

HB19-1221

Summary Sheet

Concerning the Regulation of Electric Scooters

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Background

Electric scooters, or e-scooters, are a new, lightweight mode of transportation that has become wildly popular in cities across the world. E-scooters obtain a maximum speed of 20 miles per hour and can be rented inexpensively via any number of apps that charge the rider by distance or time. They help to decrease traffic congestion, parking shortages, and vehicle emissions.

E-scooters owned by companies like Lyft, Lime, and Bird can be found all throughout downtown and metro areas, but one issue that is constantly in question is where they should be ridden. One concern is that e-scooters are being used on sidewalks which impede walking traffic and those in wheelchairs or with vision impairments.

Purpose

E-scooters are currently classified as “toy vehicles” which are only authorized to be used on sidewalks, but not for use on roadways or bike lanes. HB19-1221 removes e-scooters from the definition of “toy vehicles” and includes them in the definition of “motor vehicles,” therefore allowing them to be used on more appropriate roadways. E-scooters riders will be afforded the same rights and duties that e-bicycles have under Colorado law.

HB19-1221 regulates e-scooters in a manner similar to electric-assisted bicycles and also allows local governments to regulate the use of e-scooters in a manner consistent with e-bicycles. Local governments have complete authority to set their own regulations, traffic rules, parking requirements and fine structures that the local government can enact and modify at any time. The City and County of Denver recently enacted their own e-Scooter ordinance.

E-scooters can have a positive impact on the environment that can lead to lower carbon emissions for someone who would like to travel a short distance and avoid taking a vehicle. Many states have already begun to implement various forms of policy surrounding how e-scooters should be regulated, and the state of Colorado should follow suit.

Support

