

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5975

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 25, 2015

Title: An act relating to parent taught driver training education courses, including online courses.

Brief Description: Authorizing parent taught driver training education courses.

Sponsors: Senators Benton and Angel.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/25/15 [DP, DNP, w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators King, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Fain, Vice Chair; Baumgartner, Ericksen, Litzow, Rivers and Sheldon.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Habib, Jayapal and Pedersen.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Hobbs, Ranking Minority Member; Liias, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

Background: A person under the age of 18 must meet several conditions to receive a driver's license, including completion of a traffic safety education course. A person who is at least 15 years of age but less than 15 and one-half years of age must be enrolled in a traffic safety education course to receive an instruction permit. A person at least 15 and one-half years of age but less than 18 years of age does not need to be enrolled in a traffic safety education course to receive an instruction permit, but the person must complete a traffic safety education course to receive a driver's license. In addition the Department of Licensing (DOL) may waive the written examination to receive an instruction permit if the applicant is enrolled in a traffic safety education course.

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

The traffic safety education course requirement can be met by either completing a course through an approved driver training school or completing a course offered by a high school. Traffic safety education courses offered by high schools are managed locally through the school districts, and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction oversees and certifies the instructors and curriculum for the programs. Driver training school courses are offered privately and overseen by DOL. A course that is offered by an approved driver training school or a high school must include both classroom instruction and driving experience.

Summary of Bill: A parent-taught driver training course that has been approved by DOL satisfies the traffic safety education requirement. A parent-taught course may include an online course used by the parent. DOL may charge a fee for enrollment in the parent-taught driver education and training program but the fee may not exceed DOL's actual costs related to implementing the course.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Private courses do not offer enough flexibility to take drivers education and this will allow students to take parent-taught courses instead of waiting or not taking it at all. Many people do not live close to a private school that offers courses so this will provide more access to driver education. Driver education is expensive and this will make it cheaper. The creation of the online course will create jobs. A AAA study found that students that take drivers education are less likely to be involved in an accident.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Benton, prime sponsor; Kristen Hall, Catherine Popov, Kyle Swanson, Malia Lewis, Edwrad Kovalenko, Jasmine Mehr, Dakota Jones, John Kovalenko, Emily Clark, River HomeLink WALA STARS.