

House Transportation Committee

February 27, 2025

Bill: 5th Substitute SB 195 – Transportation Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Wayne A. Harper

Floor Sponsor: Representative Kay J. Christofferson

UASD Position: Support

This Bill amends provisions related to transportation items, including road rage, hybrid vehicle registration fees, and adherence to proposed phases of certain transportation developments.

Discussion: Senator Harper presented the 5th substitute of the Bill, which was adopted by the Committee. This Bill addresses issues studied by the Transportation Interim Committee and aims to improve transportation policy within the state. It clarifies air ambulance guidelines to ensure the nearest available units are contacted, establishes regulations for electric unicycles, self-balancing electronic vehicles, and skateboards, and enhances safety measures for the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”). Additionally, it repeals the Critical Needs and Centennial Highway Fund, as both have been completed, and confirms that UDOT must follow the phasing program for the Environmental Impact Statement. The Bill also clarifies that UDOT is responsible for maintaining street lighting it has installed at intersections.

The Bill introduces three transportation-related studies. The first requires stakeholders to collaborate with cities to identify dead-end roads and evaluate whether they should be connected. The second directs UDOT and the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”) to conduct enhanced mobility studies focused on human service transportation, identifying the most efficient ways to transport those in need. The third study, conducted by UDOT and Salt Lake City, examines the changing impact of transportation in the city. Additionally, \$1.8 million will be allocated from the General Fund for litter clean-up.

Representative Chevrier inquired about the compromises made in the 5th substitute. The sponsor explained that initial concerns involved the state's ability to make changes to stop signs and similar traffic controls. The revised version now limits these changes to instances where they restrict capacity. A review is scheduled for 2027, allowing an interim committee to assess the policy with the possibility of repeal. The Bill also addresses pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit mobility. When asked what specific enhancements had been made for pedestrians and cyclists, the sponsor stated that the study aims to identify how best to address those concerns.

Multiple members of the public spoke both in support of and in opposition to the Bill. The Director of the Bureau of EMS and the Department of Public Safety expressed support. After hearing numerous objections from the public, Representative Ivory asked the sponsor whether anything in the 5th substitute would compromise community safety and comfort. The sponsor emphasized that the Bill is designed to improve the safety and mobility of transportation methods while addressing stakeholder concerns and ensuring public safety and comfort.

Yeas: 10

Nays: 2

N/V: 0

Outcome: 5th Substitute SB 195 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

UNASSD