



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

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DATE: March 27, 2019

TO: Joint Committee on Transportation

FROM: Kris Strickler, Highway Division Administrator

SUBJECT: HB 2682(-1) – Bicycle Lanes through Intersections

INTRODUCTION

House Bill 2682(-1) clarifies the existence of a bicycle lane through an intersection if the bicycle lane is marked on opposite sides of the intersection in the same direction of travel. This measure and the (-1) amendment provides an important technical correction to ensure common practice and expectation is reflected in Oregon law.

BACKGROUND

ODOT's mission is to provide a safe and reliable multimodal transportation system for all Oregonians. From highways to public transportation to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, ODOT's work supports and invests in a system that provides transportation options to communities across the state.

As part of this multimodal transportation system, bicycle lanes are marked on many roadways to provide an exclusive lane for use by cyclists on the roadway and alert motorists of the possible presence of cyclists. Oregon law requires motor vehicle drivers to yield right of way to a cyclist in a marked bicycle lane; common practice and understanding requires motor vehicle drivers to yield right of way to a cyclist where the lane is marked leading up to the intersection (*i.e.* goes through an intersection where the lane is marked on both sides in the same direction of travel). Recent court cases have created confusion regarding the responsibility of the driver when the bicycle lane is marked up until an intersection and then continues on the other side.

DISCUSSION

House Bill 2682(-1) seeks to provide statutory clarity and maintain a driver's responsibility to yield right of way to a cyclist riding through an intersection, where the bicycle lane is marked on either side of that intersection in the same direction of travel.

Marked bicycle lane lines are Traffic Control Devices, adopted in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which as the manual and specifications of uniform standards for traffic control devices for use upon highways within Oregon ("MUTCD").¹ The MUTCD allows certain lane line extensions in certain circumstances (such as a guideline at a double left turn). However, marking bicycle lanes through intersections is only used as a last resort. Edge lines and lane markings are typically discontinued through an intersection to alert drivers to the presence of an intersection and to provide clarity to users. Physically extending all bicycle lane lines through intersections via markings is an

¹ Oregon Administrative Rule 734-020-0005. Traffic Control Devices.

impractical, and potentially distracting and unsafe way to clarify the existence of a bicycle lane and is inconsistent with the MUTCD. It is important to keep intersections clear from unnecessary markings, and equally important to ensure traffic laws are consistently enforced and protective of all users. The measure should reduce confusion and improve safety to road users.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any additional questions.