

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5818

As of February 24, 2003

Title: An act relating to traffic safety education.

Brief Description: Authorizing on-line traffic safety education courses.

Sponsors: Senators Finkbeiner, Johnson and Schmidt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 2/25/03.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Staff: Heather Lewis-Lechner (786-7448)

Background: Washington residents under age 18 are required to take a driver training class in order to obtain a driver's license, except under limited and specific circumstances. These individuals may take their training classes at their public high school or at a commercial driver training school. Traffic safety education courses consist of two phases, classroom instruction and laboratory experience. Laboratory experience is on-street, driving range, or simulator experience. On-line instruction for the classroom instruction phase of the course is currently not allowed in public high school courses or in the commercial driver training schools.

Schools may contract with the commercial driver training schools to teach the laboratory phase of the traffic safety course. The commercial driving training school instructors who are participating in the courses offered in public high schools must meet standards established by the Department of Licensing (DOL) and are subject to qualification requirements jointly adopted by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and DOL.

Summary of Bill: Commercial driver training schools are permitted to make the classroom instruction phase of the traffic safety course available through on-line instruction or through other electronic media. The on-line course instruction must meet the minimum curriculum standards as set by DOL with advice from the driver instructor advisory committee. Requirements for the on-line courses must be consistent with the requirements for courses offered through direct contact time in a classroom setting with an instructor.

Commercial driver training school instructors who participate in the traffic safety education courses offered in public high schools are no longer subject to qualification requirements jointly adopted by OSPI and DOL.

School districts may contract with commercial driver training schools to teach either the classroom phase or the laboratory phase of the traffic safety education course.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 19, 2003.

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