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HOUSE BILL 2055

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State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Representatives Young and Shea

1 AN ACT Relating to the traffic lane merge zipper method; amending  
2 RCW 28A.220.050, 46.20.130, 46.82.420, and 46.82.430; and adding a  
3 new section to chapter 46.20 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.220.050 and 1986 c 93 s 4 are each amended to  
6 read as follows:

7 The superintendent of public instruction shall include  
8 information on (1) the proper use of the left-hand lane on multilane  
9 highways and (2) the late merge zipper method to be applied when two  
10 lanes are merging, which consists of drivers using both lanes of  
11 traffic until reaching the defined merge area and then alternating in  
12 "zipper" fashion into the single lane, in instructional material used  
13 in traffic safety education courses to ensure that new operators of  
14 motor vehicles are instructed on these driving skills.

15 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.20.130 and 2006 c 190 s 1 are each amended to  
16 read as follows:

17 (1) The director shall prescribe the content of the driver  
18 licensing examination and the manner of conducting the examination,  
19 which shall include, but is not limited to:

1 (a) A test of the applicant's eyesight and ability to see,  
2 understand, and follow highway signs regulating, warning, and  
3 directing traffic;

4 (b) A test of the applicant's knowledge of traffic laws and  
5 ability to understand and follow the directives of lawful authority,  
6 orally or graphically, that regulate, warn, and direct traffic in  
7 accordance with the traffic laws of this state, including testing on  
8 the late merge zipper method to be applied when two lanes are  
9 merging, which consists of drivers using both lanes of traffic until  
10 reaching the defined merge area and then alternating in "zipper"  
11 fashion into the single lane;

12 (c) An actual demonstration of the applicant's ability to operate  
13 a motor vehicle without jeopardizing the safety of persons or  
14 property. If the applicant is deaf or hearing impaired, the applicant  
15 may be accompanied by an interpreter to assist the applicant during  
16 the demonstration. The interpreter will be of the applicant's  
17 choosing from a list provided by the department of licensing; and

18 (d) Such further examination as the director deems necessary:

19 (i) To determine whether any facts exist that would bar the  
20 issuance of a vehicle operator's license under chapters 46.20, 46.21,  
21 and 46.29 RCW; and

22 (ii) To determine the applicant's fitness to operate a motor  
23 vehicle safely on the highways.

24 (2) If the applicant desires to drive a motorcycle or a motor-  
25 driven cycle he or she must qualify for a motorcycle endorsement  
26 under RCW 46.20.500 through 46.20.515.

27 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 46.20  
28 RCW to read as follows:

29 The department shall provide an instructional poster, video,  
30 tutorial, or document with information on the late merge zipper  
31 method, as described in RCW 46.20.130(1)(b), to be available for  
32 viewing to all driver's license renewal applicants who request a  
33 driver's license renewal at a driver licensing office.

34 **Sec. 4.** RCW 46.82.420 and 2010 1st sp.s. c 7 s 22 are each  
35 amended to read as follows:

36 (1) The department shall develop and maintain a basic minimum  
37 required curriculum and shall furnish to each qualifying applicant

1 for an instructor's license or a driver training school license a  
2 copy of such curriculum.

3 (2) In addition to information on the safe, lawful, and  
4 responsible operation of motor vehicles on the state's highways, the  
5 basic minimum required curriculum shall include information on:

6 (a) Intermediate driver's license issuance, passenger and driving  
7 restrictions and sanctions for violating the restrictions, and the  
8 effect of traffic violations and collisions on the driving  
9 privileges;

10 (b) The effects of alcohol and drug use on motor vehicle  
11 operators, including information on drug and alcohol related traffic  
12 injury and mortality rates in the state of Washington and the current  
13 penalties for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol;

14 (c) Motorcycle awareness, approved by the director, to ensure new  
15 operators of motor vehicles have been instructed in the importance of  
16 safely sharing the road with motorcyclists;

17 (d) Bicycle safety, to ensure that operators of motor vehicles  
18 have been instructed in the importance of safely sharing the road  
19 with bicyclists; (~~and~~)

20 (e) Pedestrian safety, to ensure that operators of motor vehicles  
21 have been instructed in the importance of safely sharing the road  
22 with pedestrians; and

23 (f) The late merge zipper method, as described in RCW  
24 46.20.130(1)(b).

25 (3) Should the director be presented with acceptable proof that  
26 any licensed instructor or driver training school is not showing  
27 proper diligence in teaching such basic minimum curriculum as  
28 required, the instructor or school shall be required to appear before  
29 the director and show cause why the license of the instructor or  
30 school should not be revoked for such negligence. If the director  
31 does not accept such reasons as may be offered, the director may  
32 revoke the license of the instructor or school, or both.

33 **Sec. 5.** RCW 46.82.430 and 1998 c 165 s 6 are each amended to  
34 read as follows:

35 Instructional material used in driver training schools shall  
36 include information on: The proper use of the left-hand lane by motor  
37 vehicles on multilane highways; the late merge zipper method, as  
38 described in RCW 46.20.130(1)(b); and (~~and~~) bicyclists' and

1 pedestrians' rights and responsibilities and suggested riding  
2 procedures in common traffic situations.

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