

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SHB 2442**

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, MARCH 2, 1992**

**Brief Description:** Protecting pedestrians in crosswalks.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representative Van Luven)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chairman; Nelson, Vice Chairman; Barr, Madsen, McMullen, Oke, Snyder, and Vognild.

**Staff:** Roger Horn (786-7839)

**Hearing Dates:** March 2, 1992

**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 marked or unmarked crosswalks without traffic control signals, vehicles are required to stop and remain stopped while pedestrians are (i) on the side of the roadway on which the vehicle is traveling or onto which it is turning, or (ii) 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 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 traffic safety 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:**

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 traffic control signals. In the case of one-way roadways, vehicles must remain stopped the entire time a pedestrian is crossing.

The Washington Traffic Safety Commission is directed to develop and execute a statewide pedestrian safety education program in cooperation with other interested organizations. 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.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** none requested

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:**

The amendment removes the requirements that the Traffic Safety Commission coordinate a statewide pedestrian safety education program and perform an evaluation of Washington's overall pedestrian safety program.

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

The proposed law standardizes pedestrian safety laws for all types of crosswalks, will be easier for the public to understand, is safer in some ways than the current law, and will result in fewer cases being dismissed by the courts. The bill represents a consensus recommendation by an ad hoc committee. The proposed law would still be the most restrictive in favor of pedestrians in the country.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

Many groups were not represented on the ad hoc committee that proposed the language in the bill. The current law should be given a chance to work. Letters from King County and a senior citizens group indicate their opposition to the bill. Other groups have reservations about and/or oppose the bill.

**TESTIFIED:** Rep. Steve Van Luven (prime sponsor); Chuck Hayes, Traffic Safety Commission (pro); Bill Haro, City of Bellevue (pro); Bruce Olsen, American Automobile Association (pro); Susie Tracey, Washington State Medical Association (pro); Chris Leman, Coalition of Washington Communities (con)