

Committee on Infrastructure and Security

CS/CS/HB 971 — Electric Bicycles

by State Affairs Committee; Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee; and Rep. Grant and others (CS/SB 1148 by Infrastructure and Security Committee and Senator Brandes)

The bill addresses the definition and operation of electric bicycles (e-bikes) within a three-tiered classification system, revising a number of related definitions. The bill creates regulations governing the operation of e-bikes, affording an e-bike or e-bike operator with all of the rights and privileges, and subjecting them to all of the duties, of a bicycle or bicycle operator. E-bikes are authorized to operate where bicycles are allowed, including, but not limited to, streets, highways, roadways, shoulders, bicycle lanes, and bicycle or multiuse paths. However, the bill provides that the new e-bike regulations may not be construed to prevent a local government from regulating the operation of e-bikes on streets, highways, sidewalks, and sidewalk areas under the local government's jurisdiction; or to prevent a municipality, county, or agency of the state having jurisdiction over a bicycle path, multiuse path, or trail network from restricting or prohibiting the operation of an e-bike on such paths or trail networks.

The bill provides that an e-bike or an e-bike operator is not subject to the provisions of law relating to financial responsibility, driver or motor vehicle licenses, vehicle registration, title certificates, off-highway motorcycles, or off-highway vehicles. Additionally, the bill sets out labeling requirements for manufacturers and distributors of electric bicycles and prohibits tampering with or modifying an electric bicycle unless the label is replaced after modification.

Lastly, the bill makes a number of technical and conforming changes throughout related statutory provisions.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2020.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 118-0