

HB 327 Stop Light State Laws Summary

Researched February 2012, Dan Fazzini Jr – www.safe-route.org

Out of 51 Jurisdictions including Washington DC:

- 13 States had allowances for un-responsive lights for motorcycles or both motorcycles and bicycles. All the states language only specified that the operator proceed with caution and not interfere with another's ROW who was lawfully crossing (language varies). They do not provide the additional guidance and restrictions in HB327. Wait time varies.
 - Bicycle and Motorcycle
 - Colorado – non-intersections only, “several” cycles, 1995
 - Idaho – Bicycles don't need to wait, m/c one full cycle,
 - Illinois – Other than Chicago, reasonable period of time
 - Kansas – reasonable period of time
 - Pennsylvania – no time period, treat as stop sign, before 2001
 - South Carolina – 2 minutes, 2008
 - Tennessee – no time limit
 - Virginia – lesser of 2 cycles or 2 minutes, treat as stop sign, 2011
 - Wisconsin – 45 seconds (Bicycles do not need to wait a specific time), 2005
 - Bicycle Only
 - None Found
 - Motorcycle Only
 - Arkansas – no time limit
 - Minnesota – unreasonable time, before 2002
 - Oklahoma – no time limit, 2010
 - North Carolina - 3 Minutes
- 2 States had laws requiring the DOT and local agencies to install sensors which detect motorcycles and bicycles, but provide no guidance when they don't work correctly:
 - Texas, addresses motorcycles, and does not indicate for just new or also existing devices, 2007
 - California, theirs sunsets in 2018, but requires new installations to detect bicycles and motorcycles, around 2010
- Time Limits are as follows:
 - (7) None Specified/Reasonable Period: *Arkansas, Illinois (2012 may go to 2 minutes), Kansas, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee*
 - (4) One or two cycles or two minutes: *Colorado, Idaho, South Carolina, Virginia*
 - (1) 45 Seconds: *Wisconsin*
 - (1) 3 minutes: *North Carolina*
- When Enacted:
 - (6) Unknown: *Arkansas, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, North Carolina, Tennessee*
 - (3) Last five years: *Oklahoma, South Carolina, Virginia*
 - (4) More than five years: *Colorado, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin*

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Hoskin bill rescues cyclists stuck at red lights **(<http://pryordailytimes.com/local/x1700427225/Hoskin-bill-rescues-cyclists-stuck-at-red-lights>)**

(<http://pryordailytimes.com>)

OKLAHOMA CITY — OKLAHOMA CITY – When motorcyclists roll up to a red light, they can end up waiting a long time for the light to change because motorcycles are often too light to trigger the traffic detector, but that will change soon with the passage of Senate Bill 1329, which was signed into law last week by

Gov. Brad Henry.

The new law, the Motorcycle Mobility and Safety Act, will allow motorcyclists to proceed through a red traffic light when the signal fails to change, but only after certain conditions are met. The law only applies at traffic signals which are triggered by a traffic detector, not those which are on a timer. Before proceeding, the motorcyclist must come to a complete stop as prescribed by law. Then they must determine that there are no other vehicles or pedestrians approaching the roadway to be crossed or entered, unless the approaching vehicle is so far away that no immediate hazard would be posed.

The bill was authored by Sen. Randy Bass, D-Lawton, Rep. Chuck Hoskin, D-Vinita, and Rep. Pat Owenby, R-Ardmore. Rep. Hoskin has been working for several years to get such a

provision implemented.

“I have been trying for the past three years to get something done about

the problem motorcyclists face at traffic lights controlled by traffic detectors,” said Rep. Hoskin, who serves as Chairman of the Democratic Caucus in the Oklahoma House of Representatives. “Several of the organizations representing motorcycle enthusiasts have been in contact with me on this, and I am grateful to my colleagues for passing the legislation and to the governor for signing it. I know the motorcycle riding

public will be equally appreciative.”

Rep. Hoskin said it took time to get the measure passed because many legislators didn’t fully understand the safety issues involved.

“The main reason behind the national movement for this legislation is safety. We have had a lot of riders struck from behind while stopped at a traffic light, and unfortunately these rear-end collisions are often fatal for the rider,” Rep. Hoskin explained.

“I think there has also been a misperception that this we were just trying

to let motorcyclists get around the law, and nothing could be farther from the truth,” said Rep. Hoskin, who rides a motorcycle himself at times. “We know that any time you have a motorcycle versus a car, the motorcycle is going to be the loser, so riders tend

to be very conscientious about obeying traffic laws. This law provides that if a motorcyclist goes through a red light under its provisions and is involved in an accident, the liability for the accident will belong solely to the motorcyclist.”

His efforts to explain the merits of the bill apparently succeeded, as SB1329 passed 92-2 in the House and 47-0 in the Senate. The bill goes into effect on Nov. 1.



