

Executive Summary: Health Impact Review of HB 1256

Increasing monetary penalties for the unlawful use of a personal electronic device while driving a motor vehicle in a school, playground, or crosswalk speed zone (2019 Legislative Session)

Evidence indicates that HB 1256 has the potential to decrease distracted driving and increase revenue for the School Zone Safety Account, which in turn have the potential to reduce injuries and fatalities among pedestrians and bicyclists within school, playground, and crosswalk speed zones. There is no evidence to indicate how provisions may affect populations that experience inequities in pedestrian and bicyclist injuries and fatalities.

BILL INFORMATION

Sponsors: Lovick, Irwin, Valdez, Orwall, Kloba, Sells, Slatter, Riccelli, Gregerson, Ortiz-Self, Kilduff, Mead, Doglio, Goodman, Dolan, Peterson, Stonier, Reeves, Appleton

Summary of Bill:

- Increases the financial penalty of operating a motor vehicle while using a wireless communications device to two times the penalty amount under RCW 46.63.110 when it occurs within a school, playground, or crosswalk speed zone created under RCW 46.61.400.
- Requires 50% of the moneys collected under this subsection to be deposited into the school zone safety account RCW 46.61.440.

HEALTH IMPACT REVIEW

Summary of Findings:

This Health Impact Review found the following evidence regarding the provisions in HB 1256:

Pathway 1: Double financial penalties

- There is a fair amount of evidence that increasing the financial penalty for operating a motor vehicle while using a wireless communications device within a school zone would likely decrease distracted driving.
- Strong evidence that decreasing distracted driving would likely reduce injuries and fatalities among people who walk and bike in school zones.

Pathway 2: School Zone Safety Account

This review makes the informed assumption that requiring that 50% of the moneys collected be deposited into the School Zone Safety Account would result in increased safety and enforcement equipment, traffic safety design treatments (e.g., flashing beacons), and bicycle/pedestrian education programs in Washington State school zones. This informed assumption is based on discussions with staff at the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC).

- There is a fair amount of evidence that increasing safety and enforcement equipment, traffic safety treatments, and programs in school zones would likely reduce injuries and fatalities among people who walk and bike in school zones.

There is no available evidence that provisions would disproportionately affect, positively or negatively, the populations that experience inequities in pedestrian and bicyclist injuries and fatalities.

FULL REVIEW

For review methods, logic model, strength-of-evidence analyses, and citations of empirical evidence refer to the full Health Impact Review at

<https://sboh.wa.gov/Portals/7/Doc/HealthImpactReviews/HIR-2019-07-HB1256.pdf>

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