

My name is Kat Iverson. I am a bicyclist with decades of riding through signalized intersections. Most of them work well, but some, annoyingly, do not detect me. I support SB 533, and I hope you will recommend it's passage with one amendment—make it universal, not just for bicycles and motorcycles.

When engineers install demand actuated traffic signals, they plan to detect the presence of any street legal vehicle in each detector's lane and no other lane. However, detector sensitivity is sometimes a delicate balancing act between setting it to detect vehicles in its lane while not detecting vehicles in the adjacent lane(s). Sometimes engineers simply cannot achieve that balance. Often, to avoid having a through vehicle unnecessarily trigger the left turn light, engineers will reduce the sensitivity of the detector in the left turn lane, making it not sensitive enough to detect bicycles and motorcycles.

In Beaverton on Hocken Rd. there is a bike lane with a non-detecting loop. Multiple engineers have adjusted the sensitivity multiple times, but it still does not detect even my heavy-duty mountain bike.

Many bicyclists and motorcyclists know where to position themselves over the loop for the best chance at being detected, but only if the loop is visible. Re-paving often hides the loop making finding the most sensitive spot guesswork.

Video detection works much better, but even it does not always detect narrow vehicles. These detectors are relatively easily adjusted, but until a detector is reported and adjusted, bicyclists and motorcyclists are out of luck.

Waiting for a car to come along behind is not always practical. On low traffic roads that can be a long wait, and even then a car may not get close enough to trip the detector, especially if a bicyclist is towing a trailer.

Passing this bill will not force anyone headlong into busy traffic. It will merely allow bicyclists and motorcyclists to proceed when traffic is clear. Even with this bill there will still be intersections where people will take a chance with the law. If an intersection has no left turn lights, a driver on a low traffic side street may sit there for many minutes without the light ever going through the cycle. I think that the only way to account for that is to add a provision for a light that does not change for some specified amount of time.

I have one last point to make. Everything said about bicycles and motorcycles also applies to mopeds, electric bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, horse drawn carts, and even some high chassis vehicles such as dump trucks. There can even be cases when cars are not detected—malfunction or construction. In one case in Hillsboro on 231st, the lanes are temporarily re-aligned by construction candlesticks so that left-turning drivers do not drive over the detectors in the left turn lane. Drivers were not getting the left turn arrow, so they sat there wondering whether they ought to go ahead and turn. (In that case the signal has been changed to a flashing yellow arrow whenever the through lane gets a green ball)

Every demand actuated signal ought to detect every street legal vehicle, but until that happens all drivers need equal rights to continue their trips unimpeded by inadequate technology. No doubt, bicyclists and motorcyclists will be the primary beneficiaries, but I encourage you to amend this bill to apply it to everyone who for any reason is not detected by a traffic signal.

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