



The Climate Reality Project[®]

PORTLAND CHAPTER

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, and members of the committee,

My name is Nathan DeSpain. I'm writing on behalf of Climate Reality Project Portland Chapter, a grassroots climate advocacy organization, in support of HB 2963. This bill would create a rebate program for the purchase of an electric bicycle (e-bike) for qualifying individuals. Our organization sees e-bikes as a win for the climate and public health because they emit little carbon, decrease road traffic, prevent damage to infrastructure, do not pollute the environment, improve urban spaces, and are a fiscally responsible solution to our state's problems.

The lifetime emissions of an e-bike per mile traveled is around 7% the carbon emissions of a gasoline car and around 13% of an electric car. A few car trips replaced by e-bike rides result in significant emission reductions over the course of a year [1].

Perhaps counterintuitively, the more people ride e-bikes, the less costly driving is. Decreasing the number of cars on the road is the most effective answer to intensifying traffic and car-generated pollution concerns. As more people adopt e-bikes for even a fraction of their transportation needs, the number of cars on the road is decreased. This, in turn, makes car trips more energy and time efficient because there is less idling on congested roadways. [2]

Building infrastructure to accommodate more car traffic—and even bike traffic—has a variety of costs to our government and environment. Construction is a heavy emitter of greenhouse gasses [3], as well as a significant source of government spending. Compared to internal combustion or battery electric vehicles, e-bikes are much easier on existing public infrastructure. Heavier vehicles inflict more wear-and-tear on roads, and while the average automobile weighs 4000 lbs, e-bikes usually weigh between 50 and 150 lbs. Increased e-bike riding offers immediate relief to overstressed roads.

Like electric cars, e-bikes emit none of the harmful gases like ozone and nitrogen oxide that contribute to an estimated 4.2 million premature deaths each year worldwide, according to the World Health Organization [4]. All forms of transportation emit particulates, mostly from brakes and tires, but e-bikes produce a comparatively minuscule amount. The fewer emissions associated with e-bike use results in fewer respiratory illnesses. In addition, the exercise

associated with e-bike use results in lower rates of heart disease, which helps decrease the burden on our healthcare system. Investing in e-bike use is an investment in all our neighbors' health.

Cars take up a lot of space; parking lots and expanded roads make it harder to create affordable housing. As more people trade their cars for e-bikes, more space will be freed up for housing, green spaces, businesses, and more uses of land that create a vibrant city.

E-bike rebates are an extremely efficient use of government money that can be utilized quickly. Every e-bike trip that replaces a car trip results in a drastic reduction in carbon emissions, pollution, and infrastructure costs. Enabling and incentivizing more e-bike use ensures the state is effectively using its resources to fight climate change.

Please join us in supporting HB 2963. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nathan DeSpain,
Climate Reality Project Portland Chapter

*** Reference:**

[1]: <https://elpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Ebike-impact-math-polished-updated.pdf>

[2]: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8997564/>

[3]: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1361920915001066>

[4]:

<https://www.who.int/teams/environment-climate-change-and-health/healthy-urban-environments/transport/health-risks>

About The Climate Reality Project Portland Chapter

The Climate Reality Project (CRP) Portland Chapter is a local, volunteer-led chapter of The Climate Reality Project, an international nonprofit of 5 million members led by climate leader and former US Vice President Al Gore, whose mission is to catalyze global solutions to the climate crisis. Our legislative committee bases its advocacy on CRP's 5 pillars: a just transition to clean energy, zero carbon transportation, climate justice and public health, green communities, and a fair, representative democracy. climaterealitypdx.com/, www.climaterealityproject.org