



2/8/2023

Representative Pam Marsh
House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SUPPORT for HB 2571 – Relating to electric bicycles

Dear Chair Marsh and Members of the Committee,

As the Transportation Options Program Manager for the City of Eugene I am writing to express support from the City for HB 2571, which would direct the Department of Environmental Quality to establish program for providing rebates to qualifying individuals who purchase electric assisted bicycles or cargo electric bicycles and qualifying equipment. My background is in bike safety education, Safe Routes to School coordination, transportation options program management, and cargo bike courier business operations. My work at the City of Eugene is to increase the amount of active transportation trips taken throughout the city and we see this bill as an aid to that work.

We have seen the bike industry change over the decades and we're excited at where we find ourselves in this moment. In 1971 Oregon passed the "Bike Bill" and as a city Eugene has worked hard since then to build cycling infrastructure and create programs that encourage more people to cycle for more trips. That original legislation started that ripple in our community and beyond.

Now at the City of Eugene we have seen a new ripple begin with more people returning to cycling now that e-bikes have become more accessible. We have hosted online information sessions and a very successful e-bike expo that showed us just how excited the community is for this transportation option. We have also worked with our local utility, Eugene Water & Electric Board to facilitate a local rebate program that has been very successful in delivering nearly 300 rebates of over \$80,000 total.

Programs throughout the country have also shown the success of these rebate programs in getting more people biking for more trips. E-bikes have been shown to lower barriers to cycling by flattening hills, shortening distances, and increasing what's possible to carry. I have seen families who have increased their health & wellbeing because of access to e-cargo bikes, older and disabled people who have more access to resources because of e-bikes, and community members who are rediscovering the joys of cycling again because of that extra 'wind at your back' feeling that pedal assist bikes give.

By providing these rebates we can reduce barriers to cycling, increase access to sustainable transportation options, decrease the states greenhouse gas emissions, improve community health, and provide more people with the freedom and opportunity to engage actively with their communities.

Through supporting House Bill 2571 we would continue Oregon's legacy of encouraging more people to use cycling as a legitimate transportation option and we would support an industry that provides local jobs.

We would like to encourage that a portion of the funding for this program goes to education and outreach around e-bikes; including what types are allowed where, and how to ride safely and courteously. In our region we launched a Path Etiquette campaign and as we see more electric devices on our shared use path network and on our streets we know that education is a key component to integrating e-devices safely into our transportation system. Having education as part of the rebate program will go a long way to increasing that safety.

We would also like to encourage the legislature to review the legislation that limits access to e-bikes to those 16 or older. Other states are making changes to allow parents to decide when their children might be ready for a pedal assist bike and we'd like to encourage Oregon to review that potential change as well. I would be happy to be on any advisory committee that would like to review this potential change.

As we continue our work to reach city goals of reducing green house gas emissions and increasing active transportation trips, we look forward to using the tool of this rebate program to get more people riding for more trips.

Thank you for your work on this and for your time today.

Sincerely,

Shane Rhodes
Transportation Options Program Manager
City of Eugene
Email: srhodes@eugene-or.gov
Phone: 541-682-5094