after exercising due care, proceed through the intersection or turn left.

Parking. In the absence of local law permitting angled parking, vehicles stopped or parked on a roadway must park parallel to the curb. Local authorities may permit angled parking on any roadway, although the Washington State Department of Transportation approval is required if the roadway is a federal-aid or state highway.

Roadway Lane Usage. All motorcycles are entitled to the full use of a roadway lane, and no motor vehicle may be driven in a manner that deprives a motorcycle of the full use of a lane. Notwithstanding this prohibition, motorcycles are permitted to operate two abreast—but no more than two abreast—in a single lane.

The operator of a motorcycle is not permitted to overtake and pass a vehicle in the same lane as that vehicle, unless a pedestrian or bicyclist is being passed and a safe passing distance of at least three feet is being maintained. Neither is a motorcycle permitted to be operated between lanes of traffic or adjacent lines or rows of vehicles. These prohibitions do not apply to police officers in the performance of their official duties.

Summary of Bill: Vehicle Classification. A new class of motor vehicle is established for NTVs, defined as fully enclosed motor vehicles with three or four wheels that do not exceed 40 inches in width. Within this new class of vehicles, a subclass is established for short narrow track vehicles, which are NTVs that do not exceed 102 inches in length.

Triggered Traffic Control Signals. The law in place for operators of bicycles, mopeds, and street legal motorcycles approaching traffic control signals controlled by a triggered traffic control signal is expanded to include NTVs. If the operator of an NTV approaches a traffic control signal that is controlled by a triggered traffic control signal using a vehicle detection device which is inoperative due to the size or composition of the NTV, the operator of the NTV must bring it to a complete stop. If the traffic control signal fails to operate after one cycle of the traffic signal, the operator may, after exercising due care, proceed through the intersection or turn left.

Parking. When local authorities permit angled parking of motorcycles on a roadway, short NTVs must also be permitted to use angled parking, unless they are specifically prohibited from using angled parking by local ordinance.

Short NTVs must be permitted to park in parking stalls restricted to motorcycle-only parking, unless they are specifically prohibited from parking in these stalls by local ordinance.

Roadway Lane Usage. Laws related to roadway lane usage that are applicable to motorcycles also apply to NTVs: all NTVs are entitled to the full use of a roadway lane, and no motor vehicle may be driven in a manner that deprives an NTV of the full use of a lane. However, NTVs are only permitted to operate two abreast in a single lane when they are in the process of stopping or have come to a complete stop.

The operator of an NTV is not permitted to overtake and pass a vehicle in the same lane as that vehicle, unless a pedestrian or bicyclist is being passed and a safe passing distance of at

least three feet is being maintained. An NTV is not permitted to be operated between lanes of traffic or adjacent lines or rows of vehicles.

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: If you want a car that is built like a fighter pilot cockpit that is also environmentally friendly then a narrow track vehicle is for you. They are manufactured in Spokane, Washington. The Tango is the only freeway capable narrow vehicle in the world. Being stuck in LA traffic is just wasting time, I figured that the automakers had to figure out how to design a better smaller car. Single occupant vehicles are here to stay, and we can only mitigate for that slightly. Why carry four empty seats. There have been a couple studies about how much capacity can be squeezed out of our existing system. Narrow track vehicles are a solution. It is possible to fit 4500 NTVs per hour in a lane where only 2000 standard sized vehicles fit.

OTHER: We as motorcyclists do not endorse it, but we do not oppose it.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Matt Shea, Prime Sponsor; Rick Woodbury, Commuter Cars Corp.

OTHER: Larry Walker, Washington Road Riders Association and ABATE of Washington.

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