

2021-03-01

Dear Members of the Oregon State Legislature Joint Committee on Transportation,

As an Oregonian and avid motorcyclist, I respectfully ask your support of SB574 to legalize motorcycle lane-sharing in our state. This common-sense practice is legal in California and encouraged throughout most of the world because it reduces congestion, improves rider safety, and benefits the environment.

Lane-sharing is shown to be safer for motorcyclists than negotiating stop-and-go traffic or sitting idle between cars. In a 2015 study published by UC Berkeley, researchers found that motorcyclists involved in crashes while lane-sharing are "...considerably less likely to suffer head injury, torso injury, extremity injury, and fatal injury..." than those who are not. Crashes are fewer and less severe because riders are better able to avoid rear-end collisions, they have better visibility themselves, and are more conspicuous and visible in the mirrors of surrounding vehicles. Riders also gain an important risk mitigation tool with the addition of critical escape routes to use in the event of an obstacle or other hazard.

Allowing lane-sharing will reduce congestion for riders and drivers alike. The benefit to motorcyclists who must no longer sit idle in traffic, is obvious. The benefit to every other driver is that allowing motorcyclists to leave the normal flow of traffic and move through the relatively (to a motorcyclist) wide empty spaces between slow-moving or stopped cars and trucks, opens up valuable space for other vehicles and makes much more efficient use of our existing roadways, for free. A Belgian traffic engineering study concluded in 2012 that if just 10% of all drivers were to ride motorcycles and utilize lane-sharing, traffic delay times for all motorists would be reduced by 40%, and this without any additional investment in infrastructure or signage.

Relieving traffic congestion benefits the environment because it lowers the number of vehicles on our roadways and the time they spend idling in traffic, and incentivizes the use of more efficient alternative vehicles. Motorcycles use less space on the road and can park much more densely than cars. They typically average 50 miles per gallon or better, and electric motorcycles and scooters consume even fewer resources.

This issue enjoys broad bipartisan support and stands to benefit all Oregonians at little to no cost. In 2015, a lane-sharing bill passed the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously and the full Oregon Senate with a two-thirds bipartisan majority. Then in 2019, a similar bill was again widely supported on both sides of the aisle.

Please vote "YES" on SB574 to reduce congestion for all roadway users, improve our environment, and make motorcycling safer in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Andrew Giles Hudock

Hillsboro, OR