

Date of Hearing: August 20, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 586 (Jones) – As Amended July 16, 2025

Policy Committee:	Transportation	Vote:	16 - 0
	Water, Parks and Wildlife		11 - 0

Urgency: No      State Mandated Local Program: Yes      Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill defines “off-highway electric motorcycle” (eMoto) and subjects such a vehicle to the requirements and restrictions of the Vehicle Code, including that such a vehicle be registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

Specifically, this bill, defines an eMoto as an off-highway motorcycle subject to identification under the Vehicle Code that meets all of the following:

- 1) Is designed by the manufacturer for operation primarily off the highway.
- 2) Is powered by an electric motor for which a motor number is not required.
- 3) Has handlebars for steering control.
- 4) Has a straddle seat provided by the manufacturer.
- 5) Has two wheels.
- 6) Is not equipped with pedals from the manufacturer.

The bill also adds eMoto to the existing section of the Vehicle Code that list vehicles that comprise the term “off-highway motor vehicle subject to identification.”

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

The Department of Parks and Recreation contends it would need to update its off-highway vehicle (OHV) regulations to account for the eMoto vehicle type. Doing so, the department estimates, would cost approximately \$100,000.

DMV predicts minor costs to update its website, publications and memos to account for eMotos and indicates eMoto registrants would use DMV’s existing OHV registration processes.

**COMMENTS:**

Statute describes an OHV as to include vehicles such as a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle; a snowmobile or other vehicle designed to travel over snow or ice; a motor vehicle commonly referred to as a sand buggy, dune buggy or all-terrain vehicle; a motor vehicle commonly

referred to as a jeep; and a recreational OHV. Statute generally requires an OHV that is not registered with DMV because it is to be operated or used exclusively off the highways to display an identification plate or device issued by DMV. To receive such an identification plate, a registrant must pay DMV a \$54 OHV fee, every two years. The fee is comprised of a \$33 OHV fee, a \$10 California Highway Patrol fee, a \$7 OHV service fee and a \$4 “in lieu of” tax fee.

The list of OHV types in statute is illustrative, and not exhaustive. Still, the list does not include an increasingly popular vehicle, sometimes known as an eMoto—a two-wheeled electric-powered vehicle capable of speeds that make it not fit the statutory definition of an electric bicycle.

The author describes this bill as providing “necessary regulatory clarity,” which will ensure eMoto users “comply with existing OHV regulations, including safety and identification requirements, to enhance responsible recreation and public safety.” Or, as the bill sponsor, OHV District 36, puts it “SB 586 establishes a clear regulatory framework for eMotos, ensuring their safe and responsible integration into California’s OHV ecosystem.”

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