

Submitter: Matthew Hall
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2963

Dear Chairs McLain and Gorsek, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

I am writing to offer full-throated support for HB 2963. As a person who cares deeply about the need to combat climate change, I have seen first-hand the way access to e-bikes can help shift people away from car dependency. Expanding financial access to e-bikes can help the state to meet both its long-term climate and resiliency goals, while also encouraging more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly communities as more people engage with the world outside their cars. An e-bike rebate program will also benefit low-income residents by bridging the financial gap for all community members to access a sustainable and reliable form of transportation that does not have the attendant costs of car ownership.

As a person with a disability, I have long been wary but interested in bike travel. A few years ago, I bought a trike, which allowed me to the freedom to move through my community and run errands without needing my car. However, I still felt the way that even the trike wasn't quite enough to allow me to travel as far as I'd like. While out on my rides, I would often see various iterations of e-bikes, which piqued my interest. I thought that perhaps as my confidence grew, I too might get an e-trike that would help me go farther and explore more the world around me by bike. In 2024, I finally bought one. Doing so has helped me to reduce the use of my car even further and made me a bit of an apostle for these incredible machines. It has given me freedom, joy and a new way to engage with the world.

However, that investment was also a good reminder that e-bikes are still priced at a level more akin to luxury bikes. We should be doing all that we can to ensure that transportation options outside of cars are accessible and supported by firm action on the part of the legislature-- this includes investments like HB 2963, but also bike and pedestrian infrastructure, as well as investments in transit, which can and should function interdependently in a healthy transportation system. Helping to reduce the barrier to entry for e-bike ownership could be game-changing for many people who are otherwise unable to afford a car or are trapped financially by the needs of car ownership, while supporting the work to foster more resilient and livable communities.

Thanks so much for your time and consideration.

Matthew Hall