

House Research Act Summary

CHAPTER: 135

SESSION: 2005 Regular Session

TOPIC: Motorized foot scooters

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Overview

This law regulates motorized foot scooters, which are vehicles with electric or gasoline engines, with or without a seat or saddle, that either go no faster than 15 mph or have wheels not more than 10” in diameter. Operators of motorized foot scooters would generally have the same rights and duties as bicyclists. The minimum age for operation would be 12 years and operators under age 18 would be required to wear helmets. Operation on sidewalks, except when entering or leaving adjacent property, would be prohibited.

The law also allows food establishments that do not serve meals to have their signs on business sign panels, and amends definition of motorized bicycle to allow either electric or gasoline motors.

Section

- 1 **Business signs.** Amends the requirements of a food business in order to be eligible for a sign under the business sign panel program, by deleting the requirement that such a business must serve meals prepared on the premises.
- 2 **Motorized bicycles.** Amends the definition of “motorized bicycle” in vehicle registration law to include bicycles powered by electric or liquid fuel motors.
- 3 **Exemption.** Exempts motorized foot scooters from vehicle registration and taxation.
- 4 **motorized bicycles.** Makes the same change as in section 2 in the definition of motorized bicycle in traffic law.
- 5 **Definition.** Defines “motorized foot scooter” as a device that:

- has handlebars
- may be sat or stood upon by the operator
- has an internal combustion engine or electric motor capable of propelling the device with or without human propulsion
- has either 10” or smaller wheels, or an engine or motor with a maximum speed of 15 mph on a flat surface

Excludes electric personal assistive mobility devices (segways), motorized bicycles, electric-assisted bicycles, and motorcycles.

6 Regulations. Regulates motorized foot scooters.

Subd. 1. Application of traffic laws. Makes operators of motorized foot scooters subject to same rights and duties as bicycle operators, except where specific regulations for motorized foot scooters apply or where bicycle provisions are inherently inapplicable.

Subd. 2. Sidewalks, passengers. Prohibits operation of motorized foot scooters on sidewalks except when entering or leaving adjacent property. Prohibits operation with a passenger.

Subd. 3. Age. Prohibits persons under age 12 from operating motorized foot scooters.

Subd. 4. Headgear. Requires persons under age 18 operating motorized foot scooters to wear headgear that complies with Department of Public Safety standards.

Subd. 5. Lighting. Requires motorized foot scooters to be equipped with headlight and taillight that meet department standards while being operated at a time when lights are required.

Subd. 6. Operation. Requires persons operating motorized foot scooters to ride as close as practicable to right-hand curb or edge or roadway, except when passing or making a left turn, or when avoiding impediments or unsafe conditions.

Allows operation of motorized foot scooters on bicycle paths, bicycle lanes, bicycle trails, and bikeways, unless (1) the path, lane, trail or bikeway has not been set aside exclusively for nonmotorized traffic, or (2) motorized foot scooters have been prohibited by local authorities on the path, lane, trail, or bikeway.

7 Motorized bicycle. Makes the same change as in section 2 in the definition of motorized bicycle in driver license law.