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Senator Lee Beyer, Chair
Senate Committee on Business and Transportation
Oregon State Capitol, Room 453
900 Court Street N.E.
Salem, Oregon 97301

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY – ORIGINAL WILL NOT FOLLOW

Re: Senate Bill 533

Dear Senator Beyer:

I am a motorcyclist and attorney that represents injured motorcyclists in Oregon and Washington. I also advocate for the passage of laws that improve motorcycle safety. I am submitting this letter as my support of Senate Bill 533 (SB 533). Currently, sensor-operated traffic control devices in Oregon are calibrated to detect automobiles. In many cases, these sensors do not detect the presence of a motorcycle and then fail to activate the traffic control cycle and provide a green light or green arrow for the motorcyclist (“Dead Red”). Most “Dead Red” situations occur when there is little or no automobile traffic and automobiles are not present to activate the sensors.

Under current Oregon law, motorcyclists in “Dead Red” situations are forced to violate the law and risk traffic citation. I have personally encountered this situation many times as a rider in Oregon. SB 533 would simply allow motorcyclists to treat “Dead Red” traffic lights as stop signs and legally proceed through the intersection only when it is safe to do so. In addition to making sense, it also removes motorcyclists from potential rear-end accidents and from potential road-rage situations involving frustrated drivers stuck behind them. Similar laws have already been passed in California, Washington, Idaho, and thirteen other states. With the increasing prevalence of sensor-operated traffic control devices, it is time for Oregon to join its neighbors and pass this common-sense law.

Very truly yours,

/S/ CHRISTOPHER A. SLATER

Christopher A. Slater
Attorney at Law

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