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H.B. 776
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Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Lorenz

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SUMMARY

- Prohibits certain motorcycle operators from lane filtering unless certain conditions apply.
- Prohibits any motorcycle operator from lane splitting.
- Prohibits any person from purposely impeding or interfering with a motorcycle operator when the operator is lawfully lane filtering.
- Specifies that a violation of the prohibitions above is a minor misdemeanor and a predicate motor vehicle or traffic offense.
- Exempts drivers of emergency response vehicles when responding to emergencies.
- Requires the Director of Public Safety to conduct a statewide public education campaign related to the new authorization and prohibitions.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Motorcycle lane filtering

Lane filtering is the operation of a motorcycle (with two wheels or less) between two marked lanes of traffic traveling in the same direction when the other vehicles are stopped or the other vehicles are traveling at a speed of 15 miles per hour or less. This operation allows a motorcycle operator to pass other vehicles using the space between two lanes of traffic. The bill prohibits a person from lane filtering when operating a motorcycle unless all of the following apply:

1. The roadway has two or more lanes of travel in the same direction.
2. The posted speed limit is 45 miles per hour or less.

3. The speed of the motorcycle is only up to ten miles per hour above the speed of the surrounding traffic.¹

The bill prohibits a person from lane filtering along the curb or shoulder of a roadway. It also prohibits any person from purposely impeding or interfering with the operator of a motorcycle who is lawfully lane filtering.²

Under current law, whenever any roadway has been divided into two or more clearly marked traffic lanes, or wherever, within municipal corporations, traffic is lawfully moving in two or more substantially continuous lines in the same direction, a vehicle must be driven, as nearly as is practicable, entirely within a single lane or line of traffic. The vehicle must remain in that lane or line until the driver has first ascertained that changing lanes or passing another vehicle can be completed safely. A person may overtake and pass another vehicle proceeding in the same direction, or when making a left turn.³

Lane splitting

The bill distinguishes between lane filtering and lane splitting and it prohibits a motorcycle operator from lane splitting. Lane splitting is the operation of a motorcycle between two marked lanes of traffic traveling in the same direction at a speed greater than 15 miles per hour.⁴

Penalties

The bill imposes a minor misdemeanor as the base penalty for any person who improperly lane filters, any person who lane splits, or any person who impedes or interferes with a motorcycle operator lawfully lane filtering. However, the penalty may increase to a third or fourth degree misdemeanor if the offender has committed other predicate motor vehicle or traffic offenses within one year. Like other traffic offenses, the bill's new traffic offenses are strict liability offenses.⁵

Public education campaign

The Director of Public Safety must conduct a statewide public education campaign to alert other drivers, motorcycle riders, and the public of the bill's authorization to lane filter. As part of that campaign, the Director must include material on how a motorcycle rider may safely lane filter, the prohibition against lane splitting, and the prohibition against impeding or interfering with a motorcycle rider who is lawfully lane filtering. The Director must provide both printed and digital communications as part of the campaign.⁶

¹ R.C. 4511.551(A) and (B).

² R.C. 4511.551(C) and (D).

³ R.C. 4511.25(A)(1); R.C. 4511.33(A)(1), not in the bill.

⁴ R.C. 4511.551(E).

⁵ R.C. 4511.01(III) and 4511.551(F) and (G).

⁶ Section 3.

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	03-24-26
