

INITIATIVE MEASURE NO. 986

Filed

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SECRETARY OF STATE

"I AM YOUR SAMARITAN ACT"

AN ACT Relating to driver's license and permit requirements, under instruction permit; amending RCW 46.20.055; and creating new sections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1)** (1) During these difficult times involving terrorism and various acts of inhumanity, we must unite and rise above the negativity and impose our love upon one another. Let the world know there is a higher power within us. So we must dig a little deeper to find the well with the good water that will nurture our next generation of Samaritans for a better tomorrow. We must identify the deficiencies within our society, and improve upon them, and begin by asking ourselves the fundamental question: What is the greatest gift we can give another human being? Therefore, we, the people of the state of Washington, shall make it our responsibility, by imposing an act of love and kindness that will strengthen our new generation of teenagers and young adults for a better quality of life for all those they touch. Some might call it "tough love" but, all those seeking to obtain a driver's permit, shall be required to complete a course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation including automated external defibrillator (CPR/AED) and first aid as approved by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross (or recognized equivalent per the (WAC) Washington Administrative Code, prior to the issuance of a driver's instruction permit.

(2) Our state's population of new and inexperienced drivers is primarily composed of teenagers and young adults. Statistically, this age group is responsible for more vehicular related accidents and claims more lives while operating a vehicle than any other population in this state. So how deep is the well that holds the water for this cure? If we can imagine that attitude and maturity go hand in hand

with how a young mind may perceive themselves and others, we may have tapped an invaluable source of water to improve our future. In the vast science of behavioral modification, there must be an undeniable consensus that people perform better when they feel better about themselves and possess the skill set to accomplish what they set out to do. This effective age group is conceivably an optimal time to shape and cultivate their attitudes towards one another as they approach adulthood, to help them learn, adopt, and incorporate helping skills and behaviors which could play an important role in shaping their character. Learning lifesaving skills will positively impact even their own coping mechanisms during time dependent emergencies including those situations not so life-threatening. Inspire this group of youngsters to help others as they improve their own self-perception and self-esteem. They instantly become greater assets to their friends and family. And since they feel valuable to those around them, and possess the skills to answer the call, they are more likely to help a perfect stranger. People have a tendency to panic when they don't know what to do, especially, in a situation involving an emergency medical crisis. Studies indicate that people oftentimes ignore others that need emergency care simply because they don't know how to help. The required course will provide the exposure, the basic education, coordination, various techniques, and required practice and demonstration of the helping skills from each participant. The knowledge and the skills designed to inspire one to respond decisively without hesitation, instead of doing nothing, or fleeing from the scene.

(3) This measure would give Washington state national attention as the first state of the union to adopt a measure of this kind; the kind of measure that promotes the spirit of goodness and kindness towards their fellow man. Secondary and tertiary benefits behind the topic of bringing care and compassion to our population of youth and young adults will spread into the classrooms of our schools, and onto the dinner tables of American families for discussion, perpetuating a level of awareness, which would be difficult to ignore. Often youngsters don't know that they are good at something until we've made them do it. And when they realize that they are good at it they may choose to become a doctor, a nurse, or some other noble professional because of it. Or simply gain the confidence as a trained and able Samaritan within any profession they choose to do, and make it a noble

one because of who they've become. We can all look forward to a day when a majority of our population in our society are prepared to prevent premature death among the sick and injured, or at minimum, improve a person's viability for full recovery until advanced emergency care professionals resume care. The intrinsic tax revenues can be calculated on the basis of sixty-five dollars per participant, which is a typical cost for the course through a local fire department in the state of Washington. It is anticipated that the annual number of applications for the driver's instruction permit will not be affected when considering the targeted age group's desire and motivation. Their desire and motivation to seek their independence and get behind the wheel of a vehicle will far exceed the inconvenience of learning how to save someone's life, including their own, in time of need. And finally, imagine how many taxpayer dollars are saved each year with each life saved? Going one step further, each life saved before any irreversible brain damage has occurred? Medical expenses can reach exorbitant levels to re-teach someone how to write or walk again as a result of oxygen and glucose deprivation to the brain beyond the four minute window of relative safety. This can be prevented by early intervention as learned in the course which this act will require in order to obtain a driver's permit. The remarkable savings in health care rehabilitation is another area of dramatic financial savings and triumph. Categorically, the end result is a win, win, and win for everyone!

