

Submitter: Paul Nagy
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: SB422

I'm a 62- year-old Portland native. I earned the motorcycle endorsement on my Oregon driver's license in 1986 and have been commuting to work on my motorcycle nearly every day since. My wife and son are also street riders, as are my brother and brother in-law. My father was a street rider. I have been working in the motorcycle industry since 1998, and was a motorcycle safety instructor for a decade, both with Team Oregon and with Harley-Davidson's Rider's Edge Program.

I request that you support Senate Bill 422 in favor of safe and legal lane sharing for scooters and motorcycles. Safe and legal lane sharing will reduce traffic congestion for everyone, reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gases, and improve safety for motorcyclists.

By permitting scooters and motorcycles to filter through congested traffic, we permit those cars and trucks behind us to advance. Lane sharing creates new lanes on the freeways and highways without the expense and inconvenience of widening or rebuilding the roads.

Some ask if lane splitting is dangerous. Everything we do is dangerous. Driving is dangerous. Bicycling is dangerous. Skiing, snowboarding, and hot tubbing are dangerous. Celebrating the Fourth of July is dangerous. Going to the shopping mall, going to school, and going to church are dangerous. We can't eliminate danger, but we can reduce it.

Although lane sharing increases the risk of a sideswipe incident, it reduces the risks of rear-ender crashes. A motorcyclist can avoid a sideswipe incident more easily than a rear-ender. A sideswipe incident is typically less damaging to vehicles, and less injurious to drivers, passengers, and riders.

There will be some who believe that lane sharing allows motorcyclists to cheat their way through traffic, and that it isn't fair. Life isn't fair. It isn't fair that rich people get to live in big houses. It isn't fair that some people get to drive a car to work, while others take the bus. It isn't fair that some people don't pay for parking while others do. Many others will see scooters and motorcycles making progress through traffic jams and consider riding the motorcycle to work and leaving the car at home, removing a car from the traffic mix.

Numerous studies, particularly the Berkeley Study, show that lane sharing increases rider safety. The California Highway Patrol recognizes the benefits to Lane Sharing. Many truck drivers understand how legalized lane sharing would reduce congestion. We have a way to reduce traffic congestion and fuel consumption, and improve safety, and it is sitting there in front of us. Please support SB 422.