

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**LEGISLATIVE BILL REVIEW FORM: 2014**

**Bill Number:** S.170 **Name of Bill:** Motor vehicles; financial responsibility; operator's license; driver education and training

**Agency/Dept:** Dept. Public Safety – State Police **Author of Bill Review:** SGT. Garry Scott

**Date of Bill Review:** 01-10-2014 **Status of Bill: (check one):**

X **Upon Introduction**            **As passed by 1<sup>st</sup> body**            **As passed by both bodies**

**Recommended Position:**

1+2 **Support**            **Oppose** 3 **Remain Neutral** 2 **Support with modifications identified in # 8 below**

**Analysis of Bill**

**1. Summary of bill and issue it addresses.**

- (1) require operators of motor vehicles registered in Vermont to carry proof of insurance or of self-insurance;
- (2) limit the period within which a person may submit proof of licensure after being cited for failure to carry a license certificate;
- (3) require persons under 21 years of age to complete a driver education and training course in order to be eligible for an operator's license.

**2. Is there a need for this bill?**

- (1) This would aid an officer at roadside in determining if a vehicle is properly insured. The onus would be on the vehicle's operator to provide proof to the officer that the vehicle was insured at the time of the initial contact.
- (2) This would streamline the process of establishing a person had a valid license at the time of the motor vehicle stop, by requiring the operator display their license to the officer (within 5 days) instead of displaying the license at the time of a court appearance (as is now indicated in the statute).
- (3) This would improve highway safety by assuring all novice drivers under age 21 have to complete an approved driver education course prior to licensure.

**3. What are likely to be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for this Department?**

There are no known impacts on the State Police.

**4. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for other departments in state government, and what is likely to be their perspective on it?**

DMV may need to make computer changes to accommodate a new offense code. These IT costs are undetermined. Failure to pay the associated fine for this new offense may result in more

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license suspensions.

The section 3 requirement would result in more individuals under age 21 being required to take an approved driver education course prior to licensure. This would require more oversight of private driver training schools by staff of the Department of Motor Vehicles

State law enforcement officers should look favorably on sections 1 and 2.

The Agency of Education, as well as the Governor's Highway Safety Program, should weigh in on Section 3.

**5. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for others, and what is likely to be their perspective on it? (for example, public, municipalities, organizations, business, regulated entities, etc)**

The Judicial Bureau should be made aware of these proposed changes and have the opportunity for input.

**6. Other Stakeholders:**

**6.1 Who else is likely to support the proposal and why?**

Other Vermont law enforcement agencies will support the proposed changes in sections 1 & 2. Section 3 - State and Private driver education programs, Governor's Highway Safety Program, NHTSA, and the Vermont Highway Safety Alliance will all support this change.

**6.2 Who else is likely to oppose the proposal and why?**

No known opposition to sections 1 & 2.

The Agency of Education may raise concerns about the mandatory provision and how it could affect access and affordability.

**7. Rationale for recommendation:**

Section 1: Support. This should make it easier for law enforcement officers to enforce regulations requiring insurance for registered motor vehicles.

Section 2: Support. This change would streamline the process for an operator proving he was licensed at the time of a traffic stop, and probably codifies the practice currently taking place.

Section 3: Remain neutral: This section is a bit more challenging. No one can argue a person that has received training in a given area should be more proficient than someone who has received no training.

Currently, a 16 or 17 year old Vermonter who wants to obtain a Junior Driver's License must obtain and utilize a Learner Permit for 12 months, take an approved driver education course, and is subject to the provisions of the Graduated Driver License law. A person over 18 years of age does not have to meet any of these requirements to obtain a Driver's License.

In 2011, a panel of experts from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) conducted an assessment of Driver Education in Vermont. One of the findings was: "There are numerous teens waiting until age 18 to obtain a license therefore, avoiding driver education and GDL. While the reduction in crashes for the drivers 18 and 19 is significant, it is not as significant as the reduction in crashes for the 16 and 17 year old drivers."

The following chart shows learner permits and junior driver licenses issued since 2008 are trending

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down. Students completing driver education through high school programs have also declined.

YEAR	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	% change from 2008
Permits ages 15,16,17)	9,833	9,502	9,503	9,339	9539	9196	-7%
Jr. Operator's License (ages 16,17)	8,294	7,809	7,434	7,421	7375	7144	-14%
Students Completing Driver Education High Schools	5,715	5,479	5,040	4,934	4991	4883	-15%
Students Completing Driver Education Commercial Schools	1,489	1,385	1,378	1,341	1346	1498	0%

A survey of other states determined:

- Most states do not require driver education for individuals age 18 and above.

**8. Specific modifications that would be needed to recommend support of this bill:**

Section 2: Other states, such as Massachusetts, require vehicle owners to provide proof of insurance when registering the vehicle and then print the insurance carrier on the registration certificate. This would eliminate the operator having to provide proof of insurance to law enforcement via a separate form.



**Secretary/Commissioner has reviewed this  
document**

**Date: 01/13/14**

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