(4) The myriad of benefits waiting to stream from this act is based on adding a simple requirement on the path of obtaining a driver's instruction permit. Not so complicated. It also connects our students, our schools, our neighborhoods, and communities in touch with our professional Samaritans, establishing another venue to promote the relationship piece between citizen and their local fire departments, law enforcement, both public and private sector ambulance teams, as well as other facilities and educators who provide such education. Keeping people within communities connected. While there are other mechanisms or incentives by which lawmakers may exercise to increase our population of trained initial responders across all socioeconomic stratifications, one obvious and notable observation over the decades by the American Heart Association and the American Red Cross, is that if a person is not required to attend cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid classes they don't take

the initiative to enroll on their own persuasion. If they did, this initiative would not exist. Citizens who have the skills, whose occupations require certification, training, or proof of attendance and participation in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid instruction, comprise just a small segment of the general population. The trend is self-evident, apparent, and tried over the years. The determinant factor is by incentive, prerequisite, or requirement. The adoption of this act is therefore justified.

Sec. 2) RCW 46.20.055 and 2006 c 219 s 14 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) **Driver's instruction permit.** The department may issue a driver's instruction permit with or without a photograph to an applicant who has successfully passed all parts of the examination other than the driving test, provided the information required by RCW 46.20.091, submitted verification of completion of a cardiopulmonary resuscitation, including automated external defibrillator (CPR/AED), and first aid course approved by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross, (or recognized equivalent per WAC) paid a fee of twenty dollars, and meets the following requirements:

- (a) Is at least fifteen and one-half years of age; or
- (b) Is at least fifteen years of age and:
 - (i) Has submitted a proper application; and
 - (ii) Is enrolled in a traffic safety education program offered, approved, and accredited by the superintendent of public instruction or offered by a driver training school licensed and inspected by the department of licensing under chapter 46.82 RCW, that includes practice driving.

(2) **Waiver of written examination for instruction permit.** The department may waive the written examination, if, at the time of application, an applicant is enrolled in:

- (a) A traffic safety education course as defined by RCW 28A.220.020(2); or
- (b) A course of instruction offered by a licensed driver training school as defined by RCW 46.82.280(4).

The department may require proof of registration in such a course as it deems necessary.

(3) **Effect of instruction permit.** A person holding a driver's instruction permit may drive a motor vehicle, other than a motorcycle,

upon the public highways if:

(a) The person has immediate possession of the permit; and

(b) An approved instructor, or a licensed driver with at least five years of driving experience, occupies the seat beside the driver.

(4) **Term of instruction permit.** A driver's instruction permit is valid for one year from the date of issue.

(a) The department may issue one additional one-year permit.

(b) The department may issue a third driver's permit if it finds after an investigation that the permittee is diligently seeking to improve driving proficiency.

(c) A person applying to renew an instruction permit must submit the application to the department in person.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3)** The provisions of this act are to be liberally construed to effectuate the intent, policies, and purposes of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4)** If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5)** This act shall be known and cited as the "I am your Samaritan act." The name of this act is an integral part of the message and mission of this initiative. It exhumes the higher power within us. It inspires people, as a group, and even goes all the way down to the intimate level of an individual as a sole rescuer, to answer the call of the hour. Whether it's close to home or far away, it sees no boundaries. The name of this act signifies the presence of the Samaritan within every person that is prepared to answer the call. The call to give the greatest gift that one can give to another human being, life. Our generation of citizens has the obligation to respond as Samaritans to promote changes to improve the human condition for the sake of humanity. This is a non-partisan effort to significantly improve the health and well-being of all of our citizens within this state, ultimately our nation, and the world over. It has to start somewhere and the somewhere is here. Now is the time to unite and rise above ourselves and impose our love upon one another. We have found the well with the good water. Everyone is

encouraged to register and vote for the message and mission contained in this act which will effectively increase the number of trained initial responders each year, year after year, within our dearly beloved state, while transforming our population of teenagers and young adults for the better!