

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1583
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Homeland Security & Public Safety
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, a person operating a bicycle is required to have two pieces of equipment attached to the bicycle at nighttime for the safety of the operator and others, a light that emits a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet attached to the front of the bicycle, and either a red reflector or red lamp that emits a red light visible from that same distance attached to the rear of the bicycle. Bicycles are often difficult to distinguish on trafficked roads, but a motor vehicle driver's ability to see a bicycle is further complicated during periods of low visibility, such as at nighttime or during the periods immediately before sunset and after sunrise. C.S.H.B. 1583 proposes to increase the visibility of bicycles and protect drivers and cyclists by changing the bicycle equipment requirements for nighttime and for certain periods before sunset and after sunrise.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1583 amends the Transportation Code to make the safety equipment requirements for operating a bicycle at nighttime also apply to operating a bicycle during the 30-minute period before sunset and the 30-minute period after sunrise. The bill, in the requirement that a bicycle be equipped with a front lamp and a rear lamp or reflector, provides for the satisfaction of that requirement by either the bicycle or the person operating the bicycle being so equipped. The bill further revises that requirement by removing the option for the bicycle to have a reflector on the rear of the bicycle.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 1583 differs from the original by making the safety equipment requirements for operating a bicycle at nighttime also apply to operating a bicycle during the 30-minute period before sunset and the 30-minute period after sunrise, whereas the original makes those requirements also apply to operating a bicycle during periods of reduced visibility.

C.S.H.B. 1583 differs from the original, in the requirement that a bicycle be equipped with certain lamps, by providing for the satisfaction of that requirement by either the bicycle or the person operating the bicycle being equipped with such lamps, whereas the original does not include such an alternative method of satisfying the bicycle lamp requirement.