

February 26, 2021

To the Joint Committee on Transportation,

I am aware of Senate Bill 574 and the proposed changes for the filtering of motorcycles on the road during traffic slowdowns.

I have ridden motorcycles for years and initially I was adamantly opposed to this type of practice. My opposition was due to experiencing, what is known as "lane splitting" from trips into California. This witnessed practice was conducted at extremely fast speeds (for both automobiles and the motorcycles) and provided little to no warning for drivers who may be preparing to change lanes or just want some level of warning.

As I have continued to be on the road, I have witnessed (again in California) during rolling traffic slowdowns on the Southern California freeway, motorcyclists cautiously, slowly, and effectively moving through traffic and eliminating themselves from the traffic back up. Respectfully, I saw automobiles and trucks move to allow a wider berth for bikers. It was under this exposure I saw its benefits.

I am a native Oregonian. My style of motorcycling would be best described as adventure and touring. When I ride, I wear the best safety gear I can afford which includes a riding jacket and pants with armor, boots, gloves, and a helmet. I prefer smaller, more local, roads but am never opposed to a highway or freeway. During summer months I've had the experience of queuing in multiple mile long backups. Sitting in the heat from the sun with all of my safety gear on, the added heat from all of the idling car engines (as well as my own engine that I sit right on top of), and all of the exhaust fumes. It is brutal. I am wearing layers of gear to protect me and at speed, the air movement helps keep the temperatures relatively comfortable (but not always). When sitting, it is like being in an oven and roasting.

For some bikes, their engines are air cooled. The stalled traffic negatively impacted their engine and causes overheating. This only adds to the traffic problem as now we have vehicles on the side of the road waiting to cool down so they can move.

Motorcycle filtering, known as "lane splitting" in our community, when done respectfully, carefully, and within the measures written into Measure 574 are effective, safe, and allow for movement to continue to happen on our roads. I am working diligently to educate my friends and community to understand it (as many do not). I encourage them to pay attention - purposely drive 10 mph to realize the speed that is being proposed. (It really is slow.) I am encouraging all fellow riders (who also support this) not to lose the ability to educate and, if passed, not to ruin it by taking advantage of the law and treating Oregon roads like California highways.

I want safety on our roads, I want all drivers, passengers, and riders to safely reach their intended destinations. I would like, and support, adding this tool for our roads and to use the tool effectively and responsibly.

Please allow us an opportunity to use this tool. Should you have any questions or be seeking further dialogue on the subject, I would be very happy to engage and represent Oregon motorcycle riders.

Respectfully,

Kate Stoller