

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2181

As Passed House:
March 9, 2015

Title: An act relating to the maximum speed limit on highways.

Brief Description: Modifying the maximum speed limit on highways.

Sponsors: Representatives Schmick, Clibborn, Orcutt and Scott.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/26/15 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/9/15, 78-19.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation to increase the maximum speed limit on any state highway to 75 miles per hour.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 23 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Gregerson, Harmsworth, Hayes, Kochmar, Moeller, Morris, Ortiz-Self, Pike, Riccelli, Rodne, Sells, Shea, Takko, Wilson, Young and Zeiger.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives McBride and Tarleton.

Staff: Andrew Russell (786-7143).

Background:

Maximum Speed Limits.

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.

Generally, the maximum speed limit on public streets, roads, and highways is set by statute: 25 miles per hour (mph) on city and town streets, 50 mph on county roads, and 60 mph on state highways. These limits may be increased or decreased by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) if an engineering and traffic investigation shows that a higher or lower maximum speed is reasonable and safe under the circumstances. Local authorities may also alter these general speed limits. The maximum speed limit on any state highway, however, may not be increased to greater than 70 mph. Additionally, vehicles with a gross weight of greater than 10,000 pounds may not exceed 60 mph.

Summary of Bill:

The Secretary of the WSDOT may increase the maximum speed limit on any highway or portion of highway to not more than 75 miles per hour.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It's good to move something ahead to take a look at this, not only on Interstate 90, but across the state.

(Neutral) Raising speed limits should be a deliberative process to ensure the safety of the traveling public. This provides the opportunity to determine if and where speed limits should be set at 75 mph, and the WSDOT will work with safety partners to ensure the highway system remains safe.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Schmick, prime sponsor.

(Neutral) John Nisbet, Washington State Department of Transportation.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.