

2/15/24

Chair McLain, Chair Gorsek, members of the committee my name is Dave Burger and I'm here in support of House Bill 4103 – Trenton's Law – and I want to thank my Representative, Representative Emerson Levy for introducing the bill, and thank you, Representative Ngyuen for sponsoring the bill as well.

I am a Business Agent, Training Coordinator and Organizer at UA 290 Plumbers and Steamfitters serving Central Oregon and President of the Oregon State Building Construction Trades Council. Most importantly I am Trenton's father, and my wife, Trenton's mother, Cori is in the room with me as well.

I'd like to tell you a little bit about Trenton to start. Trenton, at a young age was full of life, adventure and wanting to experience everything he could. He started off as soon as he could, crawling, walking, getting into a power wheels F-150, riding bikes, skateboards, scooters and motorcycles. He loved the outdoors, camping, fishing, hunting and trail riding. As a teenager his passion was riding and racing motocross and of course Girls! He loved being with Cori and I, his 5 older brothers and sisters and friends doing anything! He was a little troublemaker at times but had the kindest heart of anyone I know!

On Saturday, June 17th, the day before Father's Day of last year, Trenton was riding on an e-bike headed to Dutch Bros to get a drink with a friend but Trenton didn't make it! He was struck by a car and killed! Bend Fire and Rescue and Bend PD responded to the accident within 3 min of the 911 call, he was transported to St. Charles where they did everything they could for Trenton but he succumbed to his injuries!

With our Families loss of Trenton, we had an outpouring of love, support and kindness from Friends, Neighbors, Co-Workers, HR Emerson Levy, Bend Mayor Kebler, Bend Counselor Broadman, Bend PD Officer Kinsella, Bend-LaPine Schools Staff, Trenton's Guidance Counselor: Bob Burris, the Bend Community as a whole and countless others!

Cori and I reached out to the driver of the car involved in the accident. She was devastated that she had taken a child away from their family! We let her know that it was ok, that it was an accident and that we didn't blame her or hate her. Their two lives crossed in a horrific way and that will be felt forever!

Everyone's lives that were involved in Trenton's E-Bike accident are affected forever! That includes Cori and I, Trenton's Brothers and Sisters, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Cousins, Friends, First Responders, Dr's, Nurses, Teachers and the whole Bend Community!

I had been in touch with Rep Emerson Levey on a few other community issues prior to Trenton's accident so shortly after She approached me about creating/updating E-Bike Safety Laws. I was in full support of this as I think this is a real issue that needs to be addressed! I asked if this Law could be named "Trenton's Law" and Rep Levy said YES! I broke down in sad but joyful tears.

After Rep Levy announced the E-Bike Safety Bill, the Bend Bulletin reached out for an interview. Cori and I sat down with Anna Kaminski from the Bulletin to tell our story and support for the E-Bike Safety Laws. We want Parents, Children and Community to know that this law can't change what has already happened but could serve in adjusting the culture and awareness around e-bike risks and contribute to safer use of e-bikes. Similarly, to how people now understand the importance of helmets and seatbelts, and how kids learn how to drive safely around motorcycles when they go to drivers' ed.

Regulating E-Bikes in a way that makes sense age-wise is an appropriate next step and trying to encourage a broader understanding of their speeds and uses is also important for e-bike users as well as others on roadways.

HB 4103 would have some great improvements over the outdated laws. It would address the classifications of e-bikes, the ages appropriate per classification, the education of e-bike safety, like Commute Options working with our schools and children, dedication to making our streets safer and key people building on making this law effective!

I am currently working with Commute Options and the Bend LaPine SD to put on an E-Bike safety assembly with Pacific Crest Middle School next Friday where there are approximately 50 e-bikes ridden to school each day. Bend PD, Commute Options and I will be reiterating the need for e-bike safety, helmet use and laws with the students. This law could help this message reach all of our Oregon communities and families!

At this point in my long testimony today, I can imagine Trenton elbowing me and saying, "Dad, just shut up already, your embarrassing me!!"

But, ALL OF THIS IS TO PREVENT JUST 1 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY FROM GOING THROUGH WHAT WE HAVE!

In closing, I would like to thank HR Emerson Levy for bringing HB4103 forward, for this Committee hearing it and I would ask that you send HB4103 on to become "Trenton's Law"!

Thank you and have a good night!

David W Burger