

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5623

As of January 30, 2015

Title: An act relating to modifying the operation of motorcycles on roadways laned for traffic.

Brief Description: Modifying the operation of motorcycles on roadways laned for traffic.

Sponsors: Senators Sheldon, Angel, Miloscia, Becker, Warnick and Conway.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/03/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: While generally motorcycles are entitled to full use of a lane on a highway, these vehicles are subject to certain operational benefits and limitations. Specifically, motorcyclists may operate two abreast in a single lane. However, an operator of a motorcycle may not pass a vehicle in the same lane as the vehicle being overtaken, unless the vehicle is a bicyclist. Currently, a motorcycle may not be operated between lanes of traffic, a practice commonly referred to as lane-splitting.

California is the only state in the U.S. that allows lane-splitting.

Summary of Bill: The operator of a motorcycle may overtake and pass in the same lane as the vehicle being overtaken. The operator of a motorcycle traveling at a speed of 35 miles per hour or less may drive between lanes of traffic or between adjacent lines or rows of vehicles if the motorcycle is traveling at no more than 10 miles per hour over the speed of traffic flow.

It is a traffic infraction for an operator of a motor vehicle to intentionally impede or attempt to prevent a motorcyclist from driving between lanes of traffic or between adjacent lines or rows of vehicles.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 26, 2015.

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.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.