

JAN 26 2011

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO MOPEDES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Section 291C-195, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 "**§291C-195 Driving of mopeds.** (a) No person less than
4 fifteen years of age shall drive a moped on a highway, street,
5 roadway, or any other public property in the State. No person
6 less than eighteen years of age shall drive a moped unless the
7 person wears a safety helmet securely fastened with a chin
8 strap. The safety helmet shall meet the specifications and
9 requirements established by rules adopted by the director.

10 (b) No person shall drive a moped except while sitting
11 astride the seat, facing forward, with one leg on each side of
12 the moped.

13 (c) No person shall drive a moped which is carrying any
14 other person nor shall any person other than the driver ride
15 upon a moped.

Report Title:

Moped; Three-wheeled; Passengers; Age Requirement

Description:

Requires passengers on a three-wheeled moped to be at least seven years of age.

JUSTIFICATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Transportation

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO MOPEDS.

PURPOSE: Requires passengers on 3-wheeled mopeds to be at least seven years of age.

MEANS: Amend section 291C-195, Hawaii Revised Statutes so the restriction regarding passenger age for motorcycles in section 291-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes is extended to three-wheeled mopeds.

JUSTIFICATION: When section 291C-195, Hawaii Revised Statutes was amended by Act 197 of Session Laws of Hawaii 2008, the focus of attention was on allowing a passenger to ride in a three-wheeled moped designed to carry two people seated side-by-side as in an automobile. The age of the passenger was not discussed. As a result, there are instances where people carry passengers less than seven years old in these vehicles that are nowhere near being as safe as a passenger car. Like motorcycles, three-wheeled mopeds are not crash tested for safety. A three-wheeled moped that is set up to carry a passenger seated beside the driver is an effort at making available to the public an inexpensive vehicle that is relatively fuel efficient. The seating arrangement and use of a steering wheel rather than handlebars make the vehicle appear to be similar to a car, but with only three wheels, it is far more susceptible to turning over than a car. In addition, the light weight and relative flimsy construction greatly enhance the vulnerability of the moped occupants in the event of a crash. Since the Legislature saw fit to restrict very young passengers on motorcycles, it seems prudent to include the same restriction on three-wheeled mopeds.

Impact on the public: We have no crash data to support the proposed change, but intuitively the change would reduce the probability of injury to young children.

Impact on the department and other agencies: There will be no impact on the Department of Transportation. The businesses that rent three-wheeled mopeds will no longer be able to rent them to people who intend to carry a passenger younger than seven years of age.

GENERAL FUND: None.

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PBS PROGRAM
DESIGNATION: TRN 597.

OTHER AFFECTED
AGENCIES: None.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval.