

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5198

As of January 21, 2025

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: Senators Valdez, Holy, Bateman, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Nobles and Trudeau; by request of Department of Licensing.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 1/23/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows a driver whose driver's license is or will be suspended for moving violation traffic infractions to end that suspension early by completing a safe driving course.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Patrick Moore (786-7535)

Background: License Suspension for Moving Violation Traffic Infractions. When a driver commits three moving violation traffic infractions within a one-year period, or four such infractions within a two-year period, the Department of Licensing is required by statute to suspend a driver's license for 60 days and set a probation period of one year running from the time suspension ends.

Moving Violations and Traffic Infractions. A moving violation is any violation of a wide range of vehicle laws committed by the driver while the vehicle is in motion. Parking violations, equipment violations, or paperwork violations relating to insurance, registration,

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licensing, and inspection are generally not moving violations. Traffic infractions are violations of a wide variety of traffic laws that are not criminal offenses, including parking, standing, stopping, and pedestrian offenses.

Penalty for Driving with a Suspended License. Driving with a suspended driver's license is a crime punishable as a misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor depending on degree of the offense. Sentencing on conviction of driving with a suspended license may include jail time, a fine, or both.

Summary of Bill: This bill adds a safe driving training exception to certain requirements that the Department of Licensing suspend a driver's license for 60 days when the driver commits three moving violation traffic infractions within a one-year period, or four such infractions within a two-year period. When the Department of Licensing issues a notice of license suspension under this requirement, the driver may complete the safe driving course required for license reinstatement. Upon receiving notice that the driver has completed the course, the Department of Licensing must terminate the license suspension. A driver's license suspension may only be terminated this way once every five years. A one-year probation period follows license reinstatement. This early license reinstatement is not available for probation violations of the one-year probation period.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2025.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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