

HB 1740 -- DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED (Griffith)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Crime and Public Safety

Currently, a person who has had his or her driver's license suspended or revoked because of an assessment of points for an intoxication-related traffic offense conviction and who has a prior alcohol-related enforcement contact must show proof to the Director of Revenue that any motor vehicle driven by the person has a certified ignition interlock device installed, and the ignition interlock device must be installed for at least six months. Under this bill, the requirement applies only to a person who has an intoxication-related traffic offense conviction in which the person's blood alcohol content (BAC) was at least .08 but less than .15 and who has a prior alcohol-related enforcement contact or to a person who has an assessment of points for an intoxication-related traffic offense conviction in which the person's BAC was found to be .15 or more.

The bill also prohibits restricted driving privileges to be issued to any person whose driving record shows an intoxication-related traffic offense in which the person's BAC was found to be .15 or more until the person files proof with the Department of Revenue that any motor vehicle operated by the person is equipped with a functioning, certified ignition interlock device.

The bill also modifies the offense of driving while intoxicated. Currently, the offense is a class E felony if the defendant, while driving intoxicated, acts with criminal negligence, causing physical injury to another person. The bill increases the penalty for this provision to a class D felony. It is currently a class D felony if the defendant, while driving intoxicated, acts with criminal negligence, causing serious physical injury to another person. The bill increases the penalty for this provision to a class C felony. Currently, if the defendant is driving while intoxicated and acts with criminal negligence to cause the death of another person, the defendant is guilty of a class C felony; this bill increases the penalty for that to a class B felony. If the defendant, while driving intoxicated, acts with criminal negligence to cause the death of two or more persons or to cause the death of any person while the defendant has a BAC of at least .15 by weight of alcohol, or the defendant has been previously been found guilty as a habitual offender or of driving while intoxicated and causing the death of another person, the defendant will be guilty of a class A felony.

A person found guilty of driving while intoxicated and acting with criminal negligence to cause the death of another person will not be eligible for probation or parole until the person has served at least five years' imprisonment. If the person has been found guilty of acting with criminal negligence, while driving while intoxicated, to cause the death of two or more persons or to cause the death of any person while the defendant has a BAC of at least .15 by weight of alcohol, the person will not be eligible for probation or parole until the person has served at least 10 years' imprisonment.

This bill is similar to HCS HB 87 (2025) and HB 2768 (2024).