

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1514

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*As Passed House  
March 20, 1991*

**Title:** An act relating to snowmobiles.

**Brief Description:** Requiring snowmobilers to wear helmets.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Silver, Day, Orr, Moyer,  
D. Sommers and Paris.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Transportation, March 8, 1991, DP;  
Passed House, March 20, 1991, 53-45.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
TRANSPORTATION**

**Majority Report:** *Do pass.* Signed by 22 members:  
Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; Betrozoff, Ranking  
Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority  
Member; Basich; Cantwell; Day; G. Fisher; Forner; Haugen;  
Horn; P. Johnson; R. Johnson; Jones; Mitchell; Nelson; Orr;  
Prentice; Prince; Schmidt; Wilson; Wood; and Zellinsky.

**Minority Report:** *Do not pass.* Signed by 5 members:  
Representatives R. Meyers, Vice Chair; Brough; Cooper;  
Heavey; and Kremen.

**Staff:** David Williams (786-7305).

**Background:** Under current statute it is unlawful for a snowmobile operator to: 1) exceed a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under existing conditions; 2) operate a snowmobile in a manner that would endanger the property of another; 3) operate a snowmobile without a lighted headlight or taillight and an adequate breaking and muffling device; and 4) operate a snowmobile upon paved portions of or on the shoulder of any public road. Violation of any of these conditions will result in a traffic infraction costing the snowmobile operator \$57.

It is a misdemeanor to operate a snowmobile while under the influence of alcohol, narcotics or habit forming drugs.

**Summary of Bill:** It is unlawful for a snowmobile operator to operate a snowmobile on public or private land unless the operator and riders are wearing protective helmets that conform to rules adopted by the Washington State Patrol. Helmets must provide full ear protection and have either a neck or chin strap which is to be securely fastened while the snowmobile is in motion.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** Use of helmets helps insure the safety of snowmobilers.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Jim Upham, Spokane County Parks; Roger Lampitt, Washington State Snowmobile Association; and John Tuft, Spokane County Parks.