



**Before the Joint Committee on Transportation  
House Bill 2314  
February 20, 2019**

Testimony of Waylon Buchan, Government Affairs  
Oregon Trucking Associations

Chair McKeown, Chair Beyer, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on House Bill 2314. This bill would allow motorcycles and mopeds to travel between traffic lanes in certain conditions. The Oregon Trucking Associations is opposed to House Bill 2314 based on the following concerns.

Safety is our top priority in the trucking industry. Every trucker strives to operate safely to ensure that they, and every motorist around them, makes it home to their loved ones at the end of the day. We believe anything which could jeopardize the safety of our drivers or the motoring public must be viewed with a high degree of scrutiny.

Oregon is the nexus between Washington and California, and as a result has a significant amount of truck traffic on our highways. At the same time, our highway capacity in Oregon is much less than California in terms of the number of available lanes. In the Portland region, it is not uncommon to see trucks operating side-by-side in both the center and right-hand lanes. This means in many cases, a motorcyclist splitting lanes could be between two heavy trucks. This is problematic because trucks are wider than other vehicles, which leaves less room for lane splitting motorcyclists. In Portland, the problem is compounded because some lanes are actually less than 12 feet wide.

When a motorcyclist splits lanes, they are often passing a truck on the right-hand side. There is a significant blind spot on the right side of most highway trucks. Because motorcycles are smaller than typical vehicles, truck drivers may not always be able to see a motorcyclist

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**Oregon Trucking Associations, Inc.**  
4005 SE Naef Rd.  
Portland, OR 97267  
Phone: 503.513.0005 Fax: 503.513.9541  
[www.ortrucking.org](http://www.ortrucking.org)

splitting lanes. A truck driver could attempt to maneuver without knowing a motorcyclist is in his or her blind spot. Ultimately, this would not end well for the motorcyclist.

A truck driver involved in a crash which results in a fatality or serious injury carries that traumatic experience with them for the rest of their life. Many drivers require a significant period of time before they are able to return to work. Some drivers do not recover from the experience and do not ever return to work.

House Bill 2314 will likely complicate the already complex issue of crash liability in Oregon. The bill would enshrine a relatively untested and unsafe practice within Oregon law. It places an additional burden on commuters and motor carriers who must convince an insurance adjuster that a crash involving lane splitting was, in fact, not their fault.

It is not clear how law enforcement will treat lane splitting in Oregon. To determine whether a motorcyclist is within the limits of the law, law enforcement must ascertain the speed of general traffic, determine whether a motorcyclist is traveling over ten miles per hour above general traffic, and then be able to pursue a motorcyclist splitting lanes. To accomplish all of this in a consistent, statewide manner is not a simple task for law enforcement.

For these reasons, the Oregon Trucking Associations strongly urges this committee to oppose House Bill 2314.