

# Health Department

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March 2, 2021

Joint Committee on Transportation  
900 Court St. NE - Remote F  
Salem, Oregon 97301

SB574: Relating to vehicle filtering in traffic slowdowns.

Co-Chairs Beyer and McLain, Co-Vice-Chairs Boquist and Noble, and members of the Committee, my name is Andrea Hamberg and I am the Interim Environmental Health Services Director for Multnomah County Health Department. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB574.

We share concerns expressed by the Portland Bureau of Transportation that this bill could harm public safety, as the risk of serious injury or death associated with motorcycling is very high. On a per-trip basis, the rate of deaths from crash injuries among motorcyclists is estimated to be approximately 25 times the rate among people on bicycles, 60 times the rate among people in passenger vehicles, and 1,340 times the rate among people riding transit.<sup>1</sup> In Multnomah County there were 46 deaths from motorcycles during the 5-year period of 2014-2018, accounting for 14% of all traffic crash deaths.<sup>2</sup>

Given this very high injury risk, any policy changes affecting the operation of motorcycles should be based on strong scientific evidence. Our search for studies supporting the practices allowed in SB574 did not surface any high-quality studies that would constitute strong scientific evidence. In the interest of protecting public health, we urge you to defer this bill until safe implementation can be demonstrated.

Regards,

Andrea Hamberg  
Interim Environmental Health Director  
Multnomah County Health Department

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<sup>1</sup> Beck, L. F., Dellinger, A. M., & O'neil, M. E. (2007). Motor vehicle crash injury rates by mode of travel, United States: using exposure-based methods to quantify differences. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 166(2), 212-218.

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Death Certificates: Center for Health Statistics, Center for Public Health Practice, Public Health Division, Oregon Health Authority. 2014-2018.