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**SENATE BILL 5402**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Liias, Walsh, Billig, Hobbs, King, and Sheldon

AN ACT Relating to the Cooper Jones bicyclist safety advisory council; adding a new section to chapter 43.59 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that Washington state is the nation's number one "Bike Friendly State." However, people who bike encounter road safety dangers that result in severe injury and death. Bicycle ridership has significantly increased over the last ten years, and the number of injuries and fatalities are also on the rise, despite the five percent annual reduction goal. The Cooper Jones act of 1998 laid the groundwork to begin a focus on bicycle safety and education. It is the intent of the legislature that the Cooper Jones bicycle safety advisory council continue that work with a focus on a review of best practices for the reduction and eventual elimination of bicycle-related injuries and fatalities in contribution to Washington state's adoption of Target Zero.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.59 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Within amounts appropriated to the traffic safety commission, the commission must convene the Cooper Jones bicyclist safety advisory council comprised of stakeholders who have a unique interest or expertise in bicyclist and road safety.

(2) The purpose of the council is to review and analyze data related to bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries to identify points at which the transportation system can be improved and to identify patterns in bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries.

(3)(a) The council may include, but is not limited to:

(i) A representative from the commission;

(ii) An emergency medical technician from the county in which the most bicyclist deaths have occurred;

(iii) A representative from the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs;

(iv) Multiple members of law enforcement who have investigated bicyclist fatalities;

(v) A traffic engineer;

(vi) A representative from the department of transportation;

(vii) A representative of cities, and up to two stakeholders, chosen by the council, who represent municipalities in which at least one bicyclist fatality has occurred in the previous three years;

(viii) A representative from a bicyclist advocacy group;

(ix) An attorney that has worked in areas of the law related to bicycles;

(x) A transportation planner with a focus on multimodal planning;

(xi) A public health official, researcher, or epidemiologist; and

(xii) A member of an academic transportation research organization, such as the transportation research board.

(b) The commission may invite other representatives of stakeholder groups to participate in the council as deemed appropriate by the commission. Additionally, the commission may invite a victim or family member of a victim to participate in the council.

(4) The council must meet at least quarterly. By December 31st of each year, the council must issue an annual report detailing any findings and recommendations to the governor and the transportation committees of the legislature. The commission must provide the annual report electronically to all municipal governments and state agencies that participated in the council during that calendar year. Additionally, the council must report any budgetary or fiscal recommendations to the office of financial management and the legislature by August 1st on a biennial basis.

(5) As part of the review of bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries that occur in Washington, the council may review any available information, including accident information maintained in existing databases; statutes, rules, policies, or ordinances governing bicyclists and traffic related to the incidents; and any other relevant information. The council may make recommendations regarding changes in statutes, ordinances, rules, and policies that could improve bicyclist safety. Additionally, the council may make recommendations on how to improve traffic fatality and serious injury data quality.

(6)(a) Documents prepared by or for the council are inadmissible and may not be used in a civil or administrative proceeding, except that any document that exists before its use or consideration in a review by the council, or that is created independently of such review, does not become inadmissible merely because it is reviewed or used by the council. For confidential information, such as personally identifiable information and medical records, which are obtained by the council, neither the commission nor the council may publicly disclose such confidential information. No person who was in attendance at a meeting of the council or who participated in the creation, retention, collection, or maintenance of information or documents specifically for the commission or the council shall be permitted to testify in any civil action as to the content of such proceedings or of the documents and information prepared specifically as part of the activities of the council. However, recommendations from the council and the commission generally may be disclosed without personal identifiers.

(b) The council may review, only to the extent otherwise permitted by law or court rule when determined to be relevant and necessary: Any law enforcement incident documentation, such as incident reports, dispatch records, and victim, witness, and suspect statements; any supplemental reports, probable cause statements, and 911 call taker's reports; and any other information determined to be relevant to the review. The commission and the council must maintain the confidentiality of such information to the extent required by any applicable law.

(7) If acting in good faith, without malice, and within the parameters of and protocols established under this chapter, representatives of the commission and the council are immune from civil liability for an activity related to reviews of particular fatalities and serious injuries.

(8) This section must not be construed to provide a private civil cause of action.

(9)(a) The council may receive gifts, grants, or endowments from public or private sources that are made from time to time, in trust or otherwise, for the use and benefit of the purposes of the council and spend the gifts, grants, or endowments from the public or private sources according to their terms, unless the receipt of the gifts, grants, or endowments violates RCW 42.17A.560.

(b) Subject to the appropriation of funds for this specific purpose, the council may provide grants targeted at improving bicyclist safety in accordance with recommendations made by the council.

(10) By December 1, 2020, the council must report to the transportation committees of the legislature on the strategies that have been deployed to improve bicyclist safety by the council and make a recommendation as to whether the council should be continued and if there are any improvements the legislature can make to improve the council.

(11) For purposes of this section:

(a) "Bicyclist fatality" means any death of a bicyclist resulting from a collision with a vehicle, whether on a roadway, at an intersection, along an adjacent sidewalk, or on a path that is contiguous with a roadway.

(b) "Council" means the Cooper Jones bicyclist safety advisory council.

(c) "Serious injury" means any injury other than a fatal injury that prevents the injured person from walking, driving, or normally continuing the activities the person was capable of performing before the injury occurred.

(12) This section expires June 30, 2021.

**--- END ---**