

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and McLain, Vice-Chairs Boquist and Noble, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation:

I am licensed motorcyclist in Texas since 1978 and a motorcycle safety specialist. I am retired from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) where in addition to my other duties, I served as a highway safety specialist. In 2006, I was appointed by the US Secretary of Transportation to the 10-member Motorcyclist Advisory Council (MAC) specified by SAFETEA-LU legislation to advise the Secretary's office on motorcycle safety issues. And in 2010, I was one of 12 team members on an international motorcycle safety scan in Europe that published the report in 2012 entitled Infrastructure Countermeasures to Mitigate Motorcyclist Crashes in Europe. <https://international.fhwa.dot.gov/scan/12028/12028.pdf> . In addition, I routinely (in pre-Covid times) present to international road safety audiences on motorcycle safety issues on behalf of the International Road Federation (IRF).

As a rider with motorcycling experience in the US, Canada and 10 European countries, I have observed and participated in lane splitting (or filtering) when I deemed such a practice was safe. Lane splitting (or filtering) is considered a normal practice in Europe and riders are expected to pass between vehicles and to advance to the front of the traffic group. When riding in Texas, I have occasionally used lane splitting (or filtering) in stopped or in very slow traffic to move my motorcycle to the head of the queue especially during the heat of a Texas summer day. It has been my observation that when lane splitting (or filtering) is done under sensible best practices, it offers a mobility benefit not only to motorcyclists, but to all motorists on the shared roadway. Moreover, it allows all motorists the opportunity to idle their engines in congested traffic for a little less time and to get to their destinations a bit sooner.

Through my self-study, I am aware of the safety implications, the published studies, and the controversy that surrounds lane splitting (or filtering). When I consider the safety consequences of this practice, I am reminded of my experience riding a motorcycle through many dozens of roundabouts in the United Kingdom. While any physical contact between motorcyclists and adjacent vehicles can be disastrous, such unfortunate contact in a roundabout or while lane splitting (or filtering) would likely be a side-swipe contact rather than a head-on or a t-bone crash that so often has catastrophic results.

I feel that SB 574 specifies appropriate and conservative safety practices and that this is an excellent opportunity to introduce this practice in Oregon. I fully support SB 574 and I respectfully request that the committee endorse its passage.

Sincerely,

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