

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1244

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to training as an alternative to driver license suspension for the accumulation of certain traffic infractions.

Brief Description: Concerning training as an alternative to driver license suspension for the accumulation of certain traffic infractions.

Sponsors: Representative Wylie; by request of Department of Licensing.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/22/25, 2/20/25 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Licensing (DOL) to terminate a 60-day driver's license suspension early for three or more moving violations in a one-year period or four or more moving violations in a two-year period when a person completes a safe driving course approved by the DOL.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Bernbaum, Vice Chair; Donaghy, Vice Chair; Reed, Vice Chair; Bronoske, Duerr, Entenman, Hunt, Nance, Paul, Ramel, Richards, Taylor, Timmons, Wylie and Zahn.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Griffey, Orcutt, Stuebe and Volz.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Low, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Mendoza,

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Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Schmidt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dent, Klicker and Ley.

Staff: Jennifer Harris (786-7143).

Background:

Driver's License Suspension for Multiple Moving Violations.

When a person commits a moving violation on three or more occasions within a one-year period, or on four or more occasions within a two-year period, the Department of Licensing (DOL) is required to suspend that person's driver's license for 60 days and to set a probation period of one year beginning from the date the driver's license suspension ends. Prior to reinstatement of a driver's license, the person must complete a safe driving course approved by the DOL.

When the DOL has suspended a person's driver's license, the driver's license suspension remains in effect until the person provides proof of automobile insurance to the DOL; this proof of insurance is required for three years after a driver's license suspension is lifted. A reissuance fee of \$20 applies for this type of driver's license suspension.

During a period of probation, a person must not be convicted of any additional traffic infractions for moving violations. If a person is convicted of a moving violation during the period of probation, he or she will receive an additional 30-day suspension.

The DOL is required to send a person a notice that an additional infraction will result in their driver's license being suspended for 60 days when a person has committed a moving violation on two occasions within a one-year period or on three occasions within a two-year period.

Driver's License Suspension for Specific Moving Violations.

Several other grounds for driver's license suspension include conviction for:

1. reckless driving, requiring a finding of willful or wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property (30-day suspension);
2. racing of vehicles on highways (30-day suspension);
3. reckless endangerment of emergency or work zone workers in a work or emergency zone (60-day suspension); and
4. reckless driving three times within two years (one-year suspension).

A reissuance fee of \$75 applies for the above types of driver's license suspensions.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A person may complete the safe driving course approved by the DOL at any time after the DOL provides notice of a pending driver's license suspension for three or more moving violations in a one-year period or four or more moving violations in a two-year period. The DOL must terminate the driver's license suspension once the DOL receives notice that a person has completed a safe driving course, provided applicable requirements related to proof of automobile insurance and payment of licensing fees are met. The one-year period of probation following termination of a driver's license suspension remains applicable.

Early driver's license suspension for safe driving course completion may only be granted once every five years. A person is not eligible for early reinstatement for a probation violation that occurs during the period of probation for three or more moving violations in a one-year period or four or more moving violations in a two-year period.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill clarifies that:

- the one-year period of probation that begins when a driver's license suspension is terminated begins at the time of suspension termination and not at the beginning of a calendar year;
- requirements for proof of automobile insurance and payment of licensing fees that are applicable still apply; and
- a person with a pending driver's license suspension that is terminated before it begins is still required to complete the one-year probation period otherwise applicable.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect on April 1, 2026.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Some individuals suffer the consequences of poor driving. Others suffer the consequences of losing the ability to use a car. This bill puts forward an approach that provides training to those who will benefit from that training, so that their driver's licenses can be suspended for a shorter period of time.

Before 2023 individuals needed to be issued six moving violations within one year, or seven moving violations within two years, for their driver's licenses to be suspended. The moving violation thresholds were reduced to three in one year or four in two years. Once every five years, someone who meets this lower moving violation threshold should have the ability to take a course to avoid the negative consequences of a 60-day driver's license suspension. This is a modest change. Twenty-five states already provide this option. It enables people

to think more carefully about what they're doing in the future.

(Opposed) It is difficult for a person to do something that triggers driver's license suspension. Significant warnings and leeway are provided for taking actions that can have fatal consequences. Speeding is reckless. For people who ride a bicycle or walk, 5 miles per hour can dramatically increase the fatality and serious injury rates of a collision. Aggressive and dangerous driving has increased a tremendous amount. There is no research demonstrating the approach in this bill will reduce collision rates.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Sharon Wylie, prime sponsor; and Alejandro Sanchez, Department of Licensing.

(Opposed) Kimberly Huntress-Inskeep.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.