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On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3542

I am a student at Oregon State University whose primary mode of transportation is a motorcycle. HB 3542 is a sensible solution to a dilemma that myself and other motorcyclists face when traffic slows down. For those of you who have never ridden it is important to keep a few things in mind. 1) Motorcycles do not handle well below about 10-15mph depending on the bike. Slow speed maneuvers are some of the hardest things to do on a motorcycle. 2) Motorcycles are almost exclusively manual, which makes them even more difficult to control at very slow speeds. 3) While the space between stopped cars may appear small from inside a car, it is generally only slightly smaller than the width of a car and much wider than a motorcycle. 4) Standing on the freeway with only a helmet and thick clothing to protect you is exactly as scary as you think it is. Given these things, the dilemma that motorcyclists currently face is as follows: Do I risk my life by staying in a lane and hoping that the driver behind me doesn't crush me, break the law and risk a fine, or ride only at night when visibility and weather conditions are usually much worse (if that option is even available). As it stands right now there is usually no good option available to us when traffic slows below 10mph. HB 3542 would allow us to slowly and safely move through traffic at about the same relative speed and with the same amount of space as a bicycle moving alongside stopped traffic in a bike lane. This reduces the risk of rear end collisions and other mishaps for us and reduces the amount that we contribute to congestion and the workload of law enforcement. Additionally, the speed limits imposed by the bill are in a good range where riders following the new law will be traveling slow enough to react to the vehicles around them, but fast enough that their bikes are not struggling to stay upright. I believe that this bill is a well thought out measure that will make riding in Oregon safer and less stressful with little downside to anyone.