

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2442

*As Passed House
February 15, 1992*

Title: An act relating to pedestrian crosswalks.

Brief Description: Protecting pedestrians in crosswalks.

Sponsor(s): By House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representative Van Luven).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Transportation, February 10, 1992, DPS;
Passed House, February 15, 1992, 90-1.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 25 members: Representatives R. Fisher, Chair; Betrozoff, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brough; Cantwell; Cooper; Day; G. Fisher; Forner; Haugen; Heavey; Horn; P. Johnson; R. Johnson; Jones; Kremen; Mitchell; Nelson; Orr; Prentice; Prince; Schmidt; Wilson; Wood; and Zellinsky.

Minority Report: *Without recommendation.* Signed by 1 member: Representative R. Meyers, Vice Chair;

Staff: Roger Horn (786-7839).

Background: Prior to 1990 vehicles were required simply to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. Current law reflects legislation passed in 1990 that was intended to provide greater protection for pedestrians.

For pedestrians in crosswalks without traffic control signals, vehicles are required to stop and remain stopped while pedestrians are (1) on the side of the roadway on which the vehicle is traveling or onto which it is turning, or (2) on the other side of the roadway and approaching the side of the roadway on which the vehicle is traveling or onto which it is turning.

For example, at an uncontrolled crosswalk on a six-lane north-south roadway, all northbound vehicles are required to remain stopped from the time a pedestrian steps off the curb into the southbound lanes until the pedestrian steps onto the curb leaving the northbound lanes. When a pedestrian steps off the curb into the northbound lanes, all northbound vehicles are required to remain stopped until the pedestrian crosses the center line. In the case of a one-way roadway, vehicles must remain stopped the entire time a pedestrian is crossing.

For pedestrians legally in a crosswalk with traffic control signals, vehicles are required to stop and remain stopped for the entire time a pedestrian is in the crosswalk. Thus, a vehicle turning on a solid green light must wait until the crosswalk into which it is turning contains no pedestrians.

Some traffic engineers, enforcement officials and organizations involved in pedestrian safety efforts have expressed concern that the current law is difficult to enforce and difficult for the public to understand.

During the 1991 interim, the Traffic Safety Commission coordinated a committee consisting of representatives of agencies and organizations concerned with pedestrian safety to develop an alternative to the current pedestrian crosswalk safety law.

Summary of Bill: For any pedestrian crossing legally in a marked or unmarked crosswalk, a vehicle is required to stop and remain stopped while the pedestrian is upon or within one lane of the side of the roadway on which the vehicle is traveling or onto which it is turning. The law applies to crosswalks with or without vehicle control signals. In the case of one-way roadways, vehicles must remain stopped the entire time a pedestrian is crossing.

The Washington State Traffic Safety Commission, in cooperation with other interested organizations, is directed to develop and execute a statewide pedestrian safety education program. The commission is also directed to perform an evaluation of Washington's overall pedestrian safety program and report its findings to the Legislative Transportation Committee by January 1, 1994.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The bill adds provisions that increase pedestrian safety. The proposed crosswalk law will be

easier to enforce and explain to the public. This legislation represents the consensus of representatives of several concerned organizations who were involved in its development. With passage of this bill, several organizations will increase their public education efforts.

Testimony Against: Though the proposed legislation adds a provision that would increase pedestrian safety, it generally weakens the current law. The current law has not had an opportunity to work; it should be studied before it is changed. King County has been doing extensive public education on the current law.

Witnesses: Chuck Hayes, Traffic Safety Commission (pro); Stanley Rosenberg, Puget Sound Council of Senior Citizens (pro with concerns); Chris Leman, Institute for Transportation & the Environment (pro with concerns); Phil Miller, King County Department of Public Works (con); John Moffat, Seattle Police Department and Ad Hoc Committee on Pedestrian Safety Laws (AHCPSL) (pro); Bill Haro, City of Bellevue and AHCPSL (pro); and Bruce Olson, Automobile Association of Washington.