

HB 2671 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Transportation

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Meeting Dates: 2/13

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Lowers age required to wear protective headgear while using a motor assisted scooter. Removes the permission to pardon first time offenders from paying a fine.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon requires protective headgear to be worn while riding a motor assisted scooter, commonly referred to as an "e-scooter", regardless of age. Exemptions can be made if the protective headgear violates a religious belief or practice. Failure to wear protective headgear is a specific traffic violation and is subject to a presumptive fine of \$25. First-time offenders may not be required to pay the fine if they provide proof that they possess the approved protective headgear.

In 2017, e-scooters began proliferating in cities as a new transportation option, similar to bike sharing, in that riders use an application to rent and pay for each rental. The City of Portland conducted a pilot study in 2018 to gather information on the impact of e-scooters in the city. Key results from the study found that users rarely used helmets, riders preferred using the devices on bikeways when available, that and 700,369 trips were taken during the four-month study period. E-scooter related accidents increased in Portland during the study, but none involved fatalities. In the United States, deaths associated with e-scooters have occurred and national accidents are estimated to be over 1,500 injuries.

House Bill 2671 specifies that only riders under 16 years of age must wear a helmet while operating an e-scooter. The measure also eliminates the exemption of first-time offenders from paying a fine when found not wearing a helmet.