

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1624

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to modifying the motorcycle safety education advisory board.

Brief Description: Modifying the motorcycle safety education advisory board.

Sponsors: Representatives Mosbrucker and Graham.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/18/22, 2/1/22 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Expands the Motorcycle Safety Education Advisory Board (Board) by two members who must represent motorcycle safety instructors.
- Requires Board members to be specially endorsed to drive a motorcycle.
- Extends two-year Board member terms to end when a successor is appointed, staggering appointments by every two years.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Wylie, 1st Vice Chair; Bronoske, 2nd Vice Chair; Ramos, 2nd Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Eslick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Robertson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Volz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berry, Chapman, Dent, Donaghy, Duerr, Entenman, Goehner, Griffey, Hackney, Klicker, McCaslin, Orcutt, Paul, Ramel, Riccelli, Slatter, Sutherland, Taylor, Valdez, Walsh and Wicks.

Staff: Phillip Craig (786-7291) and Jennifer Harris (786-7143).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

Motorcycle Endorsements.

To legally operate a two-wheeled or three-wheeled motorcycle, a person must have a valid driver's license with a special motorcycle endorsement. To obtain an endorsement, a person must pass four total tests, unless waived by the Department of Licensing (DOL) for successful completion of a motorcycle skills education course or program:

- a permit-level written test and a riding skills test, which qualifies the person for a motorcycle instruction permit; and
- an endorsement-level written test and a riding skills test, which qualifies the person for a motorcycle endorsement.

The required exams are administered at motorcycle training schools approved by the DOL. In addition to offering stand-alone exams, motorcycle training schools offer testing as part of motorcycle training courses certified by the DOL.

Motorcycle Safety Education Advisory Board.

The Motorcycle Safety Education Advisory Board (Board) assists the DOL with the administration, application, and educational content of the Washington Motorcycle Safety Program (WMSP). The Board helps the DOL implement the priorities of the WMSP, which are public awareness of motorcycle safety, motorcycle safety education, classroom and on-motorcycle training, and improved motorcycle operator testing.

The Board consists of five members appointed by the Director of the DOL (Director) with the following requirements:

- Three members of the Board, one of whom to be appointed chairperson, must be active motorcycle riders or members of nonprofit motorcycle organizations which promote motorcycle safety education.
- One member must be a Washington State Patrol (WSP) motorcycle officer with at least one year of experience as a motorcycle officer and at least five years of experience with the WSP.
- One member must be a member of the public.

Members are appointed for a term of two years. Members are required to meet at least two times annually, and not less than five times during a term of appointment. Members are not compensated for their services, but they are reimbursed for Board-related travel.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Board consists of seven members appointed by the Director, with two additional members appointed to represent motorcycle safety instructors. All members must be

endorsed to drive a two-wheeled or three-wheeled motorcycle, and to the extent practicable, the Director should strive to appoint members who reflect diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender. Also to the extent practicable, the Director should strive to appoint members who reside in different areas of the state, with at least one member who resides east of the Cascade mountains.

In addition to being able to select a chair from among the active motorcycle rider members or members of nonprofit motorcycle organizations, the Board may also consider members who represent motorcycle safety instructors for this position.

The two-year term of Board members is extended until a successor is appointed. Member appointments are staggered, so that one or two members are appointed in every even-numbered year.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill requires the Director to strive, to the extent practicable, to appoint members to the Board who reflect diversity in race and ethnicity, in addition to gender.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) An expansion of the Board membership from five to seven members will provide broader representation of motorcyclists across the state without lessening the contributions of safety and training members. Adding members will enable the Board to use committee time more efficiently, while also reducing the risk of a lack of quorum—especially during winter meetings when there is inclement weather.

The Board should be expanded so that it can help address the number of unendorsed motorcycle riders in Washington. There are approximately 20,000 to 30,000 unendorsed motorcycle riders in the state, a number in the range of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) figure. If NHTSA's estimate for the proportion of motorcycle riders who are unendorsed motorcycle riders is applied to Washington, 30 out of 80 fatalities of motorcycle riders are unendorsed riders. That number needs to change.

Motorcycles make up 4 percent of the total registered vehicles in the state, but they account for 20 percent of the deaths on the highway annually. This bill would be a step in the

direction of saving motorcycle riders' lives.

A change extending Board appointments from two-year terms to three-year terms to align the Board with other state and other Washington advisory boards should also be considered.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Gina Mosbrucker, prime sponsor; Brian Lange and Scott Robinson, ABATE of Washington; Doug Bowers; and Kathy Gill, Washington Department of Licensing State Motorcycle Advisory Board.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.