

TRAFFIC SAFETY FOR ALL

HB 1513, SB 5572

ACLU
Washington

Traffic deaths have increased in Washington in recent years, yet police resources too often are used to stop, ticket, and fine drivers for minor infractions that do not pose a threat to road safety. Washington doesn't need to choose between road safety and equity — we can have both.

Traffic Safety for All (House Bill 1513, Senate Bill 5572) deprioritizes traffic stops for non-safety-related reasons to help law enforcement better enforce traffic laws that pose a serious threat to driver safety, such as impaired and distracted driving.

HB 1513 WILL IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY:

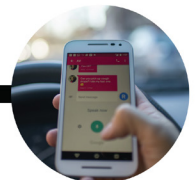
HB 1513, SB 5572 removes the burden of police stopping drivers for non-safety related reasons, including expired tabs, a broken taillight or headlight, and other equipment violations that are not actual dangers on the road. This frees officers to focus on more serious violations such as drunk, distracted, and reckless drivers, which are the greatest threats to road safety. Officers will still enforce all traffic violations under HB 1513, SB 5572 — non-safety stops just will not be the primary reason a driver is pulled over.

A REVAMPED TRAFFIC STOPS POLICY WILL INCREASE EQUITY:

Data shows prioritizing safety stops reduces racial disparity in overall traffic stops. Current traffic stops policies leave drivers — particularly Black drivers, and other people of color — feeling targeted and profiled. Non-safety related traffic stops have, at their worst, escalated to violent, even deadly, encounters putting drivers and law enforcement at risk. These stops are also often excuses to search drivers for no lawful reason. Washington State Patrol data from 2009 to 2018 shows large racial disparities in searches: officers searched Black drivers' vehicles at twice the rate we would expect based on the proportion of Black people in the population, even though white drivers were more likely to have contraband found when searched. HB 1513, SB 5572 will reduce needless encounters between drivers and officers, ensuring both can get home safe.

HB 1513'S GRANT PROGRAM PROMOTES ECONOMIC JUSTICE:

The bill creates a grant program that, instead of fees and fines, helps low-income drivers fix their vehicles and keep them in compliance. Equipment violations are often a sign of poverty, not dangerous driving. Drivers want functioning vehicles, but not everyone can afford repairs or tab renewals, forcing them to choose between using their paycheck on repairs or other basic needs. Tickets and the cost of registration renewal are a significant expense for people who live at the poverty level. Adding fees and fines to a person who cannot afford them will not make any of us safer on the road — it will just trap people in poverty. HB 1513, SB 5572 ensures that we can have safer roads without excessive fines and fees on people who can't afford them.



Driving Under the Influence

Distracted Driving



Speeding

Reckless Driving

Shattered Windshield