

House Study Bill 297 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL BY
CHAIRPERSON JONES)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to motor vehicle accident reports, including
2 the amount of property damage necessary for a report and
3 the period in which a law enforcement officer must forward a
4 report to the department of transportation.
5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. Section 321.266, subsections 2 and 3, Code 2025,
2 are amended to read as follows:

3 2. The driver of a vehicle involved in an accident resulting
4 in injury to or death of any person, or total property damage
5 to an apparent extent of ~~one~~ seven thousand five hundred dollars
6 or more, shall, ~~within seventy-two hours after the accident,~~
7 forward a written report of the accident to the department within
8 seventy-two hours after the accident. However, such report is
9 not required ~~when~~ if the accident is investigated by a law
10 enforcement agency.

11 3. Every law enforcement officer who, in the regular course
12 of duty, investigates a motor vehicle accident of which report
13 must be made as required in subsections 1 and 2, either at
14 the time of and at the scene of the accident or thereafter by
15 interviewing participants or witnesses shall, ~~within twenty-four~~
16 ~~hours after completing such investigation,~~ forward a written
17 report of such accident to the department.

18 EXPLANATION

19 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
20 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

21 Under current law, the driver of a vehicle involved in an
22 accident resulting in injury to or death of any person, or
23 total property damage to an apparent extent of \$1,500 or more,
24 must forward a written report of the accident to the department
25 of transportation (DOT) within 72 hours after the accident.
26 However, such report is not required when the accident is
27 investigated by a law enforcement agency. Every law enforcement
28 officer who investigates a motor vehicle accident for which
29 a report must be made is required to, within 24 hours after
30 completing such investigation, forward a written report of such
31 accident to the DOT.

32 This bill increases the minimum amount of total property
33 damage necessary before an accident report is required from
34 \$1,500 to \$7,500. The bill strikes the 24-hour requirement for a
35 law enforcement officer who investigated an accident to forward a

1 written report to the DOT.

2 By operation of law, a driver of a vehicle who strikes
3 fixtures upon a highway is not required to report the accident
4 to the DOT unless the apparent total property damage is \$7,500
5 or more. A driver involved in such an accident is required to
6 take reasonable steps to locate and notify the owner, a peace
7 officer, or person in charge of the damaged property and provide
8 the driver's name and address, the registration number of the
9 vehicle causing the damage, and, upon request and if available,
10 exhibit the person's driver's license.

11 The bill does not amend similar reporting requirements when
12 a person is in an accident involving a snowmobile (Code section
13 321G.10) or all-terrain vehicle (Code section 321I.11) that
14 causes total property damage of \$1,500 or more. Such reports
15 must be filed with the DOT or the natural resource commission
16 (NRC) if the accident occurred on public land, ice, or a
17 designated riding trail under the jurisdiction of the NRC.

18 By operation of law, a person who fails to forward a written
19 accident report to the DOT, as required under Code section
20 321.266(2) or (3), commits a simple misdemeanor punishable by
21 confinement for no more than 30 days and a fine of at least \$105
22 but not more than \$855.