

Select Committee Report Summary

The Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill, 2017

- The Select Committee to examine the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (Chairperson: Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabudhe) submitted its report on December 22, 2017. The Bill amends the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. It was passed by Lok Sabha on April 10, 2017, and referred to the Rajya Sabha Select Committee on August 8, 2017. The Bill was previously examined by the Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture in February 2017.
- The Committee recommended that the Bill as passed by Lok Sabha be passed without any amendments. Few observations and recommendations of the Committee include:
 - **Regional transport offices:** The Committee noted that the Bill will help strengthen public transport, road safety, automation and computerisation, online learning licence, registration of new vehicles, renewal of driving licences, the National Permit System, and the concept of last mile connectivity. These provisions are citizen friendly and will help in enhancing the concept of cooperative federalism between the central and state governments. The Committee also noted that the amendments proposed in the Bill will not affect the independent functioning of the regional transport offices under the state governments. It recommended that their functioning could be made more transparent and accountable.
 - **Electronic monitoring:** The Bill mandates state governments to ensure electronic monitoring and enforcement of road safety on national highways, state highways, and urban roads as per guidelines framed by the central government. The Committee observed that an electronic monitoring system is currently being implemented in Kerala. It recommended that the same automated traffic enforcement project can be replicated on both state and national highways across the country. It also recommended that every traffic policeman should have body wearable cameras and the offences recorded should be digitally stored and monitored.
 - **Improving road safety:** The Committee noted that while the law is good and there are sufficient rule and regulations to promote road safety, enforcement still remains the key factor to improve road safety. It also noted that other countries have shifted to creating safety systems that recognise that humans will make errors, and therefore focus on designing road transport systems which minimise the opportunity for human error.
- It recommended that sustainable mobility with a focus on pedestrians, cyclists and bus users should be the principle of policy making. Since these fall under the domain of the state government, it recommended that state enforcement agencies should implement the law well to protect the interests of these users.
- **Consultative mechanism:** The Committee noted that the consultative mechanism with stakeholders with regard to the 1988 Act is very poor. It recommended that the government should create a consultative mechanism involving all stakeholders when framing subordinate legislation. It also recommended that the government should invite comments and suggestions from the general public before making any rules, notification and schemes.
- **Single tax and permit system:** The Committee noted that inter-state and national permits require cumbersome procedures and payment of hefty amount as taxes and fees. For example, if a bus has to ply in five southern states, then it has to pay Rs 42 lakh of permit fee every year. The Committee recommended that the central and state governments may work out modalities to implement a single tax and single permit system across the country.
- **Other recommendations to be included in the Rules:** The Committee suggested various issues that may be addressed when framing Rules under the law. These include: (i) prescribing strict guidelines and checklist for proper functioning of vehicle dealers; (ii) increasing the punishment to up to seven years, in case of death in an accident caused due to drunken driving; (iii) considering if every new vehicle purchased may be required to pay the third party insurance for the life time of the vehicle at the time of registration; and (iv) exploring the possibility of enhancing the compensation to victims of hit and run cases.

DISCLAIMER: This document is being furnished to you for your information. You may choose to reproduce or redistribute this report for non-commercial purposes in part or in full to any other person with due acknowledgement of PRS Legislative Research ("PRS"). The opinions expressed herein are entirely those of the author(s). PRS makes every effort to use reliable and comprehensive information, but PRS does not represent that the contents of the report are accurate or complete. PRS is an independent, not-for-profit group. This document has been prepared without regard to the objectives or opinions of those who may receive it.