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News

Motorcycles get green light to go on red

By Danny Rathbun/Capital News Service

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RICHMOND – If you ride a motorcycle or bicycle, you probably know the frustration of getting stuck at a red light that just won't change – because the sensors under the street can't detect your two-wheeler.

Two-wheel vehicles will be allowed to run those red lights, under certain situations, under a bill signed into law Thursday by Gov. Bob McDonnell.

House Bill 1981 will let motorcyclists, moped riders and bicyclists pass through red lights, as long as there is no oncoming traffic, after waiting 120 seconds or two cycles of the light. The law will take effect July 1.

Champe Burnley, president of the Virginia Bicycling Federation, said riders of two-wheel vehicles often end up trapped at red lights, with no safe, legal option about what to do, because motorcycles and bikes aren't heavy enough or don't have enough metal to trip the sensor.

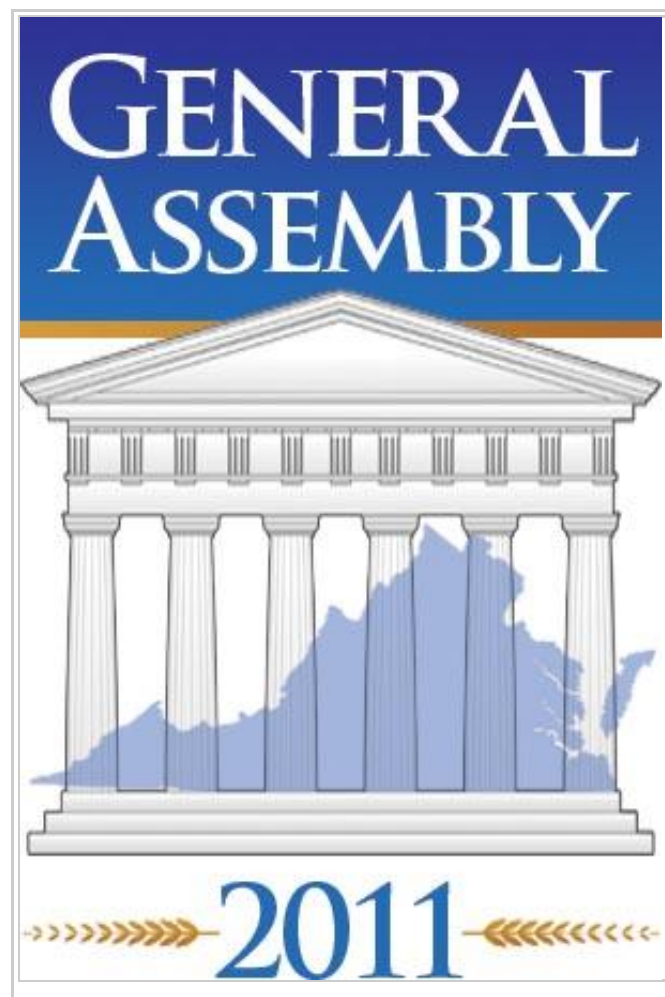
"Most of the traffic signals today have a wire in the road – so it's an induction loop. And frequently there's just not enough metallic mass for the induction loop to pick up a cycle that goes over there," Burnley said.

"If you're on a bike and you get to a stoplight – and I stop for stoplights religiously – it puts me into a difficult position. Because if the light doesn't change, I've either got to wait for a car to come up behind me to trip the stoplight, or I've got to break the law – and I don't like to do that."

Delegate Thomas "Tag" Greason, who sponsored HB 1981, said the legislation will make things much safer for riders.

"The bill is designed to increase the safety for those riders who ride motorcycles, mopeds or bicycles," Greason said. "When they approach and are stranded at an intersection, and the weight of their vehicle is not great enough to trigger the light, and so they're stranded at a red light, and they really don't have any legal options available to them under today's code."

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Greason, a Republican from Potomac Falls, said some people raised questions about who would be at fault if a motorcycle runs a red light and causes an accident. But those questions have been addressed in the bill, he said.

“Imagine that the red light is a stop sign: If the motorcyclist pulls out into oncoming traffic and causes an accident, he would have the same liability if he was at a red light or if he was at a stop sign,” Greason said.

Under his measure, motorcycles and bicycles must come to a complete stop at a red light and wait for 120 seconds or two cycles of the light.

“Then they proceed with caution, as if they were at a stop sign, and they must maintain all the liability, and give way to oncoming traffic, from either direction,” Greason said. “So there is no transfer of liability.”

Delegate Bill Janis (R-Glen Allen) introduced a similar measure – HB 1991. His proposal was folded into Greason’s bill.

HB 1981 passed the House on a 75-24 vote in January. The Senate then unanimously approved the bill – with an amendment emphasizing that bicyclists and motorcyclists who proceed through a red light must yield to oncoming traffic. The House then voted 87-11 in favor of the amended bill.

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