

BICYCLE ROAD RULES

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Senate Bill 1224

Sponsor: Sen. Michelle A. McManus

House Committee: Transportation

Senate Committee: Transportation

Complete to 6-12-06

A SUMMARY OF SENATE BILL 1224 AS PASSED BY THE SENATE 5-16-06

The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to do the following:

** Require vehicle operators to yield the right-of-way to bicyclists under certain circumstances.

** Establish provisions that would apply to bicyclists specifically and delete references to bicycles from provisions that apply to the operation of an electric personal assistive mobility device, low-speed vehicle, motorcycle, and moped.

** Provide for bicycle parking.

Riding on Right Side of Roadway Exceptions

Currently, a person operating a bicycle, electric personal assistive mobility device, low-speed vehicle, or moped upon a roadway must ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable, exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or a vehicle proceeding in the same direction. The bill would delete the reference to a bicycle.

Instead, under the bill, a person operating a bicycle upon a highway or street at less than the existing speed of traffic would have to ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway, except as follows:

-- When overtaking and passing another bicycle or any other vehicle proceeding in the same direction.

-- When preparing to turn left.

-- When conditions make the right-hand edge of the roadway unsafe or reasonably unusable by bicycles, including surface hazards, an uneven roadway surface, drain openings, debris, parked or moving vehicles or bicycles, pedestrians, animals, or other obstacles, or if the lane is too narrow to permit a vehicle to overtake and pass a bicycle safely.

-- When operating a bicycle in a lane in which the traffic is turning right but the bicyclist intends to go straight through the intersection.

-- When operating a bicycle upon a one-way highway or street having two or more marked traffic lanes, in which case the bicyclist could ride as near the left-hand curb or edge of that roadway as practicable.

Deleted Bicycle Provisions

Currently, a person riding a bicycle, an electric personal assistive mobility device, a motorcycle, or a moped upon a roadway may not ride more than two abreast except on a path or part of a roadway set aside for the exclusive use of those vehicles. The bill would eliminate the reference to a bicycle. The bill would instead prohibit two or more bicyclists operating upon a highway or street from riding more than two abreast, except upon a path or portion of the highway or street set aside for the use of bicycles.

Currently, where a usable and designated bicycle path is provided adjacent to a roadway, a bicyclist or an electric personal assistive mobility device operator may, by local ordinance, be required to use that path. The bill would delete the reference to a bicyclist.

A person operating a motorcycle, moped, low-speed vehicle, electric personal assistive mobility device, or bicycle may not pass between lanes of traffic, but may pass on the left of traffic moving in his or her direction in the case of a two-way street, or, in the case of a one-way street, on the left or right of traffic in an unoccupied lane. The bill would eliminate the reference to a bicycle.

Bicycles on Pedestrian Sidewalks

Currently, a person operating a bicycle or an electric personal assistive mobility device on a pedestrian sidewalk must yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian and give an audible signal before overtaking and passing the pedestrian. The bill would eliminate the reference to a bicycle, but add a separate and similar provision applying only to bicyclists operating upon a sidewalk or pedestrian crosswalk.

The bill also would prohibit a person from operating a bicycle upon a sidewalk or pedestrian crosswalk if that operation is prohibited by an official traffic control device. The bill specifies that a person operating a bicycle lawfully upon a sidewalk or pedestrian crosswalk would have all of the rights and responsibilities applicable to a pedestrian using that sidewalk or crosswalk. (In the Vehicle Code, “traffic control devices” means all signs, signals, markings, and devices placed or erected by authority of a public body or official having jurisdiction, for the purpose of regulating, warning or guiding traffic.)

Bicycle Parking

Under the bill, an individual could park a bicycle on a sidewalk except as prohibited by an official traffic control device. An individual could not park a bicycle on the sidewalk in a manner that impeded the lawful movement of pedestrians or other traffic.

The bill would allow a person to park a bicycle on a highway or street wherever parking was allowed for motor vehicles, at any angle to the curb or the edge of the highway, and abreast of another bicycle. A person could not park a bicycle on a highway or street in a manner that obstructed the movement of a legally parked motor vehicle.

Also, an individual would have to park a bicycle on a highway or street in compliance with the Vehicle Code and any local ordinance, except as otherwise provided in the bill.

Yielding the Right-of-Way

The bill would require vehicular traffic to yield to bicyclists in a number of circumstances.

The Vehicle Code sets forth the actions that a vehicle operator may take at different traffic control signals, and requires that the operator yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and other vehicles. A person who fails to yield as required is responsible for a civil infraction.

Currently, if a traffic signal is green, vehicular traffic facing the signal may proceed straight through or turn right or left, unless a sign at that place prohibits either turn. Traffic must yield the right-of-way to other vehicles and pedestrians lawfully within the intersection or an adjacent sidewalk at the time the signal is shown. The bill would require vehicular traffic also to yield to bicyclists within the intersection or an adjacent crosswalk.

Vehicular traffic facing a steady red signal, after stopping before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection or a limit line when marked, or, if there is no crosswalk or limit line, before entering the intersection, may make a right turn from a one-way or two-way street into a two-way street, or a one-way street going in the direction of the right turn; or may make a left turn from a one-way or two-way street into a one-way roadway going in the direction of the left turn, unless prohibited by a traffic control device. The vehicular traffic must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians lawfully within an adjacent crosswalk and to other traffic lawfully using the intersection. The bill would require that vehicular traffic also yield to bicyclists lawfully within an adjacent crosswalk.

Vehicular traffic facing a steady green arrow indication may enter the intersection only to move as indicated by the arrow, or as permitted by other indications shown at the same time. The traffic must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians lawfully within an adjacent

crosswalk and to other traffic lawfully using the intersection. Under the bill, vehicular traffic also would have to yield to bicyclists lawfully within an adjacent crosswalk.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have no apparent fiscal impact on the state or on local government.

Legislative Analyst: Chris Couch

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.