
Transportation Committee

HB 1325

Brief Description: Regulating personal delivery devices.

Sponsors: Representatives Kloba, Steele, Walen, Fey and Slatter.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a regulatory framework for the operation of personal delivery devices, which are automated devices intended to deliver property via sidewalks and crosswalks.

Hearing Date: 1/28/19

Staff: Mark Matteson (786-7145).

Background:

Autonomous Unmanned Vehicle Delivery Systems.

Unmanned vehicle systems, including autonomous systems, have been developed over time for various purposes, including governmental, research-related, hobby-related, and commercial purposes. Autonomous systems are machines capable of performing tasks in the world by themselves, without explicit human control. Examples range from autonomous helicopters to robotic vacuum cleaners. In recent years, there have been developments in the field of automated ground-based delivery systems.

Several jurisdictions, including several states and the District of Columbia, have adopted laws or regulations in recent years governing automated ground-based delivery devices. These laws and regulations have provided definitions and operational parameters for the devices, as well as modifications to the jurisdiction's rules of the road governing sidewalk use and crosswalk use. The laws have also typically excluded the devices from the definition of "motor vehicle," which eliminates the requirement that the device be subject to annual vehicle licensing requirements, for example.

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.

Rules of the Road—Motor Vehicles and Other Users of Highways, Including Sidewalks and Crosswalks.

State law governs the use of highway rights-of-way and how motor vehicles must address other users. In general, motor vehicles have the right-of-way within the roadway. Pedestrians are required to obey traffic signals, including those for crosswalks. Pedestrians crossing a roadway at a point other than a crosswalk must yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway. Motor vehicles turning into a driveway or alleyway must yield the right-of-way to bicyclists and pedestrians on a sidewalk or crosswalk. A bicyclist must yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian on a sidewalk or crosswalk. Mopeds may not be operated upon sidewalks. The operation of a motorized foot scooter or a class 3 electric-assisted bicycle on a sidewalk is not allowed, unless there is no other bicycle or pedestrian path alternative.

Violation of the rules of the road is a traffic infraction in most cases.

Summary of Bill:

The operation of personal delivery devices (PDD) is authorized under certain conditions.

A PDD is an electrically-powered, automated device weighing less than 120 pounds and intended primarily to transport property on a sidewalk or crosswalk at speeds of 10 miles per hour or less. The operation of the PDD is supported by a remote operator who may either monitor or exercise active control of the device.

A PDD may be operated on a sidewalk or crosswalk if:

- the operation is in accordance with the local ordinance governing the use of sidewalks and crosswalks;
- the PDD operator is either actively monitoring or controlling the device;
- the business that operates the PDD maintains an insurance policy with a liability coverage of at least \$100,000;
- the PDD has a unique identification number and a marker that includes the name and contact information of the business that operates the device;
- the PDD has a properly functioning braking system; and
- if the PDD is to be operated between sunset and sunrise, the device has a light on its front and rear that are visible from 500 feet or more to a driver of a car with its headlights on.

A PDD may not be operated to transport hazardous material.

A PDD is excluded from the definition of "motor vehicle" and the definition of "vehicle," except with respect to certain rules of the road governing the use of sidewalks and crosswalks. In general, the operation of PDDs must adhere to the same rules of the road that apply to pedestrians, except that PDDs may not cross a roadway at a crossing other than at a marked crosswalk; at an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection; or at a crossing between curb ramps. A PDD must yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian or a bicycle on a sidewalk or crosswalk.

A violation of the terms of the regulations governing PDDs is a traffic infraction. The citation must be issued to the business that operated the PDD at the time the infraction occurred.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.